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Persian

A Comprehensive Grammar

Saeed Yousef
assisted by Hayedeh Torabi



Persian

A Comprehensive Grammar

Persian: A Comprehensive Grammar is a complete reference guide to the grammar system for intermediate to advanced learners of Persian. It presents an accessible and systematic description of the language, focusing on real patterns of use in contemporary Persian.

The book is organised to promote a thorough understanding of Persian; its structure, its sound system and the formation of words, phrases and sentence construction. It offers a stimulating analysis of the complexities of the language, providing clear explanations and examples of each point.

Persian: A Comprehensive Grammar is the essential reference work on Persian grammar for all learners and users of the language.

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Saeed Yousef

Assisted by Hayedeh Torabi

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Contents

Preface	xv
Abbreviations	xvii
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Chapter 2 How Persian sounds and how it is written	4
2.1 How Persian sounds: vowels, diphthongs and consonants	4
2.1.1 Vowels and diphthongs	4
2.1.2 Consonants	5
2.1.3 Syllabic structure	7
2.1.4 Stress	8
2.2 How Persian is written: the alphabet	10
2.2.1 General remarks	10
2.2.2 All the letters of the alphabet in their standard order	10
2.2.3 Letters with the same sound	15
2.2.4 What is meant by ‘position’ (initial, middle, etc.)?	15
2.2.5 How vowels and diphthongs are written	16
2.2.6 Writing and connecting <i>alef</i>	18
2.2.7 The Arabic ‘limited’ (مقصوره) <i>alef</i>	18
2.2.8 <i>Hamze</i> and the glottal stop in Persian	19
2.2.9 <i>Hamze</i> and <i>he</i> (ه)	20
2.2.10 The four letters with different functions as both vowels and consonants: a review of ا, و, ه and ی	21
2.2.11 Three more signs: <i>tashdid</i> , <i>tanvin</i> and <i>sokun</i>	23

Chapter 3	Nouns	25
3.1	No gender	25
3.2	Simple and compound nouns	25
3.3	Number	26
3.3.1	The plural suffix ها (- <i>hā</i>)	26
3.3.2	The plural suffix ان (- <i>ān</i>)	27
3.3.3	Plural of compound nouns	29
3.3.4	Arabic plurals	30
3.3.5	Arabic dual plurals	32
3.3.6	Double plurals	32
3.3.7	Collective nouns	33
3.4	Definite and indefinite	33
3.4.1	In the absence of determiners and modifiers	34
3.4.2	Indefinite determiners	35
3.4.2.1	یک (<i>yek</i> , for <i>sg.</i>), چند (<i>chand</i> , for <i>pl.</i>)	35
3.4.2.2	Unstressed suffix ی (- <i>i</i>)	36
3.4.2.3	Both indefinite markers combined	38
3.4.2.4	Poetical or archaic usages	38
3.4.2.5	Some other uses of the indefinite suffix - <i>i</i>	39
3.4.3	The definite determiner (DDO-marker)	40
3.5	Diminutives	43
3.5.1	- <i>ak</i>	43
3.5.2	- <i>che</i>	44
3.5.3	- <i>e</i>	44
3.5.4	- <i>u</i>	45
3.6	The vocative case	45
3.6.1	The pre-positioned <i>ey</i>	45
3.6.2	The vocative suffix	46
3.7	Exclamatory forms	46
Chapter 4	The connector <i>ezāfe</i>	48
4.1	What is <i>ezāfe</i> ?	48
4.2	How to pronounce	49
4.3	How to write	49
4.4	Functions of <i>ezāfe</i>	50
4.5	Dropping <i>ezāfe</i>	52
Chapter 5	Pronouns	54
5.1	Pronouns – some initial remarks	54
5.2	Independent personal pronouns and possessive / objective pronominal suffixes: some general remarks	54

5.2.1	Possessive pronouns	56
5.2.2	Indefinite and impersonal pronouns	58
5.2.3	More on using objective pronominal suffixes	58
5.2.4	Additional notes on personal pronouns – and some alternative pronouns	60
5.2.4.1	1Sg. (من)	60
5.2.4.2	2Sg. (تو)	61
5.2.4.3	3Sg. (او or آن)	62
5.2.4.4	1Pl. (ما)	64
5.2.4.5	2Pl. (شما)	64
5.2.4.6	3Pl. (آنها)	64
5.2.5	<i>Ishān</i> and <i>-eshān</i> : a final note	65
5.3	Emphatic / reflexive functions of خود (<i>khod</i> , self)	65
5.3.1	Emphatic function	66
5.3.2	Reflexive function	67
5.3.3	Notes on خود when used alone	67
5.4	Demonstrative pronouns	69
5.5	Interrogative pronouns	70
5.6	All, none, each	75
5.7	Other words and phrases with pronominal functions	77
5.8	Relative pronoun(s) in Persian	79
5.9	Numbers as pronouns?	79

Chapter 6 Adjectives 82

6.1	Adjectives describe nouns	82
6.2	Position in relation to nouns	82
6.2.1	<i>Ezāfe</i> dropped in lexicalized compounds	83
6.2.2	When and how the adjective can be placed before a noun	84
6.3	No declension or inflection	85
6.4	Kinds of adjectives, their order and how they are connected	85
6.5	Definite / indefinite markers and how they affect the use of <i>ezāfe</i>	87
6.5.1	Definite	87
6.5.2	Indefinite	88
6.6	Demonstrative adjectives	89
6.7	Possessive adjectives	89
6.7.1	Possessive use of خود (<i>khod</i> , somebody's own . . .)	90
6.8	Quantitative, distributive and interrogative adjectives	91
6.9	Forms and formation of adjectives	94

6.9.1	Compound words used as adjectives	94
6.9.2	Adjectival phrases	94
6.10	Comparison of adjectives	95
6.10.1	Comparative adjectives	95
6.10.2	Superlative adjectives	97
6.10.3	The mixed form <i>az hame</i>	97
6.10.4	Better / best and more / most	98
6.10.5	Use of Arabic comparative / superlative	98
6.10.6	Equal comparison, resemblance and sameness	99
6.11	Adjectives that need the <i>-āne</i> suffix	101
6.12	Colors; adjectives from nouns	102
6.13	Adjectives used as nouns	103
6.14	Nationalities and languages	104
6.15	Use of Arabic feminine ending	105

Chapter 7 Adverbs 106

7.1	Position of adverbs	106
7.2	Persian uses adjectives as adverbs	107
7.3	'With' + abstract noun – and similar forms	107
7.4	<i>-āne</i> suffix	109
7.5	Adjective + <i>tanvin</i>	110
7.6	Reduplication	111
7.7	Adverbial phrases with <i>در حال / در حالت</i> (<i>dar hāl-e / dar hālat-e</i>)	113
7.8	Comparison of adverbs	114
7.9	زیاد (<i>ziyād</i> , much, a lot), خیلی (<i>kheyli</i> , very, a lot), etc.	114
7.9.1	Much too / too much	115
7.10	کم (<i>kam</i> , few, little), کمی (<i>kami</i> , a few, a little), etc.	115
7.11	دیگر (<i>digar</i> , other, more, any more) and هنوز (<i>hanuz</i> , still, yet)	116
7.12	هم (<i>ham</i> , too, also) and its synonyms	119
7.13	فقط (<i>faghat</i>) تنها (<i>tanhā</i>)	122
7.14	'Too . . . to . . .' and 'enough to . . .'	122

Chapter 8 Numerals, time, age, measures 123

8.1	General remarks	123
8.1.1	Cardinal numbers	123
8.1.2	Ordinal numbers and fractions	125
8.1.2.1	First, last, etc.	126
8.1.2.2	Firstly, secondly, etc.	127
8.1.2.3	Some common Arabic fractions	127

8.2	Telling the time	128
8.2.1	Times of day; days of the week	129
8.3	Age	130
8.4	Measures	131
8.5	Asking questions about numbers and quantities	131

Chapter 9 Prepositions, conjunctions and some common prefixes / suffixes **132**

9.1	Prepositions	132
9.1.1	What happens to verbs after prepositions?	136
9.1.2	Can prepositions be used as conjunctions?	137
9.2	Conjunctions	138
9.2.1	Coordinating conjunctions	138
9.2.2	Correlative conjunctions	140
9.3	Prefixes and suffixes	141
9.3.1	Prefixes	142
9.3.2	Suffixes	147
9.3.3	The stressed <i>-i</i> suffix; more on the <i>-e</i> suffix	154

Chapter 10 Infinitives and their derivatives **158**

10.1	Infinitive in Persian: two major groups	158
10.1.1	Past and present stems	158
10.1.2	Negative and passive infinitive; no ‘perfect’ infinitive!	160
10.1.3	Uses of infinitive	160
10.1.4	Infinitive of compound verbs and position of subject / object / complement of infinitive	161
10.1.5	Infinitives and the DDO-marker (<i>rā</i>)	163
10.1.6	Short infinitives	164
10.2	Derivatives	164
10.2.1	Infinitive + stressed <i>-i</i>	164
10.2.2	Derivatives made from <i>Stem I</i>	166
10.2.2.1	Present stem + <i>-ande</i> = the <i>agent participle</i>	166
10.2.2.2	Present stem + <i>-ān</i> = the <i>present participle</i>	167
10.2.2.3	Present stem + <i>-ā</i> = the <i>participle of potential (active)</i>	168
10.2.2.4	Present stem + <i>-esh</i> = <i>verbal noun</i>	169
10.2.2.5	Reduplication of the <i>imperative</i> or <i>Stem I</i>	170
10.2.3	Derivatives made from <i>Stem II</i>	171
10.2.3.1	Short infinitive (past stem) as noun	171

10.2.3.2	Past participles	172
10.2.3.3	Past and present stems together	172
10.2.3.4	Past stem + <i>-ār</i>	173

Chapter 11 Persian verbs 174

11.1	Affirmative and negative	174
11.2	Interrogative	175
11.2.1	Words needed for response: <i>بله</i> , <i>نه</i> and <i>چرا</i>	175
11.2.2	Question tags and short answers?	176
11.3	Transitive and intransitive verbs, objects and complements	176
11.4	Verbal agreement	178
11.5	Simple and compound	178
11.5.1	Separability of compound verbs	179
11.6	Forming causative verbs	180
11.7	Regular verbs replacing the irregulars	182
11.8	'To be'	183
11.8.1	Notes about writing the suffixed version	184
11.8.2	Where to use each 'to be' version?	185
11.8.3	Imperative and subjunctive; tenses with <i>Stem II</i>	186
11.8.4	Other versions	187
11.9	'To have'	188
11.10	Modal verbs	189
11.10.1	<i>بایستن</i> (<i>bāyestan</i> , to have to, must)	189
11.10.2	<i>توانستن</i> (<i>tavānestan</i> , to be able to, can)	190
11.10.3	<i>شایستن</i> (<i>shāyestan</i> , to befit)	191
11.10.4	<i>شدن</i> (<i>shodan</i> , to get / become)	192
11.11	English modals or semi-modals and their Persian equivalents	193
11.12	Past participles	198
11.13	List of Persian simple verbs	199

Chapter 12 Tenses, aspects, moods, voices 223

12.1	An overview	223
12.2	Simple present tense / present progressive tense	224
12.2.1	Present progressive formed with <i>داشتن</i>	227
12.3	Future tense	229
12.4	Simple past tense	231
12.5	Past progressive tense	233

12.5.1	Past and past progressive of certain verbs	234
12.5.1.1	خواستن (<i>khāstan</i> , to want)	234
12.5.1.2	توانستن (<i>tavānestan</i> , to be able to)	235
12.5.1.3	دانستن (<i>dānestan</i> , to know)	235
12.5.2	Past progressive with <i>dāshdan</i> (داشتن)	237
12.6	Present perfect tense	238
12.7	Present perfect progressive tense	243
12.8	Past perfect tense	244
12.9	Past perfect progressive tense	244
12.10	Imperative	244
12.10.1	Compound verbs and the imperative	245
12.10.2	Remnants of archaic or obsolete features	248
12.11	The subjunctive	248
12.11.1	Simple (or present) subjunctive	248
12.11.2	The perfect (or past) subjunctive, I and II	255
12.12	Optative mood	258
12.13	Passive voice	258
12.13.1	Alternatives for passive	260
12.13.2	How to mention the agent	263
12.13.3	Passive of infinitives and past participles	264

Chapter 13 Sentences: from phrases to complex sentences

265

13.1	Simple and complex Persian sentences	265
13.2	Conditionals	268
13.2.1	Indicative conditionals	268
13.2.2	Counterfactual conditionals	269
13.2.3	Some substitutes for اگر (<i>agar</i> , if)	271
13.2.4	مگر (<i>magar</i> , if not, unless)	272
13.2.4.1	Other uses of مگر	273
13.2.5	وگرنه (<i>va gar na</i> , otherwise; if not so; or else)	275
13.2.6	‘As if’ and ‘to look as if’	276
13.3	Wishes	277
13.4	Adverb clauses with time expressions	279
13.4.1	What tenses to use with وقتیکه (<i>vaghti-ke</i> , when)?	280
13.4.2	Dropping <i>vaghti</i> or <i>ke</i> – or both	282
13.4.3	<i>Before</i> and <i>after</i>	283
13.4.4	As soon as (همینکه)	284
13.4.5	Whenever (هر وقت که)	284
13.4.6	A few more conjunctions for time	285

13.5	Temporal idioms ‘had hardly / scarcely’ and ‘no sooner’	286
13.6	A review of the omnipotent <i>تَا</i> (<i>tā</i>)	287
13.7	Relative clauses	289
13.7.1	Restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses	289
13.7.2	When not to use <i>-i</i> in restrictive relative clauses	290
13.7.3	When and how to use <i>لِ</i>	291
13.7.4	What happens to prepositions and antecedents in possessive case?	292
13.8	Adverbial clauses of manner	293
13.9	More types of subordinate clauses using conjunctions	294
13.9.1	Clauses of purpose, cause and effect	294
13.9.2	Clauses of contrast / concession	296
13.9.3	Clauses of result (or consequence)	297
13.10	Other usages of چندان (<i>chandān</i>) and چنان (<i>chenān</i>): more conjunctions	299
13.11	Conjunctions that need the subjunctive	300
13.12	Subjunctive in certain adjectival clauses	302
13.13	Noun clauses: که (<i>ke</i> , that / which) versus اینکه (<i>in-ke</i> , [the fact] that)	302
13.13.1	Other kinds of noun clauses	303
13.14	‘Too . . . to’ and ‘enough to’	304
13.15	Some idiomatic usages of exclamative <i>che</i>	305
13.16	Impersonal	306
13.16.1	Impersonal with آدم (<i>ādam</i>)	307
13.16.2	Entirely impersonal constructions	307
13.16.3	Some quasi-impersonal idioms	308
13.17	Indirect (or reported) speech	312
13.17.1	Reporting present tense statements	312
13.17.2	Reporting past tense statements	313
13.17.3	An understandable exception	313
13.17.4	Questions	315
13.17.5	Imperative and subjunctive, conditionals and wishes	315
13.17.6	Statements understood and treated as reported speech	316
13.17.7	<i>Implied</i> reported speech	317
13.17.8	Subject: keep it or drop it?	317

13.17.9	How to translate certain tenses used in indirect speech?	317
13.17.10	Some examples of longer sentences with multiple verbs, or reporting reported speech	318
13.18	Past participle replacing a finite verb	319
13.19	Deleting a similar verb	320
13.20	Redundancy at the service of clarity	321
Chapter 14 Punctuation		323
14.1	Hyphenated words; word breaks; spaces	323
14.2	Periods and commas	324
14.3	Quotation marks; direct speech	325
14.4	Question marks	326
14.5	Colons, semicolons and other punctuation marks	326
Chapter 15 Colloquial Persian and polite Persian		327
15.1	Colloquial Persian (or Tehrani accent)	327
15.1.1	From standard to Tehrani – some of the changes in pronunciation	328
15.1.2	Alterations and contractions in verbs	332
15.1.3	The special case of the present perfect tense	333
15.1.4	Prepositions	334
15.2	Language of politeness and courtesy	335
15.2.1	Plural means polite	335
15.2.2	فرمودن (<i>farmudan</i>)	335
15.2.3	عرض کردن (<i>arz kardan</i>) versus فرمودن (<i>farmudan</i>)	337
15.2.3.1	عرضه (<i>arze</i>)	339
Chapter 16 Contemporary remnants of archaic features		340
16.1	The conditional / habitual <i>-i</i> suffix	341
16.2	The prohibitive <i>ma</i> -prefix	341
16.3	Verbs and the <i>mi-</i> / <i>be-</i> prefixes	342
16.4	The fate of <i>rā</i>	343
16.5	آن (<i>ān-e</i>) or آن از (<i>az ān-e</i>) = ‘that of’	344
16.6	Contractions	344
16.7	Comparison of adjectives – a few exceptions	345
16.8	The verb بودن (‘to be’)	345

Chapter 17 ‘Good’ and ‘bad’ Persian?	346
17.1 Administrative / journalistic Persian	346
17.2 Persian purists and what they hate most	348
17.3 Common mistakes among learners of Persian	348
17.4 The words <i>fārs – fārsi – iran – irani</i>	350
Chapter 18 Arabic to Persian – Arabic in Persian	352
18.1 Change of sounds and / or spelling from Arabic to Persian	352
18.2 Arabic in Persian	354
Chapter 19 Glossary of grammatical terms	357
Index	371

Preface

Designed as a reference grammar book, *Persian: A Comprehensive Grammar* will cover everything about the grammar of Contemporary Persian as it is used now in present-day Iran, with full and clear explanations accessible to as wide an audience as possible, irrespective of level and without requiring a thorough understanding of a particular linguistic school or approach. Those who turn to this book as their Persian grammar reference guide want to learn, or just be reminded of, how a certain grammatical structure is used, and they will find the answer through lucid explanations and ample examples that show all the fine differences in usage.

A complete list of Persian simple verbs (that includes compounds with prefixes as well as causative forms), with present stem of verbs entered separately on the list, and thorough alphabetic lists of Persian prefixes and suffixes, make this book unique and invaluable as a reference book.

The focus of attention throughout the book, however, will be on understanding the structures of a living language as used by contemporary native speakers.

To make the book still more accessible and to relieve readers of the trouble of having to check a dictionary as well, all Persian examples (written in Persian alphabet) are followed by transcriptions as well as translations into English.

This book is greatly indebted to the two volumes *Basic Persian: A Grammar and Workbook* and *Intermediate Persian: A Grammar and Workbook* that Hayedeh Torabi and I wrote and published several years ago (Routledge, 2012 and 2013).

I also have to thank all the esteemed colleagues whose works I have had to consult and learn from. My especial thanks go here to my long-time colleague Professor John Perry (University of Chicago).

Preface

Allow me to extend my thanks also to all my students of so many years, whose intelligent and often challenging questions have always helped me find better ways of explaining different topics.

Last but not least, I need to thank the great team of editors at Routledge for their patience, expertise and assistance.

Saeed Yousef
Chicago, Summer 2017

Abbreviations

adj. (adjective)

adv. (adverb)

col. (colloquial)

conj. (conjunction)

fem. (feminine)

form. (formal)

gr. (grammar)

imp. (imperative)

interj. (interjection)

intr. (intransitive)

lit. (literary or literally)

masc. (masculine)

n. (noun)

neg. (negative)

obs. (obsolete)

perf. (perfect)

pl. (plural)

poet. (poetical)

pr. (pronoun)

prep. (preposition)

pres. (present)

sg. (singular)

so. (someone)

sth. (something)

subj. (subjunctive)

temp. (temporal)

tr. (transitive)

wrt. (written)



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Introduction

Though using the Arabic script, Persian is an Indo-European language, one of the main languages in the Indo-Iranian branch of this large family, within which the Iranian or Iranic family of languages has further living cousins such as Pashto, Baluchi and Kurdish languages, while many others are now considered extinct.

The language we are calling Persian in this book is called Fārsi inside Iran, Dari in Afghanistan and Tajiki in Tajikistan – in the same way that German is called Deutsch by the Germans themselves. Politics has certainly played a role in adopting these different names, which even led to using the Cyrillic alphabet in Tajikistan. However, even though called by different names, the differences in vocabulary and pronunciation are not so significant to make mutual communication among Persian speakers in these countries impossible, and there is much less difference when it comes to formal, written Persian – which will be the focus of this book – and practically no difference in classical literature, which is shared by all varieties and dialects of Persian. Now the official language of Iran and Tajikistan and one of the two official languages of Afghanistan, Persian is known to and spoken by millions of others scattered in Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, even in China) as well as in Western diaspora (North America, Europe, Australia). And this is not to deny that there are different dialects of Persian, both inside Iran and in neighboring countries.

Persian may no more enjoy the previous status it had for many centuries as the *lingua franca* of vast regions from Anatolia (Ottoman Empire) to Bengal and parts of China, and as the language of poetry at courts, but it is still the language of Iran with about 80 million population (93% literacy in adult population) and at least 50 million more in neighboring countries and diaspora.

You may want to know to what extent Persian is close to its far cousins in the West, the European languages. You might find the following comparison of some basic words interesting, although the languages have developed in different ways in the thousands of years after their separation, and finding some similarities among contemporary words, however astonishing, is not what linguists really base their conclusions upon:

<i>English</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Italian</i>	<i>Persian</i>
two	zwei	deux	due	دو (<i>do</i>)
eight	acht	huit	otto	هشت (<i>hasht</i>)
nine	neun	neuf	nove	نه (<i>nob</i>)
father	Vater	père	padre	پدر (<i>pedar</i>)
mother	Mutter	mère	madre	مادر (<i>mādar</i>)
brother	Bruder	frère	fratello	برادر (<i>barādar</i>)
star	Stern	étoile	stella	ستاره (<i>setāre</i>)
moon	Mond	lune	luna	ماه (<i>māh</i>)
lip	Lippe	lèvre	labbro	لب (<i>lab</i>)
stone	Stein	pierre	pietra	سنگ (<i>sang</i>)
warm	warm	chaud	caldo	گرم (<i>garm</i>)
dark	dunkel	sombre	buio	تاریک (<i>tārik</i>)

Linguists refer to the language as *Modern Persian*, to distinguish it from its older, pre-Islamic stages, but it has changed very little after Islam, so it can be said to be an almost 1400-year old *modern* language. Earliest examples of poetry and prose from the 9th and 10th Centuries CE can still be read, understood and enjoyed by Iranians, in spite of some archaic features. This *Modern Persian* has been very simplified. No gender, and no declension of nouns and adjectives for different persons or cases. Verbs can be conjugated easily after learning one set of conjugational suffixes. And the stress is not a problem either: except in very rare cases, the stress falls on the last syllable (as in French).

In translations from Persian into English in this book, there being no gender in Persian, sometimes *he* has been used, sometimes *she* or *he / she / it*, but it could be either gender so far as the antecedent is not specified through proper nouns.

In most of the examples given throughout the book, a less formal, less literary language has been used; however, the spelling and pronunciation follows the ‘written’ (formal) standard, not the ‘spoken’ (Tehrani) version.

In transcriptions, the prefixes and suffixes have occasionally been hyphenated to ease distinguishing the different parts of the word, while in pronunciation they are usually pronounced together: *nām* is ‘name’ and ‘my name’ would be *nām-am* – but it is pronounced *nā.mam*. Occasionally in these transcriptions the syllabification (for the whole word or certain syllables) may have been observed, but very sparingly and only when it seemed to help the clarity in pronunciation.

Transcription

Vowels

a as *a* in *banner* *ā* as *a* in *bar*
e as *e* in *belly* *i* as *i* in *machine*
o as *o* in *border* *u* as *u* in *Lucy*

Diphthongs

ow as *ow* in *bowl* *ey* as *ey* in *prey*

Consonants

<i>b</i> as <i>b</i> in <i>boy</i>	<i>m</i> as <i>m</i> in <i>mouse</i>
<i>ch</i> as <i>ch</i> in <i>chair</i>	<i>n</i> as <i>n</i> in <i>nose</i>
<i>d</i> as <i>d</i> in <i>day</i>	<i>p</i> as <i>p</i> in <i>pen</i>
<i>f</i> as <i>f</i> in <i>fine</i>	<i>r</i> like <i>r</i> in Italian <i>Roma</i>
<i>g</i> as <i>g</i> in <i>goose</i>	<i>s</i> as <i>s</i> in <i>sun</i>
<i>gh</i> like <i>r</i> in French <i>Paris</i>	<i>sh</i> as <i>sh</i> in <i>shy</i>
<i>h</i> as <i>h</i> in <i>horse</i>	<i>t</i> as <i>t</i> in <i>toy</i>
<i>j</i> as <i>j</i> in <i>joy</i>	<i>v</i> as <i>v</i> in <i>vase</i>
<i>k</i> as <i>k</i> in <i>key</i>	<i>y</i> as <i>y</i> in <i>yes</i>
<i>kh</i> like <i>ch</i> in German <i>Achtung!</i>	<i>z</i> as <i>z</i> in <i>zoo</i>
<i>l</i> as <i>l</i> in <i>lamb</i>	<i>zh</i> like <i>j</i> in French <i>jour</i>

Note: The glottal stop will be shown by an apostrophe (but left out when in initial position).

Chapter 2

How Persian sounds and how it is written

This chapter provides the most basic information for those who probably are not familiar with the Persian alphabet or phonological system. Those who are familiar with this alphabet through other languages (like Arabic or Urdu) should still learn the differences, both in orthography and in pronunciation.

2.1 How Persian sounds: vowels, diphthongs and consonants

2.1.1 Vowels and diphthongs

A *vowel* is a sound produced in spoken language without the tongue touching the lips, the teeth or the roof of the mouth or causing any build-up of air pressure (as when you pronounce *sh*, which is not a vowel), and it is the sound needed to form a syllable: each vowel forms the peak of a syllable. And a *diphthong* ('two sounds'), also referred to as a 'gliding vowel,' is usually formed by a combination of two adjacent vowels.

English is a language with about 17 vowel sounds and 5 diphthongs. Persian has only 6 vowels and 2 diphthongs, not hard to produce for English speakers, because approximations can be found for most of them in English.

Contrary to Arabic vowels, the differences between the Persian vowels are qualitative, not just quantitative (i.e., their lengths), although you might find that many traditional grammar books, influenced by Arabic, wrongly divide them into 'short' and 'long' vowels – a distinction which is only relevant in scansion (and recitation) of poetry.

The first three vowels – the so-called 'short' ones – are usually not represented by a letter in writing, but that is only when they are in middle position. In initial, final and alone standing positions, they are represented by letters,

which are the same as those used for their so-called ‘long’ versions. These will be explained in Section 2.2 below.

Persian vowels are usually pronounced clearly, with no off-glide (which accompanies English vowels). The following are all the Persian vowels and diphthongs:

Vowels

- a* as *a* in *banner*
- e* as *e* in *belly*
- o* as *o* in *border* (no off-glide)
- ā* as *a* in *bar* if pronounced without rounding the lips – or in *father* pronounced with no off-glide
- u* as *u* in *Buddha* or *Lucy*. (In Persian, always similar to ‘-oo-’ in English *pool* with no off-glide.)
- i* as *i* in *boutique* or *machine*. (In Persian always similar to ‘-ee-’ or ‘-ea-’ in English *jeep* or *jean*.)

Diphthongs

- ow* as *ow* in *bowl*
- ey* as *ey* in *prey*

Sometimes the two less common diphthongs *āy* and *uy* are added to the list; on the other hand, it can also be argued that all these diphthongs in Persian are nothing but a vowel + the semi-consonantal / semi-vowel *w* or *y* (see Section 2.2).

2.1.2 Consonants

A *consonant* is a speech sound whose production involves a complete or partial closure of the vocal tract (usually by putting the tongue in different positions, based on which the sounds are categorized and named).

English has 24 or 25 consonants, more than it has letters to represent them, while the glottal stop is usually not counted as one. Persian has only 22 consonants (23 with the glottal stop), and that’s fewer than the number of letters that represent them (see Section 2.2 below). Most Persian consonants have close equivalents – if not total matches – in English. Each language has two or three consonants, however, that do not exist in the other or are rare: the English *th* (representing the two consonants θ [as in *thigh*] and δ [as in *thy*]) do not exist in Persian, nor does the nasal η [or the final *-ng*, as in *king*] in exactly the same form, and *w* is rare; on the other hand, the Persian *kh* and

gh are known in English mostly through other languages (*kb* in the German *Achtung* or *gh* in the French *Paris*), while the glottal stop, though used in English, is usually not found on the list of English consonants.

Compared to English, the pronunciation of consonants in Persian can generally be described as clear and firm. Table 2.1 shows all the Persian consonants (the list tries to follow the order of the English alphabet rather than the linguistic approach).

Table 2.1 Consonants

Persian consonant	English equivalent	Notes
<i>b</i>	<i>b</i> as in <i>bay</i>	
<i>ch</i>	<i>ch</i> as in <i>child</i>	
<i>d</i>	<i>d</i> as in <i>day</i>	A clear difference here: In Persian <i>dental</i> (the tongue touching the teeth), in English <i>alveolar</i> (the tongue touching the ridge above the upper teeth).
<i>f</i>	<i>f</i> as in <i>fire</i>	
<i>g</i>	<i>g</i> as in <i>goose</i>	
<i>gh</i>	<i>r</i> as in French <i>Paris</i> or <i>bon jour</i>	In different positions (initial, between vowels, etc.), the sound may slightly differ, especially in more colloquial Persian.
<i>h</i>	<i>h</i> as in <i>horse</i>	Though clearly articulated in formal Persian, in colloquial Persian, it is mostly articulated in the initial position only and tends to disappear in other positions (the previous vowel often pronounced a bit longer in such cases) or comes close to a glottal stop.
<i>j</i>	<i>j</i> as in <i>joy</i>	
<i>k</i>	<i>k</i> as in <i>key</i>	
<i>l</i>	<i>l</i> as in <i>lake</i>	More like <i>l</i> in Italian; more liquid than in English.
<i>m</i>	<i>m</i> as in <i>moon</i>	
<i>n</i>	<i>n</i> as in <i>name</i>	
<i>p</i>	<i>p</i> as in <i>post</i>	
<i>r</i>	<i>r</i> as in <i>room</i>	More like <i>r</i> in Italian <i>Roma</i> , pronounced with a trill.
<i>s</i>	<i>s</i> as in <i>sun</i>	
<i>sh</i>	<i>sh</i> as in <i>shine</i>	
<i>t</i>	<i>t</i> as in <i>toy</i>	
<i>v</i>	<i>v</i> as in <i>valley</i>	

<i>Persian consonant</i>	<i>English equivalent</i>	<i>Notes</i>
(<i>w</i>)	<i>w</i> as in <i>way</i>	Occurrence in Persian seldom; to be explained in Section 2.2 below.
<i>y</i>	<i>y</i> as in <i>yes</i>	(when <i>y</i> is a consonant)
<i>z</i>	<i>z</i> as in <i>zoo</i>	
<i>zh</i>	like <i>j</i> in French <i>jour</i> , or the sound made by <i>-su-</i> in <i>measure</i>	
<i>glottal stop</i> *		Needed to pronounce any initial vowel sound, sometimes in transition from one vowel to another.

* Glottal stops have a strong presence in Persian, as in many other languages (even some European), but in English, it has been softened to the degree that most phonologists have been reluctant to recognize it as a phoneme, which makes it hard to explain its existence where it does clearly occur. A glottal stop is normally what makes the pronunciation of an initial vowel or diphthong possible, but in some languages like Persian, it is used like other consonants in middle and final positions as well.

In English, when you shout at someone, ‘Out!’ you are pronouncing a glottal stop before the initial diphthong *ou*. Or you can clearly hear the glottal stop in the middle position when you say *uh-oh!*

In colloquial Persian, both the glottal stop and *h* tend to almost drop, especially in the final position, usually a lengthening of the previous vowel making up for their absence.

2.1.3 Syllabic structure

With *C* and *V* standing for *consonants* and *vowels*, the Persian syllable structure can be said to be based on one of these patterns:

- 1 CV (like *na*, ‘no’)
- 2 CVC (like *dar*, ‘door’)
- 3 CVCC (like *garm*, ‘warm’)

The initial *C* can be a glottal stop also, which, if ignored as in English, you might conclude that we have the patterns *V*, *VC* and *VCC* as well (as in ‘*u*, ‘he / she’; ‘*ān*, ‘that / it’; and ‘*asb*, ‘horse’).

Although you must be aware of the existence of such a glottal stop before any initial vowel, in this book, we will use the apostrophe (‘) to represent only the middle or final glottal stop; thus, you will henceforth see the above examples written as *u*, *ān* and *asb*, without the apostrophe.

A major difference between Persian and English syllabic structures, which becomes obvious after you observe the above patterns, is that a Persian syllable cannot have more than one initial consonant. When pronouncing a loan word from European languages or a European name with two or more initial consonants, an Iranian would normally add a vowel (often *e*) between the consonants, or before the first one if it happens to be an *s* sound: the words *class* and *gram* would thus be pronounced as *kelās* and *gerām*, words like *standard* and *Stalin* as *estāndārd* and *estālīn*. (Interestingly, the original Persian word for *star* is *setāre*.)

Most Persian words are quite easy to pronounce. However, a few of the final consonant clusters possible in Persian are not common in modern English, like *-sh + t* or *-kh + t*, as in *dasht* (plain), *zesht* (ugly), *mosht* (fist), *chāsht* (breakfast), *sakht* (hard), etc.

A few of these combinations are not just uncommon, but even hard to pronounce in English, like those having *h, l, n, r, v, gh, kh* or *sh* as the second / final consonant, like:

- *abr* (cloud), *babr* (tiger), *jabr* (algebra), *estakhr* (pool), *zebr* (rough), *omr* (life), *asr* (late afternoon), *gheshr* (layer), *oshr* (1/10th), *hafr* (digging);
- *shekl* (form), *ghabl* (before), *asl* (origin), *mesl* (similar), *fazl* (superiority);
- *sobh* (morning), *ghobb* (awkwardness), *madh* (praise), *tarh* (pattern);
- *dalv* (pail), *ozv* (member), *mahv* (erasure);
- *eshgh* (love), *bargh* (lightning / electricity), *shargh* (east);
- *maskh* (metamorphosis), *faskh* (cancelation), *talkh* (bitter), *sorkh* (red);
- *amn* (safe), *zemn* (meantime), *dafn* (burial); and
- *pakhsh* (distribution), *banafsh* (violet [color]), *kafsh* (shoe).

In these cases, you should resist the temptation of adding a vowel or semi-vowel between the two final consonants. The trick here for Persian speakers is that they pronounce the previous vowel in such cases a little longer to make room for pronouncing the two consonants together without the need to add a vowel, and that is what you should do.

2.1.4 Stress

Lexical stress, or the relative emphasis given to a certain syllable in a multi-syllable word, is quite straightforward in Persian – more like French in this regard than English. The final syllable bears the stress in all nouns and adjectives, the latter group functioning as adverbs also – and this

constitutes in fact the vast majority of all words that exist in the language: *pedár* (father), *ābí* (blue), *āhesté* (slow / slowly). This will be true of both simple words and compound words like *pedar-bozórg* (grandfather) or *ābi-ráng* (of blue color).

With prefixes or suffixes that produce new independent words, the stress remains on – or shifts to the new – final syllable: *pedarí* (fatherhood). This is true of plural suffixes also: *pedarhā* or *pedarān* (fathers). On the contrary, definite or indefinite / relative suffixes, possessive suffixes, conjugational suffixes and the verbal copula (suffixed form of the verb ‘to be’), do not affect the original stress and lead to no shift of stress, and nor does the connecting *ezāfe* (‘-e’). Examples: *pedári* (a father), *pedárat* (your father), *pedárand* (they are fathers), *pedár-e in bachche* (this child’s father) and so on.

In verbs, usually the last syllable (of the main verb) before the conjugational suffixes is stressed; in past participles (used to conjugate perfect tenses), their last syllable is stressed. However, the progressive *mi*-prefix, where present, would take the main stress, and in all negative verbs, the negative prefix would steal that stress even from *mi*-. Examples with *raftan* (to go): *ráftam* (I went), *ná-raftam* (I didn’t go), *rafté budam* (I had gone), *mí-raftam* (I was going), *né-mi-raftam* (I wasn’t going).

In simple or compound words, the stress doesn’t usually shift to another syllable, except very rarely for rhetoric purposes, like when contrasting two things and dropping words that mean ‘but’ or ‘whereas’ – and even in these cases, the inherently stressed syllable would still maintain a secondary stress while losing the primary one. For instance, usually *zanbúr* (bee / wasp) and *magás* (fly) with final stress, but a shift of stress is possible in the following sentence to emphasize the difference between the two insects: *Zánbur donbál-e gol ast, mágas donbál-e chiz-há-ye digár ast* (A bee is after flowers, [whereas] a fly is after other things.).

In the following chapters, when discussing different word categories or tenses, there will be references to stress if it plays some role different from the general lines described here – as, for instance, when paying attention to stress would help avoid some spelling mistakes. Or we will learn in Chapter 3 on nouns that there is a shift of stress in *vocative case* (from final to initial): usually *Bahmán* (a boy’s name), but when you call him: *Báhman!* (See Section 3.6.)

See also the role of stress in colloquial Persian (Chapter 15, especially Section 15.1.3).

2.2 How Persian is written: the alphabet

2.2.1 General remarks

We know that Persian is an Indo-European language. Before Islam, several writing systems had been adopted and developed in Iran (or Persia), starting with a semi-alphabetic cuneiform script around 525 BC for Old Persian; then there was the Pahlavi script (derived from Aramaic) for Middle Iranian Languages, parallel to which Avestan script was also used (mostly for religious texts).

After the Muslim conquest of Persia in 644 AD, the Arabic alphabet was adopted – and it is still being used. This was accompanied by an influx of Arabic words comparable to what happened to Old English after the Norman Conquest of 1066. The alphabet was slightly modified, however, by adding four letters to represent *p*, *ch*, *zh* and *g* – sounds that do not exist in Arabic. On the other hand, some letters representing sounds particular to Arabic lost their distinct articulations in a process of assimilation. These letters are still used when writing certain words borrowed from Arabic, while the corresponding articulation has not been borrowed and the pronunciation has been ‘Persianized.’

Persian, or Perso-Arabic script, is written cursively (or *joined up*), which means that usually all or most of the letters in a word are connected to each other. Words are written from right to left (unlike numbers, always written from left to right), usually without taking the pen from the paper, and dots and strokes (if needed) are added after the whole word has been written. (For numbers see Chapter 8.)

It is true that the shape of a letter changes depending on its position (initial, middle, final or alone), but this does not mean that one has to learn 128 different shapes for the 32 letters of the alphabet. If you have to learn 52 shapes for English (for the two sets of small and capital letters used in print, and we don’t count here the cursive shapes used in handwriting), for Persian, the number is around 60 (see Table 2.2).

2.2.2 All the letters of the alphabet in their standard order

Table 2.2 lists all letters in their alphabetical order with their names, sounds and shapes in different positions. The first letter occupies the two rows #1-a and #1-b, as it is treated in Persian dictionaries, entries with initial *ā* preceding

Table 2.2 The alphabet: names, sounds and shapes

Name of letter (as pronounced in Persian)	Sound	Alone	Final	Middle	Initial	Letters similar in sound from
1-a. ā (or ā-ye bā-kolāh, alef- madd, alef-e mamduḍ)	Carrier for the glottal stop for ā in initial position (initial in relation to a syllable, not necessarily to the whole word) (see Section 2.2.10.)	آ	آ	آ	آ	As carrier of glottal stop, #21 (ع [eyn]) and #33 (<i>hamze</i>)
1-b. alef	Carrier for the glottal stop for all vowels (except for initial ā, mentioned above) and diphthongs in initial position (see Section 2.2.8.)	ا	ا	ا	ا	As carrier of glottal stop, #21 (ع [eyn]) and #33 (<i>hamze</i>)
2. be	<i>b</i> as in <i>boy</i>	ب	ب	ب	ب	↔
3. pe	<i>p</i> as in <i>post</i>	پ	پ	پ	پ	↔
4. te	<i>t</i> as in <i>toy</i>	ت	ت	ت	ت	↔
5. se	<i>s</i> as in <i>sun</i>	ث	ث	ث	ث	↔
6. jim	<i>j</i> as in <i>joy</i>	ج	ج	ج	ج	↔
7. che	<i>ch</i> as in <i>child</i>	چ	چ	چ	چ	↔
8. he	<i>h</i> as in <i>horse</i>	ح	ح	ح	ح	↔
9. khe	like <i>ch</i> in German <i>Achtung!</i>	خ	خ	خ	خ	↔
10. dāl	<i>d</i> as in <i>day</i>	د	د	د	د	↔
11. zāl	<i>z</i> as in <i>zoo</i>	ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	↔
12. re	<i>r</i> as in <i>room</i> (more like <i>r</i> in Italian <i>Roma</i>)	ر	ر	ر	ر	↔

(Continued)

Table 2.2 (Continued)

Name of letter (as pronounced in Persian)	Sound	Alone	Final	Middle	Initial	Letters similar in sound	Connects from
13. ze	z as in zoo	ز	ز	ز	ز	#11, #18, #20	→
14. zhe	like j in French <i>jour</i>	ژ	ژ	ژ	ژ		→
15. sin	s as in <i>sun</i>	س	س	س	س	#5, #17	↔
16. shin	sh as in <i>shime</i>	ش	ش	ش	ش		↔
17. sād	s as in <i>sun</i>	ص	ص	ص	ص	#5, #15	↔
18. zād	z as in zoo	ض	ض	ض	ض	#11, #13, #20	↔
19. tā	t as in <i>toy</i>	ط	ط	ط	ط	#4	↔
20. zā	z as in zoo	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	#11, #13, #18	↔
21. eyn	(glottal stop); see Section 2.2.8	ع	ع	ع	ع	As carrier of glottal stop, #1 ([alef]) and <i>hamze</i>	↔
22. gheyn	like r in French words <i>Paris</i> or <i>bon jour</i>	غ	غ	غ	غ	#24	↔
23. fe	f as in <i>fire</i>	ف	ف	ف	ف		↔
24. ghāf	like r in French words <i>Paris</i> or <i>bon jour</i>	ق	ق	ق	ق	#22	↔
25. kāf	k as in <i>key</i>	ک	ک	ک	ک		↔
26. gāf	g as in <i>goose</i>	گ	گ	گ	گ		↔
27. lām	l as in <i>lake</i>	ل	ل	ل	ل		↔
28. mim	m as in <i>moon</i>	م	م	م	م		↔

(Continued)

Name of letter (as pronounced in Persian)	Sound	Alone	Final	Middle	Initial	Letters similar in sound	Connects from
29. nun	<i>n</i> as in <i>name</i>	ن	ن	ن	ن		↔
30. vāv	<i>v</i> as in <i>valley</i> ; see also Section 2.2.10 for its functions as vowel (<i>u</i> or <i>o</i>) and diphthong (<i>ou</i>)	و	و	و	و		→
31. he	<i>h</i> as in <i>horse</i> (<i>as consonant</i>); see also Section 2.2.10 for its functions as vowel (final <i>a</i> or <i>e</i>)	ه	ه	ه	ه	#8	↔ (as consonant) or → (when final vowel) ↔
32. ye	<i>y</i> as in <i>yes</i> (<i>as consonant</i>); see also Section 2.2.10 for its functions as vowel (<i>i</i> as in <i>machine</i>) and diphthong (<i>ey</i> as in <i>prey</i>)	ی	ی	ی	ی		
(33) <i>hamze</i>	a glottal stop	ء آ ؤ (ء only when citing an Arabic phrase)	ء آ ؤ	ء آ ؤ	ء (same as #1)	#1, #21	↔ or → (depending on the letter with which it is used)

other entries with *alef. Hamze* (the *glottal stop*) is usually not treated as a separate letter in dictionaries or elsewhere, but it has been added here at the end of the list for more ease. Some notes and observations or comparisons will follow Table 2.2.

The right column shows whether the letter connects from both sides (↔) or only from right (→). The second column from right shows which letters are similar in sound but are written differently (only the numbers mentioned). Bold numbers refer to the letter more commonly used for the sound. (See also Tables 2.1–2.4.)

As a closer look at Table 2.2 will show, most of the letters are grouped in groups of two to four letters that are similar in shape, their only difference being the number or position of dots (or strokes, in one case). If you consider the basic shapes only (without the dots or strokes), there are only 34 basic shapes to learn.

- (a) There are 9 letters that only have one shape in all positions (right to left):

اد ذ ر ز ژ ط ظ و

Of these 9 letters, only ط and ظ connect from both sides; the rest are the so-called ‘non-connectors’ that do not connect from the left. After these non-connectors, if they are in the middle of a word, you always have a new start and the next letter should be written in its ‘initial’ form (or the ‘alone’ form if it happens to be the last letter).

- (b) There are 20 letters with two shapes each; if we consider the basic shapes only, these can be grouped in the following 11 groups (right to left):

ب / پ	ج / چ	س / ش	ص / ض	ف / ف	ق / ق	ک / گ	ل / ل	م / م	ن / ن	ی / ی
پ / پ	چ / چ	ش / ش	ض / ض			گ / گ				
ت / ت	ح / ح									
ث / ث	خ / خ									

- (c) There remain only three more letters: the ones with more than two shapes each (right to left):

Alone	Final	Middle	Initial	Letter
ع	ع	ع	ع	eyn ع
غ	غ	غ	غ	gheyn غ
ه	ه (or ه)	ه (or ه)	ه	he ه

- (d) Note that the letter *o* (#31) connects from both sides as consonant, but only from right when used as final vowel. Also note that the dotted *o* (= *ö*), used in Arabic for the *t* sound, is not used in Persian (see Chapter 18), being replaced by either *o* or final *e*.
- (e) The two letters representing the consonant *h* (#8 and #31) have the same name also in Persian. To distinguish one from the other, *ح* is called *he-ye jimi* (meaning ‘the *he* that looks like a *jim*’) or occasionally *he-ye hotti* (using the word *حُطَي* from the *Abjad* numeral system), while *ه* is called *he-ye do-cheshm* (meaning ‘the two-eyed *he*’) or occasionally *he-ye havvaz* (using the word *هَوَّز* from the same numeral system).
- (f) In the Romanization of Arabic names that use the letter *ق* (#24), Western tradition usually uses the letter *q* (as in *Iraq* or *Qatar*), to distinguish it from *غ* (#22) (*gh*, as in *Ghana* or *Maghreb*). In Persian, however, there being no difference in pronunciation between *ق* and *غ*, normally *gh* is used for both.
- (g) Final / alone form of *ی* is not dotted in Persian, not even in Arabic loan words: *ی*.
- (h) And finally you may have noticed that the letters, despite usually having different forms for different positions, have no ‘capital’ form, not even to mark the proper nouns or the beginning of sentences.

2.2.3 Letters with the same sound

As mentioned earlier (under Section 2.2.1), there are at least 9 letters that seem to have no use in Persian, since there are other letters that could be used for the same sounds. Each of these letters has its own distinct sound in Arabic. However, while used in Arabic loan words, their articulation has been Persianized. Their only benefit *in writing* could be in making it easier to distinguish certain words from each other or in showing how one word is related to some others of the same root. It is like *die* and *dye* in English: it is hard to say whether the two different spellings constitute a problem (in writing) or some help (in understanding). Table 2.3 is a list of these letters, the first row showing the letter more frequently used for the same sound.

2.2.4 What is meant by ‘position’ (initial, middle, etc.)?

The terms *initial* (or *beginning*), *middle*, *final* and *alone* (‘*alone-standing*’ or ‘*isolated*’) are sometimes used to denote the position of a letter in a word,

Table 2.3 Letters with the same sound

	Z	S	T	H	Gh	Glottal stop
Most common letter for the sound	ز	س	ت	ه	ق	ا / آ
Other letters sharing the sound	ذ ض ظ	ث ص	ط	ح	غ	ع also <i>hamze</i> ; see Section 2.2.8: أ / و / ع / ء

sometimes the position of a sound or phoneme in a syllable, and they are not always the same.

As was mentioned above, after letters that do not connect from the left, you always need the *initial* form of the next letter, not the *middle* one, and you will need the *alone* form if it is the last letter, not the *final* form. This can become a problem for only those letters that have more than two basic forms: see the different forms of the letters ع (*eyn*, #21), غ (*gheyn*, #22) and ه (*he*, #31) in Table 2.2.

When it comes to vowels, this becomes more important: an ‘initial’ vowel can be in the middle of a word – at the beginning of a new syllable. Here the proper syllabification would help. A middle *ā* is always written with *alef* (ا) without the *madd* (~) placed on it. But the word قرآن (the Quran) in its proper syllabification is pronounced *ghor.ʿān*, and you would need the initial *ā* at the beginning of the second syllable. It is with an eye to this that Section 2.2.5 should be studied.

2.2.5 How vowels and diphthongs are written

The scary notion that, in the Persian alphabet, vowels are not written, making reading of words difficult, is only true of 3 out of 32 positions – less than 10% (see the box in Table 2.4) – and that only if you decide not to write the diacritical marks for three of the vowels when in middle position (admittedly a common practice). It is true, however, that without those diacritical marks (even for *alef* in initial position), different readings would be possible, and you would need to know the word (through context) to read correctly.

To represent the glottal stop that precedes all vowels and diphthongs in initial position, Persian alphabet uses the letter *alef* (ا), while words starting with the letter *eyn* (ع) are also pronounced in the same way: the initial *glottal stop* + *a* in the Persian word *asb* (horse) written with *alef* (#1) and the Arabic

loan word *asr* (age or late afternoon) written with *eyn* (#21) are pronounced similarly, and the same is true of other vowels.

Initial *ā* would additionally need the diacritical sign ~ (called *madd*) above *alef*: *آ*. Writing the sign *madd* is not optional, and in these cases, it has to be written.

Now, a look at Table 2.4 will be helpful; more notes will follow. (See also Section 2.2.8 for more on glottal stop.)

The first three vowels (*a*, *e* and *o*) need a letter as carrier in the final position also. For final *a* and *e*, this letter is (the ‘silent’) *hé* (ه). For final *o*, the letter *vāv* (و) is used.

While there are only a few words in Persian that end in the vowels *-a* and *-o*, there are many that end in *-e*, but it is good to know that all the words with a final *-e* sound in contemporary Persian used to be pronounced in early modern Persian with final *-a*, as they are still pronounced in Afghanistan and Tajikistan, in some provinces in Iran and in Arabic. You have certainly noticed that many Persian girls’ names (even those originally from Arabic) are written in their Romanization with final *-eh*, while the same names are written with final *-a* elsewhere: *Fatemeh* versus *Fatima* or *Aliyeh* versus *Aliya*, etc.

The diacritical marks used here for diphthongs are optional and usually not written but sometimes helpful in writing to distinguish *i* from *ey* and *o* / *u* from *ow*. The traditionally used markings, based on Arabic pronunciation (*aw* اَو and *ay* اَي instead of *ow* اُو and *ey* اِی) are now much less common and seem outdated, because they do not reflect the standard modern Persian pronunciation, but they can still be found in some dictionaries or older grammar books.

Table 2.4 Vowels and diphthongs (right to left)

Alone	Final	Middle	Initial	
ه	ه	ـَ	آ	<i>a</i>
ه	ه	ـِ	اِ	<i>e</i>
و	و	ـُ	اُ	<i>o</i>
آ	ا	ا	آ	<i>ā</i>
او	و	و	اُو	<i>u</i>
ای	ی	ی	اِی	<i>i</i>
اُو	و	و	اُو	<i>ow</i>
اِی	ی	ی	اِی	<i>ey</i>

2.2.6 Writing and connecting *alef*

For writing *alef* alone, you start above the base line and come straight down to the base line. However, when writing *alef* after letters that connect from both sides, you normally don't take your pen off the paper and go from the base line straight up. That would not be the case, though, after the letter ل (*lām*): in this case, you take the pen off the paper after you have written your initial (or middle) *lām* and write the *alef* from above, normally with a slant not unlike a backslash, almost to connect to the base of *lām*, letting the *lām*'s hook remain to its left on the base line. The resulting shape, therefore, would not look like ل (similar to an English capital 'U'), but rather like: ل (in some fonts and styles looking like this: لا). Regardless of its shape, you should not forget that the last letter in this combination is *alef*, and *alef* would not connect from left.

Compare: لال (*lāl*, mute / dumb), ملل (*melal*, nations), ملال (*malāl*, boredom), قاب (*ghāb*, frame), قلب (*ghalb*, heart), انقلاب (*enghelāb*, revolution).

2.2.7 The Arabic 'limited' (مقصوره) *alef*

In Chapter 18 (on Arabic in Persian), there will be a more detailed discussion of *alef-e maghsure* (in proper Arabic, ألف مقصورة, *alif maqṣūrah*). Here, with the spelling of vowels just covered, suffice it to say that, in a very limited number of loan words from Arabic – some proper names and a few adverbs – , the final *ā* is written with the letter ع (used normally for *i*), occasionally with a 'shortened' *alef* (similar to an apostrophe: ') put above the ع to help the pronunciation. In recent decades more and more Iranians have been writing such words with a proper *alef* in an attempt of 'Persianization' and / or to avoid complications. Occasionally this deleted or 'limited' *ā* is in the middle of the word – in Arabic sometimes with the letter و (*vāv*). Here are a few examples, written (from left to right) with *alef-e maghsure* marked, then without the mark, and finally the more recent Persianized version (pronunciation remains the same); the most common current spelling appears in bold:

عيسا عيسى (isā, Jesus), عيسا عيسى

موسا موسى (musā, Moses), موسا موسى

اسماعيل اسمعيل (esmā'il, Ishmael, sometimes taken to be Samuel), اسمعيل اسمعيل

حتى حتى (hattā, [adv.] even), حتى حتى (see Section 2.2.11 for the *tashdid* sign)

زكات زكوة (zakāt, Islamic alms tax), زكات زكوة

2.2.8 Hamze and the glottal stop in Persian

As already mentioned, in this book, an apostrophe sign is used for glottal stop, but no sign is used when the glottal stop is in the initial position, i.e., words that begin with a vowel.

The most common sign / letter used in Persian to represent the glottal stop is ء, called همزه (*hamze*), a sign resembling the initial letter *eyn* (= ع) – which seems a clever choice, considering the phonological similarities, even more in Persian than in original Arabic: *hamze* and *eyn* have an identical sound in Persian as glottal stop. Unlike *eyn*, however, *hamze* is not treated as a separate letter, and in Persian, it is never in initial position (where *alef* is usually used) – which means that in dictionaries also there is no separate entry for *hamze*. In words of Arabic origin, it is usually combined (as a diacritical mark) with the three letters representing the so-called ‘long’ vowels:

أ (usually preceded by *a*) = ء + ا

ؤ (usually preceded by *o* or *u*) = ء + و

ئ = ع + ء (in which case ي will lose its dots and is written as ئ) – Note that the Arabic version اِ is not common in Persian.

Of these three, the last one (ئ) is the one preferred in contemporary Persian, sometimes replacing أ in middle position, and it is the one used for Persian or non-Arabic words also in middle position when a glide is needed between two vowels, although a recent tendency prefers to replace *hamze* in such cases by a simple ع whenever possible. Examples: هاوایی or هاوایی (hāvā'i, Hawaii), تئاتر (te'ātr, theater), سئول (se'ul, Seoul, capital of South Korea).

Some examples of glottal stops in different positions and followed by different vowels or diphthongs (the apostrophe sign not written when in initial position):

- Followed by *a*: اسب (*asb*, horse), عدل (*ādl*, justice); رفتهام (*raf.te'am*, I have gone), تأسف (*ta.'as.sof*, regret; see Section 2.2.11 for the *tashdid* sign), تعقل (*ta.'agh.ghol*, thought); مؤنث (*mo.'an.nas*, feminine)
- Followed by *e*: اسم (*esm*, name), علم (*elm*, knowledge); زائر (*zā.'er*, pilgrim), شاعر (*shā.'er*, poet); ارائه (*e.rā.'e*, presentation), اشاعه (*e.shā.'e*, distribution)
- Followed by *o*: اتاق (*o.tāgh*, room), علوم (*o.lum*, sciences); نئون (*ne.'on*, neon), تنعم (*ta.na.'om*, prosperity); مائو (*mā'o*, Mao)

- Followed by *ā*: آدم (*ādam*, Adam), عادت (*ādat*, habit); قرآن (*ghor.'ān*, the Quran), سعادت (*sa.'ā.dat*, happiness), سؤال (*so.'āl*, question), تئاتر (*te.'ātr*, theater); ساموآ (*sā.mo.'ā*, Samoa), رئا (*re.'ā*, Rhea [myth.]), دعا (*do.'ā*, prayer)
- Followed by *u*: او (*u*, he / she), عود (*ud*, oud [music]); سئول (*se.'ul*, Seoul), صعود (*so.'ud*, ascent), مسؤول (now more commonly written as مسئول, both pronounced *mas.'ul*, responsible); زائو (*za.'u*, woman at or immediately after childbirth)
- Followed by *i*: ايران (*i.rān*, Iran), عيسى (*i.sā*, Jesus); رفته‌ايم (*raf.te.'im*, we have gone), رئيس (*ra.'is*, boss), بعيد (*ba.'id*, unlikely); مرئي (*mar.'i*, visible), ساعي (*sa.'i*, industrious)
- Followed by *ow*: اوراق (*ow.rāgh*, pages, leaves), عورت (*ow.rat*, genitals); مدعو (*mad.'ow*, invited)
- Followed by *ey*: اي! (*ey*, hey [interjection]), عينك (*ey.nak*, eyeglasses); شعيب (*sho.'eyb*, the prophet Shuaib or Shu'ayb [= Jethro?])

Examples of middle or final glottal stop preceded by, but not followed by, a vowel or diphthong (in which case it would more easily be recognized as a phoneme):

- Preceded by *a*: تأثير (*ta'.sir*, effect, influence), معلوم (*ma'.lum*, known, obvious); منشأ (*man.sha'*, origin); منبع (*man.ba'*, source)
- Preceded by *e*: شعر (*she'r*, poetry); جامع (*jā.me'*, comprehensive)
- Preceded by *o*: رؤيا (*ro'.yā*, dream), معتاد (*mo'.tād*, addict); تلالؤ (*ta.la'.lo'*, the glittering), تنوع (*ta.nav.vo'*, variety)
- Preceded by *ā*: انشاء (*en.shā'*, composition)¹, وداع (*ve.dā'*, farewell)
- Preceded by *u*: سوء (*su'*, evil), ممنوع (*mam.nu'*, forbidden)
- Preceded by *i*: سريع (*sa.ri'*, fast)
- Preceded by *ow*: نوع (*now'*, kind, sort)
- Preceded by *ey*: شئيء (*shey'*, object, thing), بيع (*bey'*, purchase)

Glottal stops as the second consonant followed by no vowel include the following: شمع (*sham'*, candle), منع (*man'*, forbidding), زرع (*zar'*, planting, agriculture, also a unit of length [approx. 2 meters]).

2.2.9 Hamze and he (ه)

In Persian you will often see a *hamze* placed above a final *he*, resulting in the shape ^ه or, when joined, هـ. This is not a real *hamze* standing for glottal stop, but rather a small *ye* (ي) used as a glide when a final ه , in its function as a vowel (usually representing final -e), is followed by the connecting *ezāfe*.

Example: نامه (*nāme*, letter) → نامه (*nāme-ye*, letter of)

The recent tendency mentioned above, which tries to limit the use of *hamze* to Arabic words only, would prefer to use a whole ی here instead, i.e., نامه ی instead of نامه, although the latter is still the form more commonly used.

2.2.10 The four letters with different functions as both vowels and consonants: a review of ا, و, ه and ی

Alef and ā (آ / ا)

This letter is the carrier of the glottal stop required before all vowels and diphthongs when in initial position, but it is used in middle and final position also as a simple *ā*. To sum up:

- 1 آ (with *madd* above *alef*) always represents *ā* in *initial* position, usually at the beginning of a word, like آب (*āb*, water), but very rarely in other positions when at the beginning of a new syllable, like قرآن (*ghor.'ān*, the Quran).
- 2 ا represents *a*, *e* or *o* when in *initial* position (i.e., at the beginning of a syllable, which often means at the beginning of a word). Examples: ابر (*abr*, cloud), امروز (*em.ruz*, today), استان (*os.tān*, province, land).
- 3 As a glottal stop, ا precedes the letters و and ی in *initial* position to represent the vowels *u* and *i* or the diphthongs *ow* and *ey*. Examples: اوگاندا (*u.gān.dā*, Uganda), ایسلند (*is.land*, Iceland), اوضاع (*ow.zā'*, conditions), ای (*ey*, o!, hey!).
- 4 Most commonly, in *middle* and *final* positions (i.e., when *not* at the beginning of a syllable), ا simply represents the vowel *ā*, as in دانا (*dā.nā*, wise).
- 5 With a *hamze* above *alef* (آ), it is simply a glottal stop (usually after the vowel *a*) in *middle* and *final* positions, as in تأمین (*ta'.min*, securing) and مبدأ (*mab.da'*, beginning).

Vāv (و)

- 1 As a consonant, و has the sound *v* in all positions, as in ولرم (*ve.larm*, lukewarm), جوان (*ja.vān*, young), گاو (*gāv*, cow).
- 2 Though there is officially no *w* sound in Persian, this sound can usually be heard at the end of the diphthong *ow*, like نو (*now*, new). The conjunction و (*va*, and) is usually pronounced in colloquial Persian as a final -o attached to the previous word, روز و شب (*ruz va shab*, day and night) thus pronounced as *ru.zo shab*, but this final -o changes to *wo* after all the

- vowels (except after *i*): غذا و لباس (*gha.zā wo le.bās*, food and clothing), etc. Also occasionally when a final *u* vowel is followed by another vowel, as in certain formal plurals, like آهوان (*ā.hu.wān*, gazelles).
- 3 It can represent the vowel *u* in *middle* and *final* positions, as in دور (*dur*, far) or هلو (*ho.lu*, peach). When preceded by the *alef* that represents the glottal stop, it has the same function in *initial* position also; examples for this mentioned above under *alef*.
 - 4 It can represent the diphthong *ow* in *middle* and *final* positions, as in دوران (*dow.rān*, period) and نو (*now*, new). When preceded by the *alef* that represents the glottal stop, it has the same function in *initial* position also; for examples, see above under *alef*.
 - 5 It can represent the vowel *o* in *final* position, as in دو (*do*, two), but occasionally in *middle* position also, especially after the consonant *خ*, as in خوش (*khosh*, happy), or in foreign (i.e., *Western*) words, as in اتوبوس (*o.to.bus*, bus).
 - 6 With a *hamze* written above *vāv* (ؤ), it is simply a glottal stop in *middle* and *final* positions (see Section 2.2.8 for examples).
 - 7 Owing to certain changes in the phonetic system of the language in the course of its development, sometimes *واو معدوله* [*vā.ve ma'.du.le*] is written after the consonant *خ* [*kh*] but not pronounced at all, as in the word خواهر (*khā.har*, sister).
 - 8 As number 2 above shows (: آهوان, *ā.hu.wān*), sometimes *و* has a double function (: *u + w*), though written only once. (Comparable to the double functions of *ی*; see under *ye* below, #4.)

Hé (ه)

- 1 As a consonant, *ه* has the sound *h* in all positions: هوا (*ha.vā*, weather), دهان (*da.hān*, mouth), ده (*dah*, ten).
- 2 In *final* position (i.e., at the end of a syllable), it can represent the vowels *-a* (in only one word in contemporary Persian: the word نه [*na*, no]) or *-e* (very common), as in پسته (*pes.te*, pistachio). In this function, it is usually called های غیر ملفوظ (*hā-ye ghey.r-e mal.fuz*, the unpronounced *hé* or silent *hé*) and is never joined to the next letter if a suffix is added or in compound words.

Since the words followed by *ezāfe* (the enclitic particle *-e*) seem to end in the same vowel sound as the words ending in *silent hé*, sometimes causing spelling problems even for less careful Iranians, it would be helpful to remember that the *ezāfe* particle is never stressed, while the final *-e* sound,

which is part of the word, is stressed. Compare: دست (dās.te, hand of) versus دسته (das.té, handle) or پای (pā.ye, foot of) versus پایه (pā.yé, leg [of chair, etc.] or fundament).

3 For *hamze-and-he* (هَ , pronounced -e-ye), see Section 2.2.9 above.

Ye (ی)

- 1 As a consonant, ی has the sound y in all positions: یک (yek, one), سایه (sā.ye, shadow or shade), چای (chāy, tea).
- 2 It can represent the vowel i in *middle* and *final* positions, as in میز (miz, table) or پری (pari, fairy). It represents i in *initial* position also, but only when preceded by *alef*: این (in, this).
- 3 It can represent the diphthong ey in *middle* and *final* positions, as in میدان (mey.dān, square) or نی (ney, reed [flute]). It represents ey in *initial* position also, but only when preceded by *alef*, as in ای (ey, o!, hey!).
- 4 Sometimes, when functioning as i but followed by another vowel (in which case the glide y is usually required), ی can have a double function as i + y (though written only once), as in the word سیاه (si.yāh, black). (Sometimes you have the same double function in English in i as in *piano*.)
- 5 With a *hamze* written above ye (یَ), it is simply a glottal stop in *middle* and *final* positions (see Section 2.2.8 for examples).
- 6 In some Arabic loan words, a final ی is pronounced as ā; see the note on الف مقصوره (Section 2.2.7).

2.2.11 Three more signs: *tashdid*, *tanvin* and *sokun*

Tashdid and *tanvin* are used almost exclusively for borrowings from Arabic. *Tashdid* and *sokun* are rarely written at all, though recommended when they help the reader avoid a different and incorrect reading.

Tashdid is the sign ّ placed above a consonant (usually in middle position) to show that the consonant has to be pronounced twice. This occurs when a syllable ends in a consonantal sound and the next syllable begins with the same consonant: two adjacent similar consonants flanked on both sides by vowels (-VCCV-). In English words, such ‘double consonants’ are never pronounced twice, and they only help determine the pronunciation of the preceding vowel (compare *later* and *latter*, *fury* and *furry* or *diner* and *dinner*). To see how it would really sound in English if a consonant were to be pronounced twice, we would have to choose two words instead of one. Consider, for instance,

how you would pronounce the consonant *d* if you were to say ‘a sad day’ (as distinct from the double *d* in the middle of words like *saddle* or *sudden*).

Not many words with Persian origin need *tashdid*, one example being the word بچه , pronounced *bach-che*, ‘child.’ More examples: مؤثر (mo.as.ser, effective), قصه (ghes.se, story), تنفس (ta.naf.fos, breathing).

Sometimes *tashdid* is on a final consonant, where it is impossible to pronounce the consonant twice unless the word is followed by *ezāfe* or some suffix starting with a vowel. ظن (zan[n], suspicion) is pronounced in the same way as زن (zan, woman), the difference becoming clear when you add *ezāfe*: ظن من (zan.ne man, my suspicion) versus زن من (za.ne man, my wife).

Tanvin is the sign َ (similar to the diacritical sign for the vowel *a*, but written twice). It is only used in final position and in borrowings from Arabic (not recommended for non-Arabic words, though occasionally used), and even in those cases, Persian would prefer to use it only above the letter *alef*. Then that *alef* would not be pronounced as *-ā* as one would expect, but as *-an*. Its function is changing (Arabic) nouns to adverbs.

Examples: نسبت (nes.bat, relation) → نسبتاً (nes.ba.tan, relatively); or بعد (ba'd, after) → بعداً (ba'-dan, afterwards / later).

Sokun (or *jazm*) is the sign ْ placed on a consonant to show that it is not followed by a vowel (or ‘no vowel is attached to it’). This sign also is hardly ever written, unless it is found necessary to avoid misreading.

Example: سحر (sehr, magic), as distinguished from سحر (sa.har, dawn).

Note

- 1 The final glottal stop after *ā* is rarely pronounced in colloquial Persian, especially when it is written as *hamze*. That explains why, even in writing when an *ezāfe* is needed, the glide ی is used instead of *hamze*: انشای کلاس (en.shā.ye kelās, the class's composition) and اعضای انجمن (a'.zā.ye an.jo.man, the members of the association) are much more common than انشاء کلاس (en.shā.'e ke.lās) and اعضاء انجمن (a'.zā.'e an.jo.man).

Chapter 3

Nouns

Apart from the ‘real’ nouns – words referring to things, places, people or ideas – words belonging to other categories can often be used grammatically as nouns, as subjects or objects of verbs. Many adjectives can be nouns as well, and all of them become plural nouns by adding the plural suffixes. Also, certain verbal derivatives – most commonly the infinitive itself – can be used as nouns.

3.1 No gender

Persian is a language with no gender distinction other than the distinction indicated by lexical means like پدر (*pedar*, father) and مادر (*mādar*, mother) or اسبِ نر / نریان (*asb-e nar / nariyān*, ‘male horse’ or stallion) versus اسبِ ماده / مادبان (*asb-e māde / mādi yān*, ‘female horse’ or mare). As we shall see in Chapter 5 on pronouns, there is even no ‘he / she’ distinction in Persian.

As a result of this, nouns do not have gender-specific articles or endings and undergo no inflection in different cases. In this regard, even the borrowings from Arabic are usually treated – or are expected to be treated – like Persian words. Just as in English a few words have special feminine forms (actress, poetess, etc.), in Persian also, some borrowings from Arabic might use a feminine ending, which, in its ‘Persianized’ form, is a ‘silent *hé*’ (ه) added, pronounced as a final *-e* sound: شاعر (*shā'er*, poet), شاعره (*shā'ere*, poetess). There will be some more examples of these in Chapter 18 on Arabic in Persian.

3.2 Simple and compound nouns

Nouns can be a single word (simple) or a combination of simple noun + either prefixes / suffixes or other words (compound). The boundaries

between word categories can often be blurred in languages, and Persian is no exception. Many adjectives can be used as nouns also, just as almost all adjectives can be used as adverbs. When it comes, then, to the question of what words can be combined to make a compound noun (one grammar book lists 19 possible combinations), the easiest answer is that almost any combination is possible, sometimes independent words connected by the *ezāfe* (-e connector) or by the conjunction ‘and,’ sometimes without. Some compounds following the Arabic model have **ال** (pronounced -ol / -o) in the middle (see Chapter 18 also).

If one part is a prefix, a suffix or a verb stem, it is usually written joined; other combinations are also written joined, especially in compounds with a longer history of currency, but more recent terms that combine independent words are sometimes written separately. Some examples:

- پیشرفت (*pish-raft*, progress)
pish (adv.), ahead, before + *raft* → *raftan*, to go
- خوشحال (*khosh-hāl*, happy)
khosh (adj.), nice, happy + *hāl* (n.), mood
- باغبان (*bāgh-bān*, gardener)
bāgh (n.), garden + *bān* (suffix)
- سیب زمینی (*sib-zamini*, potato)
sib (n.), apple + adj. made from *zamin* (n.), earth + suffix
- تخم مرغ (*tokhm-e morgh*, egg)
tokhm (n.), egg + (the connector *ezāfe*) + *morgh* (n.), hen

3.3 Number

There is a universal plural ending in Persian that can be used for all the nouns, and there is another one with some limitations in usage, and then there are some Arabic plurals (although the Persian plural suffixes can be used for borrowings from Arabic as well and are much more common). (As for verbal agreement, see Section 11.4.)

3.3.1 The plural suffix ها (-hā)

A stressed -*hā* suffix (ها) is the universal and more common plural ending. This suffix can be added to all nouns, even to those for which other plural forms are also possible. It is usually written joined to the noun,

although the non-joined style is also becoming popular in more recent times. Examples:

زن ها (zan, woman), زن ها (mard-hā, men); زن ها (zan-hā, women)

If the noun ends in *silent hé* (= final -e), however, the -hā suffix is always written separately and never joined. Example:

خانه ها (khāne-hā, houses), خانه (khā.ne, house)

The word ده (deb, village), in contrast, ends in the consonantal ه (hé), which means that the plural -hā suffix is usually joined, although it *can* be written separately as well: ده ها (deh-hā, villages) or ده ها.

3.3.2 The plural suffix ان (-ān)

The other plural suffix ان (-ān) is always written joined and, unlike ها, has certain limitations in its usage. Most importantly:

- 1 It is used in formal / written Persian only; never in colloquial / spoken Persian. This means by extension that it is never attached to nouns that are used solely or predominantly in colloquial Persian.
- 2 It is used almost exclusively for animates, provided that they are not recent borrowings from foreign languages (like شوفر [shufer, driver, 'chauffeur'] or دکتر [doktor, doctor]) or are not too colloquial. Certain parts of body that are in pairs (not even all of those in pairs!) can take the -ān plural ending; see the note on *exceptions* that follows.

As already mentioned, this suffix is always joined in writing and pronounced together with the last sound of the noun.

Examples: زن ان (zan, woman), زنان ان (za.nān, women); مرد ان (mard, man), مردان ان (mar.dān, men).

Since this suffix starts with a vowel, it usually needs to be preceded by a glide if the noun also ends in a vowel:

- All nouns ending in vowel -ā use the glide ی (-y-): آقا (āghā, Mr., sir, gentleman) → آقایان (āghāyān).
- Nouns ending in vowel -u also often use the glide ی, especially when the syllable ending in -u is part of a verb stem, like دانشجو (dāneshju, a university student) → دانشجویان (dāneshjuyān, students). Some of these

nouns simply change the pronunciation of *u* to *uw* by making *u* shorter in pronunciation and without adding any letter in writing: آهو (*āhu*, gazelle) → آهوان (*āhuwān*, gazelles). Parts of body, when adding *-ān*, belong to this group: ابرو (*abru*, eyebrow) → ابروان (*abruwān*, eyebrows). (See also the note on the letter *vāv* under Section 2.2.10.)

- If ending in vowel *-i*, an additional *ی* is not written, but the glide *ی* is pronounced: ایرانی (*irāni*, Iranian) → ایرانیان (*irāniyān*, Iranians). (See also the note on the letter *ye* under Section 2.2.10.)
- In Persian nouns ending in the vowel *-e*, the consonant *g* (گ) – which is a remnant of the original *-ak* or *-ag* ending in old and early modern Persian – is usually used as the glide, and in writing the *silent hé* is dropped: پرنده (*parande*, bird) → پرندگان (*parandegān*, birds).
- No nouns ending in *-a* / *-o* to worry about!
- Nouns ending in diphthongs *-ow* and *-ey* need no glide because of the presence of *w* or *y* respectively. Examples: پیرو (*pey.row*, follower) → پیروان (*pey.ro.wān*, followers); نیک‌پی (*nik.pey*, auspicious) → نیک‌پیان (*nik.pe.yān*, auspicious ones).

Some exceptions

- Only a few nouns like خانم (*khānom*, lady, Mrs., woman) and بچه (*bach.che*, child), though referring to *animates*, form their plurals always with *-hā*: خانمها (*khānomhā*, ladies, women), بچه‌ها (*bach.chehā*, children). In the case of the latter, you may find بچگان in classical Persian poetry, but no longer in contemporary Persian.
- In more literary language, a few nouns that appear (at least in modern times!) to refer to *inanimates*, can have their plurals with *-ān* also:

درخت (*derakht*, tree) → درختها or درختان (*derakhthā* or *derakhtān*, trees)

ستاره (*setāre*, star) → ستاره‌ها or ستارگان (*setārehā* or *setāregān*, stars)

سخن (*sokhan*, talk) → سخن‌ها or سخنان (*sokhan-hā* or *sokhanān*, words or talks)

Of parts of body that are in pairs – lips, eyes, eyelashes (do we have to count?!), eyebrows, hands, arms, knees and fingers – can have their plural in both forms (while keeping in mind that the *-ān* version is always for written or literary Persian), but other parts like ears, feet, etc., though in pairs, use only *-hā*:

چشم (*cheshm*, eye) → چشمها or چشمان (*cheshmhā* or *cheshmān*, eyes)

دست (*dast*, hand) → دستها or دستان (*dasthā* or *dastān*, hands)

But

گوش (*gush*, ear) → always گوشها (*gushhā*, ears); or
پا (*pā*, foot) → always پاها (*pāhā*, feet)

- Also note that some nouns that normally don't form their plurals with *-ān* may be part of compound nouns for animates or used in a different sense allowing using *-ān*. If پا (*pā*, 'foot' or 'leg,' mentioned above) cannot have پایان (*pāyān*) as its plural,¹ some compounds referring to animates can: چهارپا (*chahārpā*, lit. 'four-legged,' usually used for livestock) can have its plural both ways (چهارپاها [*chahār-pāhā*] or چهارپایان [*chahār-pāyān*]), and so do words like هزارپا (*hezār-pā*, lit. 'thousand-legged,' a millipede) or گریزپا (*goriz-pā*, an elusive person). Or if the plural of سر (*sar*, head) is always سرها (*sarhā*), when the same word is used in phrases like 'heads of states,' on the contrary, the plural is *always* سران (*sarān*) and never with *-hā*.

3.3.3 Plural of compound nouns

When two or several words are treated as a single concept, the plural suffix is usually added to the last word; a different position can sometimes change the meaning. Compare:

تخته سیاهها (*takhte-siyāh-hā*, blackboards) versus تخته‌های سیاه (*takhte-hā-ye siyāh*, the black boards or planks)

آدم بزرگها (*ādam-bozorg-hā*, grown-ups) versus آدمهای بزرگ (*ādam-hā-ye bozorg*, great / important people)

With a number of compound nouns made from Arabic loan words, it is common in official and administrative language to use the Arabic (often broken) plural for the first noun. When using Persian plural for the same compounds, in many instances, either noun can become plural, while using the plural for the second noun makes it sound more casual. In the following examples, first the Arabic plural is mentioned, then the more formal Persian plural(s) and finally the most informal / casual one:

رئیس جمهور (*ra'is[e] jomhur*, president [of a country]), possible plurals:

رؤسای جمهور (*ro'asā-ye jomhur*) – common in formal Persian

رئیس جمهوران (*ra'is[e] jomhurān*) or رئیس‌ان جمهور (*ra'isān-e jomhur*) – formal, but not very common

رئیسهای جمهور (*ra'is-hā-ye jomhur*) – possible, but not common

رئیس جمهورها (*ra'is[e] jomhurhā*) – informal / casual

وکیل مدافع (*vakil modāfe'*, attorney), plurals:
 وکلای مدافع (*vokalā-ye modāfe'*) – common in formal Persian
 وکیل مدافعان (*vakil modāfe'ān*) or وکیلان مدافع (*vakilān-e modāfe'*) – formal; not very common
 وکیلهای مدافع (*vakilhā-ye modāfe'*) – common
 وکیل مدافعها (*vakil-modāfe'-hā*) – casual

3.3.4 Arabic plurals

Many of the Arabic loan words common in Persian have their Arabic plural forms, many of them broken plurals that follow certain patterns with changes in internal vowels (compare with English 'foot,' *pl.* 'feet'). However, you can usually use the Persian plural endings for these loan words. In Chapter 18 on Arabic in Persian, some of the most common patterns will be listed with examples, and this brief introduction is only about the different ways they are treated in Persian.

- (a) Many of the Arabic broken plurals are not common in Persian and are known only to highly educated people, though even avoided by them: شک (*shakk*, doubt) is a very common loan word, but its Arabic plural شکوک (*shokuk*) is not common in Persian.
- (b) Many more are common and usually learned in school, but are used more in formal, written Persian and avoided in informal Persian. For کتاب (*ketāb*, book) usually the Persian *-hā* is used; only in written Persian occasionally کتب (*kotob*) can be seen.
- (c) Occasionally only one of the possible Arabic plurals for a word becomes common in Persian, for instance دلائل (*dalā'el*) as plural for دلیل (*dalil*, reason) is very common, even in spoken Persian, whereas ادله (*adelle*) is never used in spoken Persian and only seldom in written Persian.
- (d) In some rare cases, the 'Arabic' plural common in Persian seems to be made up by Iranians and is not common in Arabic – not for that word and in that sense, at least. For instance, the word محاسن (*mahāsen*) may be used as the plural of حسن (*hosn*, merit), or مرده (*marade*) may wrongly be considered the plural of مرید (*morid*, disciple, follower), whereas they are plurals of other Arabic words.
- (e) In very few cases, the Persian plural is not common for certain Arabic words, and the Arabic plural is the only option. Examples:

شخص (*shakhs*, person), *pl.* اشخاص (*ashkhās*, persons, people)
 فرد (*fard*, individual), *pl.* افراد (*afrād*, individuals, people)

نفر (*nafar*, count word for people), *pl.* نفرات (*nafarāt*, a group of people)
 مال (*māl*, property), *pl.* اموال (*amvāl*, properties, belongings)
 اهل (*ahl*, native [of a place]), *pl.* اهالی (*ahāli*, residents or inhabitants)
 ادبی (*adabi*) means ‘literary’ and ادبیات (*adabiyyāt*, originally *pl.* of ادبیّه) means ‘literature’

- (f) Sometimes only the broken plural form of an Arabic noun is common in Persian and its singular is hardly known or only seldom used. Some examples:

اریاب (*arbāb*, boss, master), used in Persian as singular
 والدین (*vāledeyn*, parents)
 اولاد (*owlād*, children [in relation to parents])
 اراجیف (*arājif*, balderdash, baloney)
 نجوم (*nojum*, astrology), used in Persian as singular

- (g) Sometimes the Arabic loan word and its plural are treated in Persian as two unrelated words, or the Persian and Arabic plurals have different meanings and usages. Examples:

سبب (*sabab*, cause): سبب ها (*sabab-hā*) means ‘causes,’ but the Arabic plural اسباب (*asbāb*) means ‘furniture,’ ‘stuff,’ ‘tools,’ etc.
 حقّ (*hagh*, right [*n.*]): in socio-political contexts, حقوق (*hoghugh*) is the common plural and not حق ها (*hagh-hā*), as in ‘human rights’ (حقوق بشر, *hoghugh-e bashar*). Additionally, *hoghugh* means ‘salary’ also.
 انتخاب (*entekhāb*, selection or choice): however, انتخابات (*entekhābāt*) is used for *elections* and not انتخابها (*entekhāb-hā*), which means ‘selections’ or ‘choices.’
 اصلاح (*eslāh*, correction, improvement): here also, although the Persian *-hā* is possible, it is only *eslāhāt* that can be used in the sense of ‘(political) reforms.’
 دوا (*davā*, drug, medicine): دواها (*davā-hā*) means *drugs*, and the broken plural ادویه (*adviye*) means ‘spice(s).’
 مطبوع (*matbu*): common only as an adjective (‘pleasant’) while مطبوعات (*matbu’āt*) means ‘the press.’
 طرف (*taraf*): meaning *side*, طرفها (*taraf-hā*) means *sides* or *parties* while اطراف (*atrāf*) means ‘around’ or ‘surroundings.’
 مرسوم (*marsum*): is ‘custom’ or ‘customary,’ while the plural مراسم (*marāsem*) means ‘ceremony’ and is usually treated as singular, allowing the use of the double plural مراسمها (*marāsem-hā*, ceremonies).

- (h) As examples of two different Arabic plurals that have different meanings and usages, one can mention شهود (*shohud*, witnesses) and شواهد (*shavāhed*, clues), both plurals of the word شاهد (*shāhed*); also امور (*omur*, matters, affairs) and اوامر (*avāmer*, orders), plurals of the word امر (*amr*).
- (i) Of the Arabic plural patterns, one that often does not involve a change of internal sounds and only uses the suffix *-āt* has found more acceptance in Persian and has even been used sometimes for Persian words, a practice which is considered wrong by those who care for ‘good’ Persian. Some of the most common of such words – all of which can have their plurals with *-hā* also – are the words دهات (*dehāt*, villages); باغات (*baghāt*, gardens); پیشنهادات (*pishnahādāt*, proposals); گزارشات (*gozāreshāt*, reports); دستورات (*dasturāt*, orders); and فرمایشات (*farmāyeshāt*, sayings).

To these should be added a few words (mostly of Persian origin) that form their plural / collective in Persian by adding the *-jāt* suffix; examples:

سبزی (*sabzi*, vegetable) → سبزیجات (*sabzijāt*, vegetables)
 ترشی (*torshi*, pickles) → ترشیجات (*torshijāt*, pickles collectively)
 مربا (*morabbā*, jam) → مرباجات (*morabbājāt*, jams)
 طلا (*talā*, gold) → طلاجات (*talājāt*, goldware)
 کارخانه (*kārkhāne*, factory) → کارخانجات (*kārkhānejāt*, factories)

3.3.5 Arabic dual plurals

Only a few dual plurals from Arabic (ending in *-eyn* suffix) are common in Persian, mostly in formal or legal / administrative language. Examples:

والدین (*vāledeyn*, parents)
 زوجین (*zowjeyn*, spouses, husband-and-wife)
 طرفین (*tarafeyn*, the two sides [usually of a dispute])

A geographical name also: بین النهرین (*beynon.nahreyn*, Mesopotamia [*lit.* ‘between two rivers’]).

3.3.6 Double plurals

This happens usually when an Arabic (broken) plural is treated as singular in Persian – at least in one of its senses – or needs to convey a more collective,

all-embracing meaning. The word مراسم mentioned above (Section 3.3.4 / g) is one such example, with مراسم‌ها used for plural (ceremonies); or the word ارباب (*arbāb*, boss, master), also mentioned earlier (Section 3.3.4 / f), uses either *-hā* or *-ān* for plural. The word اسباب (*asbāb*, furniture, stuff, see Section 3.3.4 / g) uses *-hā* for plural, and for ادویه (*adviye*, spice, see Section 3.3.4 / g), the plural form ادویه‌جات (*adviyejāt*) is common. Similarly, حبوبات (*hobubāt*, grains) and جواهرات (*javāherāt*, jewelry) are double plurals.

3.3.7 Collective nouns

Collective nouns, which are singular in form but plural in meaning, are treated almost in the same way in Persian as in (British) English regarding using a singular or plural verb, depending on context and whether it is being seen as a whole mass (singular) or the members are seen individually (plural verb preferred). One major difference is probably the word خانواده (*khānevāde*, family) for which using a plural verb in Persian is much more common than singular when compared with English, and a singular verb would often sound awkward. Here are some examples:

With a singular verb

خانواده خیلی مهم است (*khānevāde kheyli mohem ast*, Family is very important.)

این خانواده دو‌یست سال بعد به هند مهاجرت می‌کند (*in khānevāde devist sal[e] ba'd be hend mohājerat mi-konad*, 200 years later, this family emigrates to India.)

With a plural verb

خانواده‌ام اینجا زندگی می‌کنند (*khānevāde-am injā zendegi mi-konand*, My family live [not lives!] here.)

خانواده‌ات به چه زبانی صحبت می‌کنند؟ (*khānevāde-at be che zabāni sobbat mi-konand?*, What language do [not does!] your family speak?)

3.4 Definite and indefinite

When a noun is in its absolute form (i.e., not accompanied by any determiners), it is only through context that its being definite or indefinite can be determined, which sometimes leads to different possible translations.

3.4.1 In the absence of determiners and modifiers

Consider this short sentence: اسب می‌دود (*asb mi-davad*, literally ‘horse runs’). This can be understood and translated as:

- (a) A horse runs. (In a *generic* sense.)
- (b) Horses run. (In a *general* sense; equal to *indefinite plural* in English.)

However, if you know that you are talking about some particular horse (and for some reason are not using a demonstrative adjective, the absence of which would make this a somewhat weird sentence):

- (c) The horse runs.

If you use plural in Persian (اسبها می‌دوند, *asbhā mi-davand*), you are much less likely to understand this as a general statement (b) and would normally translate it as definite: *The horses run.*

Note that here by merely changing the tense – to simple past tense, for instance: اسب دوید (*asb david*) – the options (a) and (b) would disappear and it can only be definite (c): *The horse ran.*

Also, using a modifier (as an adjective) would make it sound like definite, unless you add indefinite markers: a modifier would make you decide whether you want it to be understood as definite (no indicator needed if it is the subject) or indefinite (in which case you have to add the indefinite markers):

اسب سفید می‌دود (*asb-e sefid mi-davad*, The white horse runs / is running.)

More examples:

کتاب مفید است (*ketāb mofid ast*, lit. book-useful-is), meaning ‘A book is useful’ or ‘Books are useful,’ but also, when referring to a particular book, ‘The book is useful.’

کتاب خوب نیست (*ketāb khub nist*, lit. book-good-isn’t). Since we normally assume that books are good, this should be understood as *definite*: ‘The book is not good.’ However, this could be part of a longer statement, ‘A book is not good [for this purpose].’ Should that be the case, then it can also be translated as ‘A book is not / Books are not good.’

- کتاب قرمز است (*ketāb ghermez ast, lit. book-red-is*): ‘The book is red.’ – This cannot be a general statement.
- قلم می‌نویسد (*ghalam mi-nevisad, lit. pen-writes*): ‘A pen writes’ or ‘Pens write.’ – But also: ‘The pen writes.’
- قلم نمی‌نویسد (*ghalam nemi-nevisad, lit. pen-not-writes*): ‘The pen does not write.’ (This cannot be a general statement.)
- قلم روی صندلی است (*ghalam ru-ye sandali ast, lit. pen-on-chair-is*): we must be talking about a particular pen, and a particular chair too: ‘The pen is on the chair.’

3.4.2 Indefinite determiners

The indefinite determiner or marker in Persian is either *یک* (*yek*, one; for plural usually *چند*, *chand*, some) placed before the noun, or the unstressed suffix *ی* (*-i*) placed after, or a combination of both, and different levels of language (informal, formal, poetical) use them differently.

3.4.2.1 *یک* (*yek*, for sg.), *چند* (*chand*, for pl.)

Slightly more common in colloquial than in formal Persian, *yek* means ‘one’ and is therefore expected to be used for a *singular* indefinite noun only. For plural, a quantitative adjective like *چند* (*chand*, some or several; in colloquial *چند تا*, *chand.tā*) can be used. However, see (c) below for cases where colloquial Persian would allow using *یک* with plural nouns when the suffix *-i* is also present.

Yek (and *chand*) are placed before the noun and written separately; *chand* acts like a number, and the noun after it is always in singular form. For some other quantitative adjectives that can be used like *chand*, see Chapter 6 (Section 6.8); they include words like *بعضی* (*ba'zi*, some [of]) and *برخی* (*barkhi*, some [of]), both of which are followed by plural nouns, and *تعدادی* (*te'dādi*, a number [of]), used with singular nouns, and several more. Examples:

- یک اسب می‌دود* (*yek asb mi-davad*, A horse runs / is running.)
یک نفر غائب است (*yek nafar ghā'eb ast*, Someone [lit. one person] is absent.)
چند پرنده می‌بینم (*chand parande mi-binam*, I see some / several birds.)

A few, very common words can still be seen following the older style of being written joined (as a second, rather old-fashioned option): *یکروز* or,

more commonly, *یک روز* (*yek ruz*, one day, once); *یک شب* or, more commonly, *یک شب* (*yek shab*, one night).²

Usage note: When ‘some’ is used in the sense of ‘several,’ *chand* can be the Persian equivalent, but when ‘some’ is used in a more general sense (like ‘a certain group of’), words like *ba’zi* should be used in Persian; compare:

I bought some books: *چند کتاب خریدم* (*chand ketāb kharidam*)

Some people never grow up: *بعضی آدمها هرگز بزرگ نمی شوند* (*ba’zi ādam-hā hargez bozorg nemi-shavand*) – Don’t use *chand* here!

3.4.2.2 Unstressed suffix *ی (-i)*

The unstressed suffix *ی (-i)* can be added to the noun or to the adjective modifying the noun – to the last adjective if there are more than one. The noun can be singular or plural.

When added to the noun, no *ezāfe* (connecting the noun to the modifiers that may follow; see Chapter 4) is possible.

When an adjective is present, spoken / informal Persian *always* adds the suffix to the adjective, never to the noun, while in formal, written Persian both versions are acceptable. In contrast to colloquial Persian, if you move further in direction of literary, poetical language, you would be expected to add the suffix to the noun.

When there are two or more adjectives, in the colloquial version, the adjectives can be connected either by *ezāfe* (the connector *-e*) or *va* (‘and’), and the suffix *-i* is added to the last adjective. In the formal version, however, the adjectives can only be connected with *va*.

Examples:

Colloquial: *روز گرم زیبایی* (*ruz-e garm-e zibā’i*, a warm, beautiful day) or *روز گرم و زیبایی* (*ruz-e garm-o [= garm va] zibā’i*, a warm and beautiful day).

Formal: *روزی گرم و زیبا* (*ruzi garm-o [= garm va] zibā*, a warm and beautiful day). Note that here, because the *-i* is added to the noun and is thus placed between the noun and its adjective, the *ezāfe* that connects the noun to the adjective is dropped: no *ezāfe* after an indefinite *-i*!

In certain cases ‘formal’ option – adding *-i* to the noun instead of the adjective – would not be possible: With certain quantifiers that precede the noun, the

indefinite *-i* (if needed) is added to the adjective, if there is one, and not to the noun, even in formal Persian. These words include, but are not limited to, هر (*har*, every, each); چنین (*chenin*, such); هیچ (*hich*, no, not any); and چه (*che*, what). In the following examples, *-i* has been added to the noun when there is no adjective, but to the adjective as soon as there is one:

هر کتابی قیمتی دارد (*har ketābi gheymati dārad*, Every book has a price.)

But: هر کتاب خوبی قیمتی دارد (*... ketāb-e khubi ...*, Every good book has a price.)

چنین کتابی نخوانده بودم (*chenin ketābi na-khānde budam*, I had not read such a book.)

But: چنین کتاب خوبی نخوانده بودم (*... ketāb-e khubi ...*, I had not read such a good book.)

هیچ کتابی ندیدم (*hich ketābi na-didam*, I didn't see any book.)

But: هیچ کتاب جالبی ندیدم (*... ketāb-e jālebi ...*, I didn't see any interesting book.)

چه کتابی نوشته‌اید؟ (*che ketābi neveshte'id?*, What book have you written?)

But: چه کتاب دیگری نوشته‌اید؟ (*... ketāb-e digari ...*, What other book have you written?)

This suffix is usually written joined if the noun (or adjective) ends in a consonant:

زنی (*zani*, a woman);

زنی جوان (*zani javān*, a young woman) – the version used only in formal / written Persian – or

زن جوانی (*zan-e javā.ni*, same meaning) – the only version used in spoken / informal Persian, but common also in writing.

If the word (noun or adjective) ends in a vowel, a glide might be required, which sounds somewhere between a glottal stop and a y. The following list shows how this glide is normally written in the case of each vowel (or diphthong):

- *a*: no words in contemporary Persian except نه (*na*, no) and و (*va*, and)!
- *e*: نامه (*nāme*, letter) → نامه‌ای (*nāme'i*, a letter) – remember that the silent ◦ (*he*) that represents final *-e* is always written separately!
- *o*: رادیو (*rādiyo*, radio) → رادیویی or رادیوئی (*rādiyo'i*, a radio)³
- *ā*: پا (*pā*, foot) → پایی or پائی (*pā'i*, a foot)
- *u*: مو (*mu*, hair) → موئی or مویی (*mu'i*, a hair)

- *i*: بینی (*bini*, nose) → بینی‌ای or (old-fashioned) بینئی (*bini'i*, a nose)
- *ow* (no glide needed): راهرو (*rāh-row*, hallway) → راهروی (*rāh-rowi*, a hallway), although sometimes written as راهروئی
- *ey* (no glide needed in pronunciation): نی (*ney*, reed or flute) → نی‌ای or نیی / نیی (*neyi*, a reed or a flute)

Helpful notes

- Indefinite *-i* should not be used for general statements. For general statements in English you can say, for instance, ‘pens write’ or ‘a pen writes.’ To say the same in Persian, you would say قلم می‌نویسد (*ghalam mi-nevisad*), or occasionally یک قلم می‌نویسد (*yek ghalam mi-nevisad*), but never قلمی می‌نویسد (*ghalami mi-nevisad*) or یک قلمی می‌نویسد (*yek ghalami mi-nevisad*), which would mean ‘a certain pen is writing.’
- Indefinite *-i* should not be used when you have *noun + adjective* preceded by numbers (or by *chand*, several): چهار اتاق بزرگ (*chahār otāgh-e bozorg*, four large rooms) or چند کتاب خوب (*chand ketāb-e khub*, several good books).
- The indefinite *-i* can never have the *ezāfe* attached to it: it is never *-i-ye* when it is the unstressed indefinite *-i*.

3.4.2.3 Both indefinite markers combined

Now common only in spoken Persian, this mixed version of ‘*yek . . . + -i*’ is often avoided in more formal, written Persian. Since it is a feature of colloquial Persian, the suffix *-i* is never added to the noun, but rather to the adjective – to the last adjective if there is more than one. Though mostly used for singular nouns, sometimes *yek + a plural noun* is also used. The plural form “چند + ی” is also occasionally used (especially for time-related expressions), or even “یک چند + ی”, but not when the noun is modified by an adjective.

Examples:

یک گل (*yek goli*, a flower), یک گل‌هائی (*yek golhā'i*, some flowers),
 چند روزی (یک) (*[yek]*) *chand ruzi*, some / a few days
 یک گل‌های قشنگی (*yek gol-e ghashangi*, a pretty flower),
 (*yek golhā-ye ghashangi*, some pretty flowers)

3.4.2.4 Poetical or archaic usages

In contemporary Persian, یکی (*ye.ki*) with unstressed *-i* is a pronoun meaning ‘one’ or ‘someone,’ as in یکی دیگر (*yeki digar*, another one) or یکی در می‌زند

(*yeki dar mi-zanad*, someone is knocking at the door). But in classical texts of early modern Persian – some remnants still in contemporary poetry – it could be used as an indefinite marker. Compare different levels of language when saying ‘a man’ in Persian:

- یک مرد (*yek mard*) or مردی (*mar.di*) = common in colloquial as well as formal
- یک مردی (*yek mardī*) = only colloquial
- یکی مردی (*yeki mard*) or یکی مردی (*yeki mardī*) = only poetical, imitating archaic usage

3.4.2.5 Some other uses of the indefinite suffix -i

- (a) **To show insignificance:** This suffix can be added to a noun to refer to some small or insignificant amount or number; this is a meaning which is absent in *یک* (*yek*) when used alone for indefinite (not *yek* + *-i*). Very often – though not always – it is the non-verbal part of a compound verb to which this suffix is added. Compare the pairs of sentences in the following examples and see the change of meaning when the suffix is added:

به دخترم پول دادم که لباس بخرد (*be dokhtaram pul dādam ke lebās bekharad*, I gave [some] money to my daughter to buy clothes.)

به دخترم پولی دادم و به اداره رفتم (*be dokhtaram puli dādam va be edāre raftam*, I gave some [small amount of] money to my daughter and went to office.)

بعد از شنا نیم ساعت استراحت کردم (*ba'd az shenā nim sā'at esterāhat kardam*, I rested for half an hour after swimming.)

در آنجا استراحتی کردیم و نزدیک غروب برگشتیم (*dar ānjā esterāhati kardīm va nazdik-e ghorub bar-gashtīm*, We took a short rest there and returned close to sunset.)

از پنجره نگاه کردم (*az panjare negāh kardam*, I looked from the window.)

از پنجره نگاهی کردم (*az panjare negāhi kardam*, I threw a glance from the window.)

It can also be used to show indifference or carelessness, as when you do something in a slapdash fashion:

کفشی پوشیدم و از خانه بیرون دویدم (*kafshi pushidam va az khāne birun davidam*, I put on some shoes and ran out of the house.)

- (b) **Each / every:** Unstressed *-i* is also used in the sense of *every*, *each* or *per* (similar to *هر*, *har*):

روزی دو بار (*ruzi do bār*, twice a day) = هر روز دو بار (*har ruz do bār*) or
 دو بار در روز (*do bār dar ruz*, twice each day)
 هر متر هزار = (*metri hezār tumān*, 1000 Tumāns per meter) = هر متر هزار
 تومان (*har metr hezār tumān*, each meter 1000 Tumāns)

3.4.3 The definite determiner (DDO-marker)

Persian uses *l̄* (*rā*) as the definite enclitic particle, which will be called for ease the DDO-marker in this book, meaning Definite-Direct-Object-marker. This name helps you remember where you have to use *rā* and what the three conditions are, because in some cases using it is optional.

You always have to use *rā* if all of the following three conditions, for which the abbreviation *DDO* stands, are met:

- 1 There is an **object** in the sentence.
- 2 This object is a **direct** object.
- 3 This *direct object* is **definite**.

It is easier to find whether the first two conditions are met or not:

- **Object?** You must have a transitive verb: intransitive verbs do not have any object, so no *l̄* with intransitive verbs! (Only remember that in Persian, as in English, certain verbs can be both transitive and intransitive; the context should help here.)
- **Direct object?** Much easier to determine in Persian than in English, because all indirect objects are preceded by a preposition in Persian. Therefore, no *l̄* if the object is preceded by a preposition!
- **Definite?** This would be the trickier part. If you know that your *direct object* is *definite*, then you *have to* use *l̄*, and there is no way you can avoid it. But is it always easy to determine the *definiteness*? At least we know that it is definite when it is a proper noun, a pronoun (excluding objective *suffixes*), a noun modified by demonstrative or superlative adjectives, a noun which is part of a possessive construction – these are all definitely *definite*! If you do not have any of these clues and have doubts about the degree of definiteness, then you probably have the option of using *l̄* or not using it.

Position: This particle is placed immediately after the noun that it modifies, or after the last modifier of the object, whether an adjective or a possessive

pronoun and the like, and if there is additionally an indefinite marker present (most common in relative clauses), the DDO-marker will be placed after that, as the last member in the string of words attached to the noun:

آن دختر جوانی را که با مینا حرف می‌زند نمی‌شناسم
(ān dokhtar-e javāni rā ke bā minā harf mi-zanad nemi-shenāsam, I don't know that young girl who is talking to Mina.)

Note that placing *rā* after the whole relative clause is considered bad and careless Persian.

Write Separately: Unlike the indefinite *-i* suffix, the DDO-marker *rā* is now usually written separately, although it used to be written joined until about 100 years ago. *ما را* (*ma-rā*), a contraction of *من* (*man*, I or me) + *را*, is still quite often used in formal, written Persian, as well as *ترا* (*to-rā* = *تو* [*to*, thou] + *را*) and, in poetical language, *کرا* (*ke-rā* = *که* [*ke*, who?] + *را*).

Examples in which using *را* is obligatory:

A proper noun: *مینا را می‌بینم* (*minā rā mi-binam*, I see Mina.)

A pronoun: *تو را دیدم* (*to rā didam*, I saw you / thee.) – Note that here the pronoun *تو* has been used as the direct object; but if you use an objective suffix, no *را* is used: *دیدمت* (*didamat*, I saw you / thee.)

Noun modified by demonstrative adjective: *آن قلم را به من بده* (*ān ghalam rā be man bedeh*, Give me that pen.)

Noun modified by superlative adjective: *بهترین کفش را خرید* (*behtarīn kafsh rā kharid*, He / she bought the best shoes.)

Possessive: *سگمان را پیدا کردیم* (*sag-emān rā peydā kardim*, We found our dog.)

Possessive can be formed by using *ezāfe*. Compare: (a) *عکسی دیدم* (*aksi didam*, I saw a picture) versus (b) *عکس مردی را دیدم* (*aks-e mardī rā didam*, I saw a man's picture = I saw *the* picture of a man). In (a), *را* is not necessary, although it would not be wrong to use it (both definite and indefinite markers used, the meaning changing to 'I saw a certain picture'), but in (b) using *را* is obligatory.

Apart from the above cases, you should know that: *most* modified or plural nouns in the absence of indefinite determiners are understood as *definite*, like *کتاب ارزان* (*ketāb-e arzān*, the cheap book) or *کتابها* (*ketābhā*, the books).

When using *rā* for an indefinite object seems to be optional, you are much more likely to use it if the object is a person. Compare ‘a book’ and ‘a man’ in the following sentences:

روی زمین کتابی دیدم و آن را برداشتم (*ru-ye zamin ketābi didam va ān rā bar-dāshtam*, I saw a book on the ground [the floor] and picked it up.)
روی زمین مردی را دیدم ولی نزدیکش نرفتم (*ru-ye zamin mardī rā didam vali nazdikash na-raftam*, I saw a man on the ground [the floor] but did not go near him.)

In the latter sentence, using *rā* after *mardī* is optional, and you can drop it, but then you would be treating that man like some bag of potatoes (which is okay if that is really how you want to sound).

Another factor, which is related to both context and certain verbs: the nature of the action expressed by the verb plays a great role in making an object appear as definite or not. Consider the verb کشتن (*koshtan*, to kill). A butcher can say:

گوسفندی (را) کشتم و گوشتش را فروختم. (*gusfandi [rā] koshtam va gushtash rā forukhtam*, I killed / slaughtered a sheep and sold its meat.)

For the butcher, using *rā* after the ‘sheep’ is optional, because he is only doing what he usually does. Not so for you if for some reason you have to kill / slaughter a sheep: you would certainly need *rā* then, even if you are using the indefinite determiner as well. Killing a human being, fortunately, is never treated as something commonplace, even if it happens in battle, and you always use *rā*:

در جنگ سربازی را کشت و هرگز این را فراموش نکرد (*dar jang sarbāzi rā kosht va hargez in rā farāmush na-kard*, He killed a soldier in the war and never forgot it.)
خرسی از جنگل بیرون آمد و سگی را کشت (*khersi az jangal birun āmad va sagi rā kosht*, A bear came out of the woods and killed a dog.)

Certain verbs seem to need a definite object in all cases: due to the intensity of the action, an indefinite object without *rā* (which could sound ‘casual’) is hardly thinkable. Examples:

پسری را کتک زدند و فرار کردند (*pesari rā kotak zadand va farār kardand*, They beat up a boy and ran away.)

آن مرد سگی را از رودخانه نجات داد (*ān mard sagi rā az rud-khāne nejāt dād*, That man rescued a dog from the river.)
 آیا یک آپارتمان نو را به یک خانه قدیمی ترجیح نمی‌دهی؟ (*āyā yek āpārtēmān-e now rā be yek khāne-ye ghadimi tarjih nemi-dahi?*, Don't you prefer a new apartment to an old house?)

In the last example, the verb is ترجیح دادن (*tarjih dādan*, to prefer), and you can say من قهوه ترجیح می‌دهم (*man ghahve tarjih mi-daham*, I prefer coffee) without necessarily needing *را*, which would be optional, but as soon as you mention *to what* you prefer something, the intensity of the action increases and *را* would be unavoidable.

To learn more about *rā* in colloquial Persian and alternative colloquial markers, see Chapter 16; about some of the archaic usages of *rā*, see Chapter 17.

3.5 Diminutives

The diminutive form of nouns in Persian is obtained by adding suffixes, most commonly *-ak*, *-che*, *-e* and *-u*. They are meant essentially to convey smallness, which can entail contrasting associations of both pejoration and endearment. They are all stressed and written joined.

3.5.1 -ak

The most common and productive of these is *-ak*, which would require the glide ی (-y-) when added to nouns that end in a vowel. If the noun ends in *-e*, however, the silent ه (letter *he*) representing the vowel changes to گ (letter *gāf*). Occasionally a slight change of meaning appears which can even lead to new, independent words. Some examples:

دختر (*dokhtar*, girl) → دخترک (*dokhtarak*, small girl)
 مرد (*mard*, man) → مردک (*mardak*, the guy [derogatory])
 طفل (*tefl*, child [not very common]) → طفلک (*teflak*, poor thing [common; endearing])
 بچه (*bach.che*, child) → بچگک (*bach.chegak*, small child)
 عروس (*arus*, bride) → عروسک (*arusak*, a doll)
 پستان (*pestān*, breast) → پستانک (*pestānak*, [baby] pacifier)

In some dialects of colloquial Persian, sometimes the *-ak* becomes *-ake* by adding *-e*. In Tehrani dialect, مردک, which is already derogatory, becomes مرتیکه (*martike*), which is much worse and used in vulgar language (like زنیکه [*zanike*] used for a woman).

Sometimes the *-ak* suffix is added to comparative adjectives or adverbs, and sometimes the adjective / adverb is doubled, with *-ak* added to both or only to the second one:

زودترک (*zud-tar-ak*, a little earlier)

دیرترک (*dir-tar-ak*, a little later)

نرم نرمک / نرمک نرمک (*narm-narmak / narmak-narmak*, softly, slowly, little by little)

اندک اندک (*andak-andak*, little by little)

اندکک (*andak-ak*, just a little)

3.5.2 -che

Still productive, though to a much lesser extent, *-che* usually conveys smallness without positive or negative associations. Examples:

کتاب (*ketāb*, book) → کتابچه (*ketāb-che*, booklet)

باغ (*bāgh*, garden, orchard) → باغچه (*bāgh-che*, small garden or flower-bed)

دریا (*daryā*, sea) → دریاچه (*daryā-che*, lake)

کوی / کو (*ku / kuy*, street, alley [now less common]) → کوچه (*kuche*, small / narrow alley or lane [very common])

مو / مو (*mu / muy*, hair) → مویچه (*muy-che*) → مژه (*mozhe*, eyelash)

3.5.3 -e

As a diminutive suffix, this is no more productive, and it is more to be found in certain dialects, with derogatory associations.

When used in Tehrani accent (which has emerged as the standard colloquial), like پسره (*pesare*, the boy), it is hard to say whether it is the diminutive *-e* or the definite *-e* common in this accent. See Chapter 15 (Colloquial Persian) for more.

3.5.4 -u

This one, too, is no more productive; only in some southern dialects it is still common as a definite marker. Two remnants of the diminutive function which are still common in contemporary Persian:

گرد (*gerd*, round [*adj.*]) → گردو (*gerdu*, walnut)
یار (*yār*, friend [*poet.*]) → یارو (*yāru*, the guy [derogatory])

3.6 The vocative case

The vocative is the case when you call someone (a real person or a personified object), and in Persian it is simply obtained by a change of stress: the stress shifts from its normal, final position to the first syllable. Your friend's name is *ahmád* (احمد), but when you call him, you say *áhmád!* Or instead of *āghā-ye akbarí* (آقای اکبری, Mr. Akbari) you say, *ághā-ye akbari!*

Apart from this common and simple form, it is good to know about the following possible, but less common, affixes.

3.6.1 The pre-positioned *ey*

In more literary / poetical written Persian, there is the pre-positioned ای (*ey*, similar to 'hey!'), which is now written separately and no longer common in colloquial Persian except for praying or cursing (not when you simply call someone):

ای خدا! (*ey khodā*, O God!)
ای خدای بزرگ! (*ey khodā-ye bozorg*, O great God!)
ای مادر قحبه! (*ey mādar-ghahbe*, O you son of a whore!)

The archaic, now obsolete, pre-positioned ای (*ayā*, O!) is found only in texts of classical literature, as in this line by Saadi (pronounced *Sa'di*, 13th Century CE):

ای باد سحرگاهی! گر این شب روز می خواهی . . .
ayā bād-e sahar-gāhi, gar in shab ruz mi-khāhi, O breeze of Dawn! If you want this night to turn to day . . .)

In the same archaic usage, pre-positioned *الا* (*alā*) or *هالا* (*halā*) were also used, which could additionally mean ‘Beware!, Behold!, Ah!’ as in this line by Hāfez (14th Century CE):

الا ای طوطی گویای اسرار!
(*alā ey tuti-ye guyā-ye asrār*, O parrot that you reveal secrets!)

Just to call someone’s attention (with or without mentioning the name), there are other, not quite polite, interjections in colloquial Persian: *آی* (*āy*, which can also be a cry of pain), *هی* (*hey*), *های* (*hāy*), *آهای* (*āhāy*), *اوهوی* (*ohoy*).

An Arabic, similarly pre-positioned particle is *یا* (*yā*, O!), which is only used in prayers and fixed loan phrases from Arabic. The two most common in Persian are:

- *یا علی!* (*yā ali*, O Ali!), common to say when you are lifting something heavy and need to gather your strength, a battle cry of Shiites
- *یا لآ!* (*yāl.lā*, Quick!), originally *یا الله* (*yā al.lāh*, O Allah!)

3.6.2 The vocative suffix

In what now sounds as either archaic or poetical, the nouns in vocative case are occasionally suffixed by an unstressed *-ā* (and no change of stress). It can still be encountered in contemporary Persian when addressing God: *خدایا!* (*khodāyā*, with the glide *-y-* added here between the two vowels, meaning ‘O God!’ Or in more poetic expressions like *دردا و دریغا!* (*dardā-wo-darighā*, O pain, alas!)

3.7 Exclamatory forms

Persian uses the word *چه* (*che*, what) with both nouns and adjectives in exclamative phrases and sentences. When used with nouns, the indefinite *-i* is also added to the noun – or to the (last) adjective if the noun is modified by adjective(s).

Unlike the interrogative *che*, which changes to *چی* (*chi*) in spoken / Tehrani Persian, this *چه* remains always the same and does not change.

The word *عجب* (*ajab*, usually interjection: ‘how strange’) can also be used in such structures; in colloquial Persian, you can also use *چقدر* (*che-ghadr*, how

much) instead of چه but mainly with adjectives (not nouns) or to modify the verb, in which case the verb will take the main stress.

Examples:

(a) *With nouns:*

چه روزی! / عجب روزی! (*che / ajab ruzi!*, What a day!)

چه پرنده‌هائی! / عجب پرنده‌هائی! (*che / ajab parande-hā'!*, What birds!)

(b) *With adjectives:*

چه دیر! / عجب دیر! / چقدر دیر! (*che / ajab / che-ghadr dir!*, How late!)

چه قشنگ! / عجب قشنگ! / چقدر قشنگ! (*che / ajab / che-ghadr ghashang,*
How beautiful!)

(c) *Nouns and adjectives together:*

چه روز سردی! / عجب روز سردی! (*che / ajab ruz-e sardi!*, What a cold day!)

چه پرنده‌های کوچک و قشنگی! / عجب پرنده‌های کوچک و قشنگی! (*che / ajab parande-hā-ye kuchek va ghashangi!*, What small beautiful birds!)

(d) *In a sentence:*

دیروز چه (عجب) روز سردی بود! (What a cold day it was yesterday!)

چه (عجب) دخترهای قشنگ و باهوشی دارید! (What pretty and smart daughters you have!)

چقدر می‌خوری! (*How much you eat!* [= you eat a lot!]) – Here the verb (in this case *mí-*) takes the main stress; compare with a normal question in which the stress is on *ché-ghadr*:

چقدر می‌خوری؟ (*How much do you eat?*)

For some idiomatic usages of exclamative *che*, see Chapter 13.

Notes

- 1 Although پایان exists in Persian as a different word, meaning ‘the end.’
- 2 This is different from using *yek* in compounds, where it is often written joined. Compare: یک مرتبه (*yék mar.ta.bé*, one time, once) versus یکمرتبه (*yek.mar.ta.bé*, only final stress, *adv.*: all of a sudden, suddenly).
- 3 Regarding these two versions in writing, this book sides with the ئی version; the other version (بی), which is gaining popularity, is more about cleansing Persian of what it considers to be unnecessary Arabic elements.

The connector *ezāfe*

Though usually not written at all (unless after words ending in vowels), this enclitic particle is so present and so important in Persian that it needs to have a chapter dedicated to it.

4.1 What is *ezāfe*?

The connector *ezāfe* is a final unstressed *-e* sound added to a noun (or any word when treated as a noun) to connect it to the modifiers that follow and often to connect different modifiers to each other. ‘Good Persian’ requires that you don’t use too many *ezāfes* after each other, preferably not more than three, and use alternative forms instead, but it is not hard to find chains of words in Persian connected by more than three *ezāfes*. Consider the following sentence with a total of seven *ezāfes* (numbered in the transcription) in two strings, the first string with five *ezāfes* connecting six of the seven words that constitute the subject, the second string with two *ezāfes* connecting three of the four words in the predicate:

یک امتیاز مهمّ شهرهای نزدیک دریای مازندران هوای معتدل آنهاست
(*yek emtiyāz-e¹ mohemm-e² shahr-hā-ye³ nazdik-e⁴ daryā-ye⁵ māzandarān havā-ye⁶ mo’tadel-e⁷ ānhā-st*, One important advantage of the cities near the Caspian Sea is their moderate weather.)

In its simple form, stripped of all of the modifiers, the sentence is امتیاز هوا است (*emtiyāz havā ast*, advantage is weather):

- Two of these *ezāfes* (1 and 6) connect the nouns *advantage* and *weather* to their immediate modifiers (the adjectives *important* and *moderate*).

- The third *ezāfe* is also of the same nature if we consider *nazdik* (near, nearby) as an adjective, but by adding *ezāfe* to *nazdik* (4) we are changing it to a preposition (= in the vicinity of) followed by its own object (a descriptive prepositional phrase used for *shahr-hā*, the cities).
- Two of these *ezāfes* (2 and 7) are of a possessive nature (*the cities' advantage* = advantage of the cities, and *their weather* = the weather of them).
- In one case (5), a generic noun (sea) has been modified by a specific name (Caspian).

4.2 How to pronounce

This final unstressed *-e* is added to the last sound of the previous word and pronounced with that, never separately. In the transcriptions in this book you might often see, as you just did above, that *ezāfe* has been written after the word, separated from it by a hyphen. That is intended only as some help in word recognition, to better distinguish the different parts of a word from each other. But if you see that as the transcription for امتیاز مهم (emtiyāz-e mohemm, important advantage), you should not be misled by that hyphen and pronounce *em.ti.yāz* first and then *-e*. The *ezāfe* changes the syllabification here and becomes – and is pronounced as – part of the word: now you should pronounce the word as *em.ti.yā.ze*.

If the word ends in a vowel, you will usually need the glide *-y-* before *-e*, and Section 4.3 below shows how the glide is written after each vowel.

4.3 How to write

There is no change in writing in words ending in consonants; the diacritical mark _̣ (*kasre* or *zīr*) is usually not written, except when the writer wants to avoid some misreading:

دست (*dast*, hand) → دست چپ or دستِ چپ (with or without the diacritical, in both cases pronounced: *dast-e chap* [in syllabification: *das.te chap*], left hand).

(Warning: Someone who is not well-educated or is quite careless in spelling might write *dast-e chap* as دسته چپ by adding a *silent hé*, but this is not only a severe spelling mistake but will give a totally different word!)

As for words ending in vowels and diphthongs:

- *-a* (almost non-existent!) and *-e*: These words need the glide *-y-* before adding the *ezāfe*, changing the pronunciation from *-e* to *e-ye*. The form used in traditional orthography and still preferred by the majority – and adopted by this book as well – is placing a ‘*hamze*’ on the final *ه* letter – which is actually not a real *hamze* (a glottal stop) but a small *ی* (*y*). The resulting character – *ه̄* when alone, *ه̄* when joined – is a Persian invention and not readily found on the modern software you need for texting, etc., a fact contributing to the emergence (or re-emergence) of a trend which writes a whole *ی* (separately) after the silent *ه̄*. Examples: حلقهٔ ازدواج (*halghe-ye ezdevāj*, ring of marriage), رانندهٔ تاکسی (*rānande-ye tāksi*, driver of taxi). (The other, more recent trend would write حلقه‌ی and راننده‌ی.)
- *-o*, *-ā* or *-u*: These words would add *ی* in writing, to be pronounced as *ye* after those final vowels. Examples: رادیوی پرویز (*rādiyo-ye parviz*, radio of Parviz), صدای باران (*sedā-ye bārān*, sound of rain), جادوی هنر (*jādu-ye honar*, magic of art).
- *-i*: Words ending in this *ی* don’t need to add another *ی* in writing, and the final *ی* assumes the double function of *i* + *y* and is pronounced *-i-ye*. Example: بازی شطرنج (*bāzi-ye shatranj*, game of chess). (Here also a more recent trend, anxious to relieve the final *ی* of its double function, suggests writing an additional *ی* separately, resulting in بازی‌ی شطرنج – this would lead to new problems, though, and the suggestion has not been taken seriously.)
- *-ow* and *-ey*: Words ending in diphthongs should not actually need a glide in pronunciation, because they already end in a (semi-)consonant which can be separated from the vowel-part of the diphthong and be attached to the *ezāfe*: thus, راهرو (*rāhrow*, corridor) + *ezāfe* can be pronounced *rāh.ro.we* (‘corridor of’) and نی (*ney*, reed) + *ezāfe* can similarly be pronounced *ne.ye* (‘reed of’) – no additional *ی*, therefore, needed in writing either. In the case of the former – the diphthong *ow* – however, some occasionally write a *ی* when *ezāfe* is added, which means that they are also changing the pronunciation as well by reducing the final *-ow* to just *-o*.

4.4 Functions of *ezāfe*

Ezāfe is a topic present in most of the other chapters in this book, because you need to always learn where to use and where not to use it, what alternative structures can replace it and so on. If this chapter is an overview, the other chapters will give you more specific and detailed information.

Connecting a noun (or any part of speech when treated as a noun) to its modifier(s) constitutes the core of *ezāfe*'s functions and in a way encompasses all other functions, in whatever way we call and define those functions. Because when we say *noun + modifier*, by *noun* we mean any word functioning as a noun (i.e., assuming the role of subject or object / predicative noun), and the modifier can also be almost anything: adjective, another noun used to modify a noun, present and past participles and other verb derivatives, any descriptive participial or prepositional phrase.

The most common function of *ezāfe* is *descriptive*, where you have *noun + ezāfe + adjective*, as in هوای معتدل (*havā-ye mo'tadel*, moderate weather). In Chapter 6 on adjectives, there is more specific information on how, when and where to use *ezāfe* in these noun-adjective situations.

Examples of pronouns treated as nouns with *ezāfe* added: من احمق (*man-e ahmagh*, stupid me), توی آبستن (*to-ye ābestan*, pregnant you).

In most of the other cases, it comes very close to the preposition *of* in English:

- It connects two nouns with possessive or (more generally) pseudo-possessive, attributive relations: کیفِ دختر (*kif-e dokhtar*, purse of girl = girl's purse) is *possessive*, while سقفِ اتاق (*saghf-e otāgh*, ceiling of room = room's ceiling) is less about possession and more about showing the relation and is attributive in nature.
- It connects two nouns with the second noun functioning as an adjective denoting kind, category or material (what a real adjective can also do): Examples: کتابِ تاریخ (*ketāb-e tārikh*, book of history = history book¹); حقّ تقدّم (*hagh.gh-e taghad.dom*, lit. 'right of priority' = right of way); کوبیر نمک (*kavir-e namak*, desert of salt, salt desert).
- Sometimes the relation between nouns is more figurative / metaphorical, even though they may be very common expressions, as in آب مروارید (*āb-e morvārid*, lit. water of pearl = cataract [of eyes]); دل سنگ (*del-e sang*, 'heart of stone' [implying cruelty]); چس فیل (*chos-e fil*, lit. 'silent fart of elephant' = popcorn). Very common in poetry also, with expressions like گریهٔ ابر (*gerye-ye abr*, 'tears of cloud' for 'rain').
- It connects Iranian first and last names (a remnant of the old, traditional way of saying a son of who someone is), but is not used for foreign names; it also connects certain titles (not all) with the person's name. Examples: محمدِ مصدّق (*mohammad-e mosaddegh*, Mohammad Mosaddeq); آقایِ مصدّق (*āghā-ye mosaddegh*, Mr. Mosaddeq); خانمِ فرخزاد (*khānom-e farrokhzād*, Mrs. Farrokhzād).

- Similarly, as we had seen earlier in the example of دریای مازندران (*daryā-ye māzandarān*, Sea of Māzandarān = Caspian Sea), it is used for specification, connecting a generic noun to a specific (often proper) name, very common with geographical names. Other examples: کشور ایران (*keshvar-e irān*, Country of Iran), کوه اورست (*kuh-e everest*, Mount of Everest), اقیانوس اطلس (*oghyānus-e atlas*, Ocean of Atlas = Atlantic Ocean).
- Persian has only a few simple prepositions, the rest are mostly prepositional phrases in which you add *ezāfe* to a noun or to an adjective / adverb (see Chapter 9 on prepositions for more details). For instance, نزدیک (*nazdik*, close, near) is an adjective / adverb; by adding *ezāfe* it becomes a preposition meaning ‘close to’ or ‘in the vicinity of’: نزدیک صندلی (*nazdik-e sandali*, ‘near the chair’ or ‘in the vicinity of the chair’). Other examples: به طرف (*be taraf-e*, in the direction of = towards); در برابر (*dar barābar-e*, in front of).

4.5 Dropping ezāfe

As mentioned earlier in Section 4.3 (on the functions of *ezāfe*), many chapters in this book will refer to *ezāfe* and give more specific advice on where to use it and where not. The index can help you in this regard. In the previous chapter, for instance, it was mentioned that this connector is dropped when the indefinite *-i* is added to a noun (Section 3.4.2.2), repeated in more detail in the chapter on adjectives (Section 6.5.2).

Most importantly, when two words connected by *ezāfe* start to form a fixed (or ‘lexicalized’) compound, the *ezāfe* is sometimes dropped, a process which happens first in spoken, informal Persian and is later adopted in formal Persian also. This new lexical identity can sometimes become quite independent, where a change in meaning would occur if you add the deleted *ezāfe*, as in تخته سیاه (*takhte-siyāh*, blackboard), which differs from تخته سیاه (*takhte-ye siyāh*, a black plank or board). Common expressions referring to family relations usually drop this *ezāfe*, as in مادر بزرگ (*mādar-bozorg*, grandmother), شوهر خواهر (*showhar-khāhar*, brother-in-law [*lit.* ‘husband of sister’]) and so on. See more examples under adjectives (Section 6.2.1).

In the chapter on adjectives, you will also learn that, if the adjective precedes the noun, no *ezāfe* is needed (Section 6.2.2), and this rule can be extended to most modifiers placed before a head noun, like superlative

adjectives (Section 6.10.2), ordinal numbers (the *-omin* version) and numerals used as pre-positioned adjectives (Chapter 8), each to be reviewed in their proper chapter.

Note

- 1 Compare with using a real adjective, also connected through *ezāfe*:
کتاب تاریخی (*ketāb-e tārikhi*, historical book).

Chapter 5

Pronouns

You might need to check the next chapter, on adjectives, since many words, like those in the categories of possessives (Section 6.7), demonstratives (6.6) and interrogatives (6.8), have double lives as both pronouns and adjectives.

5.1 Pronouns – some initial remarks

Pronouns or pronominals are words that replace nouns when you don't want to repeat them. You have the three persons, singular and plural, which makes it a set of six pronouns. Similar to nouns, however, pronouns do not change in Persian for different cases or gender and do not undergo declension.

This set of six pronouns is seen first of all in the form of six independent pronouns (I, thou, he / she / it, we, you, they), which can be used without any change as subjects, as objects, or as possessive pronouns (when post-positioned, connected through *ezāfe*). Then there are two more sets of enclitic / suffixed personal pronouns, one used for possessive or objective, the other the verbal / conjugational personal enclitics added to the verbs.

The verbal / conjugational enclitics will be covered with the verbs (Section 12.2), but it will be helpful to see here all of these pronouns in a single table. (For some variations and more details, see either Table 5.1 below or in the appropriate chapters.)

5.2 Independent personal pronouns and possessive / objective pronominal suffixes: some general remarks

These are the pronouns on the first row in Table 5.1. See how the pronoun من (*1 Sg.*) is used in all of the following examples without any change:

Table 5.1 Personal pronouns

	1Sg.	2Sg.	3Sg.	1Pl.	2Pl.	3Pl.
Independent personal pronouns (subjective / objective / possessive ¹)	من (<i>man</i> , I, me, my)	تو (<i>to</i> , you, your [thou, thee, thy])	او (<i>u</i> , he, him, his / she, her) or آن (<i>ān</i> , it, its)	ما (<i>mā</i> , we, us, our)	شما (<i>shomā</i> , you, your)	آنها (<i>ānhā</i> , they, them, their)
Possessive pronouns (the equivalents of)	مال من (<i>māl-e man</i> , mine)	مال تو (<i>māl-e to</i> , yours [thine])	مال او (<i>māl-e u</i> , his, hers) or مال آن (<i>māl-e ān</i> , its)	مال ما (<i>māl-e mā</i> , ours)	مال شما (<i>māl-e shomā</i> , yours)	مال آنها (<i>māl-e ānhā</i> , theirs)
Possessive or objective pronominal suffixes	ـم (-am)	ـت (-at)	ـش (-ash)	ـمان (-emān)	ـتان (-etān)	ـشان (-eshān)
Conjugational suffixes (subjective)	ـم (-am, am)	ـی (-i, are [art])	است (<i>ast</i> , is)	ـیم (-im, are)	ـید (-id, are)	ـند (-and, are)
Present tense of verb 'to be' (enclitic²)	ـم (-am)	ـی (-i)	ـد (-ad)	ـیم (-im)	ـید (-id)	ـند (-and)
Present tense of all other verbs	ـم (-am)	ـی (-i)	ـ	ـیم (-im)	ـید (-id)	ـند (-and)
Past tense of all verbs	ـم (-am)	ـی (-i)	ـ	ـیم (-im)	ـید (-id)	ـند (-and)

As *subject* (if mentioned, usually at the beginning of the sentence):

من شما را ندیدم (*man shomā rā na-didam*, I did not see you.)

In this function, since the verb at the end of the sentence with its conjugational suffixes can clearly show who the subject is, it is possible and indeed very common to drop the independent personal pronouns; it has to be mentioned, though, if the subject needs to be emphasized. شما را ندیدم, without the pronoun من mentioned, still means ‘I did not see you’; in order to say ‘I did not see you’ (= It wasn’t *me* who saw you), من has to not just be mentioned, but be pronounced more emphatically.

As *indirect object* (which always comes after a preposition in Persian):

آن را برای من نیاوردید (*ān rā barāye man nayāvārdid*, You did not bring it for *me*.)

Objective suffixes, which in this case need to be attached to the preposition, are not possible with all prepositions (even less so in formal Persian than in colloquial Persian). The previous example when using the objective suffix would be:

آن را برایم نیاوردید (*ān rā barāyam nayāvārdid*, You did not bring it for *me*.)

As *direct object* (which, if definite, would require *l*, also):

شما من را نمی‌شناسید؟ (*shomā man rā nemi-shenāsīd?*, Don’t you know *me*?) – See Section 5.2.4 for the contraction مرا (*marā*) instead of را.

The same sentence when using objective suffix (attached to the verb here):

شما منی‌شناسیدم؟ (*shomā nemi-shenāsīdam?*, Don’t you know *me*?)

Possessive (post-positioned, connected through *ezāfe*):

همسر من می‌خواهد با شما حرف بزند (*hamsar-e man mi-khāhad bā shomā harf bezanad*, My spouse wants to talk to you.) When using the possessive suffix, همسر من (*hamsar-e man*) would change to همسرم (*hamsaram*).

See the next chapter (Section 6.7) for more on possessive adjectives.

5.2.1 Possessive pronouns

As one can see in Table 5.1 (second row), Persian doesn’t have a separate set of possessive pronouns: the same independent personal pronouns are used in this function when preceded by مال (*māl-e*, *lit.* ‘property of’).

In literary / poetical Persian, آن (*ān-e*, that of, sometimes preceded by the preposition *az*: از آن) can be used instead of مال, but don't be tempted to use it just because of its similarity to the English *that of*: مال is the common form.

These pre-positioned words are never attached to possessive suffixes (third row above) to form possessive pronouns. مال من (*māl-e man*) and مالِ من (*māl-am*) can both mean 'my property,' but it is only مالِ من that can additionally be a pronoun meaning 'mine,' and the same is true of the other persons.

When مال is followed by a noun or name, then it would function very much like the English -'s: مالِ محسن (*māl-e mohsen*) would mean 'Mohsen's' or 'that of Mohsen.' And sometimes you have a noun or name between مال and the personal pronouns, which in this case can be either an independent personal pronoun or a possessive suffix. Examples:

مالِ شما (*māl-e shomā*), meaning 'yours.' Remember: never مالتان (*māl-etān*)!

مالِ عموی (*māl-e amu*), meaning 'the uncle's,' 'that of Uncle.'

مالِ عمویِ شما (*māl-e amu-ye shomā*) or مالِ عمویتان (*māl-e amu-yetān*), both meaning 'your uncle's,' 'that of your uncle.'

مالِ عموهایِ شما (*māl-e amu-hā-ye shomā*) or مالِ عموهایتان (*māl-e amu-hā-yetān*), both meaning 'your uncles,' 'that of your uncles.'

A few notes

- مال as pronoun usually has a singular antecedent and is always followed by a singular verb; there is no مالهای in plural form. (You can repeat the plural antecedent as a noun, though.)
- مال is usually used for non-humans (which can be considered as 'property' and can 'belong' to someone). In a sentence like 'He is my father, not yours,' it would not be quite appropriate in Persian to use مال تو when translating 'yours,' and in this case, it is better to repeat the noun instead of using a pronoun.
- مال is used in colloquial Persian in a variety of senses. مال ایران (*māl-e irān*) is not just 'Iran's' but can also be 'coming from' or 'made in' Iran. مال چشم (*māl-e cheshm*) is not just 'the eye's' but also 'pertaining to' or 'used for' the eye.
- The English usage of possessive pronouns after *of* ('a friend of mine,' 'a fantasy of hers,' etc.) has no equivalent in Persian. Instead of 'a friend of mine' simply say 'one of my friends': یکی از دوستانِ من (*yeki az dustān-e man*).

5.2.2 Indefinite and impersonal pronouns

Personal pronouns of all sorts are considered to be *definite*, so they can only replace definite subjects or objects.

For indefinite, you can use یکی (*yeki*, one, someone); چند تا (*chand-tā*, some [countable], a few); or بعضی ها / بعضی (*ba'zi / ba'zi-hā*, some [countable], a few); and مقداری (*meghdāri*, some [uncountable]). (See Section 5.3 below for combinations of *yeki* and relative pronouns.) Examples:

Subject (definite): آن زن آمد (*ān zan āmad*, That woman came.) → او آمد
(*u āmad*, She came.)

Subject (indefinite): زنی آمد (*zani āmad*, A woman came.) → یکی آمد
(*yeki āmad*, Someone came.)

Object (definite): غذا را خوردم (*ghazā rā khordam*, I ate the food.) →
خوردمش (*khordam-ash*, I ate it.) – Note that the DDO-marker has to
be dropped.

Object (indefinite): غذائی خوردم (*ghazā'i khordam*, I ate some food.) →
مقداری خوردم (*meghdāri khordam*, I ate some.)

بعضی (*ba'zi*) and the more formal / literary برخی (*barkhi*, same meaning) are both used to make compounds like بعضی اوقات / وقتها (*ba'zi vaght-hā / ba'zi owghāt*, sometimes) and are also used pronominally:

برای بعضی ها باورش سخت است (*barāye ba'zi-hā bāvar-ash sakht ast*, For
some, it is hard to believe that.)

Another category of indefinite pronouns would be the impersonal ones, equivalents of English *one / you* in *How should one know?* or *You live only once*. The most common word in Persian would be آدم (*ādam*, one [= Adam]), next comes انسان (*ensān*, one; human) and, much lower in frequency, شخص (*shakhs*, one; person). Sometimes the personal pronouns تو (2 Sg.) and شما (2 Pl.) are used in this impersonal way. آدمیزاد (*ādamizād*, lit. son or descendent of Adam) is also a version of آدم, in literary language آدمی (*ādami*). Example:

آدم نباید به حرف او اعتماد کند
(*ādam nabāyad be harf-e u e'temād konad*,
One should not trust his words.)

5.2.3 More on using objective pronominal suffixes

Some of the examples have already been mentioned above (Sections 5.1 and 5.1.2) for objective suffixes used in sentences. Here are some more useful details:

Direct object, simple verbs: Objective suffix is added to the verb (usually written joined) and the DDO-marker *rā* (if there is one) is dropped.

خریدیمش (khāne rā kharidim, We bought the house.) → خریدیمش (kharidim-ash, We bought it.)

Direct object, compound verbs: Objective suffix is added either to the verb or to the non-verbal part (usually written joined) while dropping the DDO-marker *rā*.

تمیز کردم (khāne rā tamiz kardam, I cleaned the house.) → تمیز کردم (tamiz-ash kardam, I cleaned it.) or تمیز کردم (tamiz kardam-ash, same meaning)

Indirect object: Here the objective suffix can only be added to the preposition (which is always present before an indirect object). The problem is that formal, standard Persian does not allow objective suffixes to be added to all prepositions. If you add them to the preposition *تا* (*tā*, until), it would sound poetic / archaic; if you add them to the prepositions *از* (*az*, from), *به* (*be*, to) or *با* (*bā*, with), it would sound too colloquial / Tehrani (and would need certain glides common in that accent; see Section 5.1.4). Here are some examples with less problematic prepositions:

قرار بود درباره آن موضوع صحبت نکنید (gharār bud darbāre-ye ān mowzu' sohbat nakonid, You were supposed not to talk about that subject.)

→ درباره اش (darbāre-ash, about it)

شاید برای دخترهایم جالب باشد (shāyad barāye dokhtar-hā-yam jāleb bāshad, It might be interesting for my daughters.) → برایشان (barāyeshān, for them)

کتاب را زیر آن میز کوچک پیدا کرد (ketāb rā zir-e ān miz-e kuchek peydā kard, He / She found the book under that small table.) → زیرش (zir-ash, under it)

کی کنار استاد شما نشسته بود؟ (ki kenār-e ostād-e shomā neshaste bud?, Who was sitting next to your professor?) → کنارش (kenār-ash, next to him)

No emphasis possible: If the object needs some emphasis, you can't use the objective suffixes, because they can't take the stress and are always unstressed.

Possible confusions: دیدم (*didam*) means 'I saw' – with '-am' being the conjugational ending for 1Sg. But it can also mean 'He / She saw

me' – this time '-am' being the objective pronoun and the verb being just دید for 3Sg. Or consider these:

می بینیم (*mi-binim*, we see), and

می بینیم (*mi-bini-am*, you see me) – this one should preferably be written as می بینی ام (same pronunciation) to avoid this confusion.

Also: With verbs that can have two objects (direct and indirect), using only these objective pronouns can lead to some ambiguity: گفتمش (*goftam-ash*) could be both 'I said it' and 'I told *him / her*.' Other examples:

دادمش (*dādam-ash*, 'I gave it [to him]' or 'I gave *him* [sth.]')

نشان دادمش / نشانش دادم (*neshān-ash dādam / neshān dādam-ash*, 'I showed it [to s.o.]' or 'I showed *him* [sth.]')

5.2.4 Additional notes on personal pronouns – and some alternative pronouns

5.2.4.1 1Sg. (من)

This is the only pronoun which, in formal / literary written Persian (never in spoken Persian), *can* have a contraction form when the enclitic DDO-marker *rā* is added: مرا (*marā*) instead of من را (*man rā*). Not possible, of course, if *man* as the direct object needs to be emphasized. Compare:

من را دعوت کردند (*man rā da'vat kardand*, They invited me.) – Here مرا is also possible (in written Persian only).

مینا من را صدا کرد، تو دیگر چرا آمدی؟ (*minā man rā sedā kard, to digar cherā āmadi?*, Mina called me, why did you then come?) – Here مرا is not possible, because emphasis is needed.

When speaking or writing more politely, Iranians try to avoid using the pronoun من ('I') too often, which, they fear, could convey some attitude of arrogance and pride. One solution is using alternative words to substitute من. These are mostly nouns used as pronouns, most of them with meanings that show the speaker's inferiority in relation to the addressee. The most common word among them is بنده (*bande*, [your] servant or slave), used frequently in both written and spoken Persian to show respect.

Less common, now outmoded synonyms include حقیر (*haghir*, humble, your humble servant), فدوی (*fadavi*, devoted, your devoted servant), اینجانب (*in-jāneb*,

common in written administrative language; ‘the undersigned’) and چاکر (*chāker*, servant; common at a more vulgar level). Authors now often refer to themselves in articles or books as نگارنده (*negārande*, the author).

While using such substitutes, the verb is still conjugated for 1Sg. (3Sg. sounds too outdated now), and you don’t usually switch between من and these substitutes but try to be consistent.

Also important: If you are using polite substitutes like بنده to humble yourself, you must also use corresponding polite forms for other pronouns (and the verbs): your addressee, for instance, can’t be تو (2Sg.), and you should use شما (2Pl.) then even for a single person:

بنده هنوز کتاب جدید شما را ندیده‌ام (*bande hanuz ketāb-e jadid-e shomā rā nadide-am*, I haven’t seen yet your new book.) – Here using تو instead of شما would be wrong.

In more colloquial Persian, the plural ما is also used as a way to avoid using من. This is especially common in schools when schoolchildren address their teachers, and using a plural verb is also necessary. Thus, a schoolgirl who has to leave class earlier would say to the teacher:

خانم، ما امروز باید ده دقیقه زودتر برویم (*khānom, mā emruz bāyad dah daghighe zud-tar beravim*, Ms., we have to leave 10 minutes earlier today.)

By the way, you don’t usually hear a child using the word *bande*; children tend to use *mā* when talking politely – if they are old enough to have learned it. (And using *mā* in this way in colloquial Persian is quite different from the way a monarch might use it – the ‘royal we’ – or even a sufi in mystic poetry.)

5.2.4.2 2Sg. (تو)

The 2Sg. pronoun is quite common in Iran; it is not considered obsolete or poetical as *thou* is in English, and it is not considered rude if used in the right sort of relations, among friends and close family members. As some new development in recent decades, even some kids might be heard now using تو when addressing their parents – something which was hardly imaginable a few decades ago and shows more ‘friendly’ (rather than authoritarian) relations between parents and kids.

To be more respectful, one can always use the 2Pl. pronoun شما (see below), or one of its substitutes, for a single person.

The verb is conjugated for 2Sg. when using تو as subject and for 2Pl. when using شما. However, colloquial Persian would sometimes allow using the plural شما with a singular verb for relationships that are halfway between intimate and formal. Thus, you start with شما and then for the verb (or possessive, if required) switch to 2Sg. Compare:

شما به دوستان گفتید؟ (*shomā be dust-etān goftid?*, Did you tell your friend? – Grammatically correct; consistent in using plural throughout the sentence.)

شما به دوستت گفتی؟ (*shomā be dust-at gofti?*, same meaning as above, but used for a relationship which is halfway between intimate and formal.)

Still more polite than simply switching to plural would be using expressions like سرکار (*sarkār*, Your Honor), سرکارعالی (*sarkār-e āli*, Your Excellency); جناب عالی / جنابعالی (*jenāb[e]-āli*, Your Excellency); عالیجناب (*āli-jenāb*, Your Excellency); حضرت عالی (*hazrat-e-āli*, Your Honor); and the like, all requiring a plural verb when used for subject. No special, formal rank is required and these can be used for anyone you want to talk very respectfully to. Whether these (and similar terms, used also for other pronouns) should be treated as pronouns or simply as forms of address can be disputed.

Note that:

- (a) you can't start with تو and then switch to plural;
- (b) this is possible only with شما and not with its substitutes that are still more formal / polite and will be listed further below; and
- (c) this inconsistency would be considered bad grammar, as well as impolite, when used mistakenly.

5.2.4.3 3Sg. (او or آن)

In colloquial Persian (Tehrani accent), these two pronouns merge into one and become اون (*un*), but standard contemporary Persian treats them as two separate pronouns: او (*u*) only for humans – unless you are humanizing an animal or an object – and آن (*ān*, a word that also means ‘that’) for non-humans. Examples:

وقتی استادمان را دیدم، به او سلام کردم (*vaghti ostād-emān rā didam, be u salām kardam*, When I saw our professor, I greeted him.)

این باغ وحش یک زرافه هم دارد و باید حتماً آن را ببینیم (*in bāgh-e-vahsh yek zarrafe ham dārad va bāyad hatman ān rā bebinim*, This zoo has a giraffe also and we must certainly see it.)

من سگم را می‌شناسم، این او نیست (*man sagam rā mi-shenāsam, in u nist*, I know my dog, this is not *him / her*.) – Using او for a pet dog, showing closer ('humanized') relation.

In formal, written Persian – outmoded now and not much loved but still common in administrative / journalistic language – you can see the alternative وی (*vey*, he / she) used for animates; never in spoken Persian. By using وی in writing you might sound more formal, but not necessarily more polite. Example:

خبرنگار ما با وی گفتگو کرد (*khavar-negār-e mā bā vey goft-o-gu kard*, Our reporter talked with him / her.)

If an absent person (like your friend's father) needs to be referred to more politely, then the 3Pl. pronoun ایشان (*ishān*, they [more polite than آنها]) is used with a plural verb if subject. As it was the case with شما → تو, there is an intermediary case here also for relations halfway between intimate and formal, which would allow using a singular verb for ایشان. Example:

پدر شما آنجا بودند و ایشان هم با من صحبت کردند (*pedar-e shomā ānjā budand va ishān ham bā man sohbat kardand*, Your father was there, and he too talked to me.)

Still more polite (but far less common) would be combining جناب or حضرت with ایشان or with the possessive suffix ـشان as جنابشان (*jenāb-eshān*) or حضرتشان (*hazrat-eshān*).

For referring to an absent person in a derogatory way, یارو (*yāru*, [rather slang] the guy, that fellow) is used or فلانی (*folāni*, such and such a person [used to avoid mentioning a name in the presence of undesired company]), but these hardly fit in the category of pronouns, since they are not replacing a noun and have no antecedent but themselves. Example:

دیدی یارو چطور نگاه میکرد؟ (*didi yāru che-tour negāh mi-kard?*, Did you notice how that guy was looking?)

In formal written Persian (more in administrative / legal language), نامبرده (*nām-borde*, the afore-mentioned) is common as pronoun, although it can be used adjectivally also to modify a noun.

5.2.4.4 1Pl. (ما)

As mentioned above under 1Sg., in certain cases (now mostly in informal, spoken Persian), this plural pronoun can be used for 1Sg. to avoid using من (see above for the example).

When used correctly for 1Pl., it shouldn't normally be in need of a still more polite substitute; in contemporary administrative correspondence, you might come across اینجانبان (*injānebān*, 'we, the undersigned') as a formal substitute. The terms used in medieval texts are outmoded or obsolete now.

As you will learn below under 2Pl., for the pronoun ما, the plural suffixes are also sometimes used: ماها (*māhā*) or, in poetical language, مایان (*māyān*). The effect would be more limiting / exclusive in character rather than expanding / inclusive: 'just us' (not you!), 'just these few / this group of us' (not all of us, not the rest).

5.2.4.5 2Pl. (شما)

Here also what was mentioned above under 2Sg. (replacing تو by شما in polite language) should be taken into consideration. The verb is always plural if شما is subject, and there is no 'intermediary' form.

More polite substitutes, like عالیجنابان (*ālī-jenābān*, Your Excellencies), are possible but not very common.

Similar to ماها mentioned above (1Pl.), there is the pluralized شماها (*shomāhā*) also, with the poetical version شمایان (*shomāyān*). Here also the effect would be limiting in character, and it can be compared with *youse* or *you-all* (*y'all*) in American English, referring to closer and closed relations.

5.2.4.6 3Pl. (آنها)

As it is obvious, آنها (*ānhā*) is the plural of آن (*ān*, 'it' or 'that'). Unlike the singular آن which could not be used as personal pronoun for *he / she*, where او was used, the plural آنها is used as the plural of *he / she* (requiring a plural verb) as well as *it / that* (the verb may be singular or plural). The more formal / literary plural version, namely, آنان (*ānān*), is used now exclusively for people therefore always used with a plural verb.

The polite version ايشان (*ishān*) had been mentioned above under 3Sg.; it is pronounced ايشون (*ishun*) in spoken Persian (Tehrani accent) and is very common, similar to آنان used for people only.

The more polite substitute حضرات (*hazarāt*, Their Excellencies) is sometimes used ironically, mockingly or sarcastically also.

5.2.5 Ishān and -eshān: a final note

ايشان (*ishān*) and ايشان (-*eshān*) are the two independent and suffixed versions of the same pronoun, originally used for 3Pl. In contemporary Persian of Iran, however, there are some differences in their usage that can be summed up in this way:

ايشان (*ishān*):

- Is used only for people.
- Can be used for a single person (to show respect), with a plural verb, but a singular verb permissible for relations halfway between distanced and intimate.

ايشان (-*eshān*):

- Used for all ranks and categories (people / animates / inanimates).

5.3 Emphatic / reflexive functions of خود (*khod*, self)

The possessive function of خود will be described in Chapter 6 on adjectives, but here the emphatic or reflective functions of خود will be explained. And خود is not alone, there are the more literary synonyms خویش (*khish*) and خويشتن (*khishtan*) also, used only in more elevated written Persian.

When used alone, or when nouns / pronouns do not follow it but rather precede it, خود is also used in literary, written Persian only, but it can be very common in all levels of language when used either with personal pronouns or with the connector *ezāfe* (to connect it to the noun that follows). First, a glance at the different ways it can be used in Table 5.2. (Instead of the personal pronouns mentioned here, their synonyms can be used, like ايشان instead of آنها for 3Pl.)

Table 5.2 خود (*khod*, self) – informal and formal

	Most common; use of the pronoun in parentheses optional for more emphasis	Also common	In literary, written Persian only
1Sg. (I) myself	(من) خودم (<i>man</i>) <i>khodam</i>	خود من <i>khod-e man</i>	من خود <i>man khod</i>
2Sg. (you) yourself	(تو) خودت (<i>to</i>) <i>khodat</i>	خود تو <i>khod-e to</i>	تو خود <i>to khod</i>
3Sg. (he / she / it) himself / herself / itself	(او / آن) خودش (<i>u / ān</i>) <i>khodash</i>	خود او / آن <i>khod-e u / ān</i>	او / آن خود <i>u / ān khod</i>
1Pl. (we) ourselves	(ما) خودمان (<i>mā</i>) <i>khodemān</i>	خود ما <i>khod-e mā</i>	ما خود <i>mā khod</i>
2Pl. (you) yourselves	(شما) خودتان (<i>shomā</i>) <i>khodetān</i>	خود شما <i>khod-e shomā</i>	شما خود <i>shomā khod</i>
3Pl. (they) themselves	(آنها) خودشان (<i>ānhā</i>) <i>khodeshān</i>	خود آنها <i>khod-e ānhā</i>	آنها خود <i>ānhā khod</i>

5.3.1 Emphatic function

خود is used in the forms mentioned above to emphasize some fact, or to show that someone does something alone and on his / her own. Examples with *khod* + personal suffixes:

(من) [*man*] *khodam behtar az to u rā mi-shenāsam*, I myself know him better than you do.)

(تو) [*to*] *khodat ān rā be man dādi*, You yourself gave it to me.)

دخترم می خواهد خودش درباره آن به شما بگوید (*dokhtaram mi-khāhad khodash darbāre-ye ān be shomā beguyad*, My daughter wants to tell you about it herself.)

بچه دوست دارد خودش غذايش را بخورد (*bach.che dust dārad khodash ghazāyash rā bekorad*, The child likes / prefers to eat [its food] [by] itself.)

In this *emphatic* function, instead of using the suffixes, sometimes the personal pronouns are used – or even nouns and names – all preceded, of course, by the connector *ezāfe*.

Thus, instead of خودم (*khodam*), you can say خود من (*khod-e man*), or, similarly, خود تو (*khod-e to*) instead of خودت (*khodat*), or you can say خود شهر (*khod-e shahr*, the city itself), etc. Examples:

خودِ تو از همه دیرتر آمدی (*khod-e to az hame dir-tar āmadi*, You yourself came later than everybody else.)
 چرا از خودِ ما نپرسیدند؟ (*cherā az khod-e mā naporsidand?*, Why didn't they ask ourselves?)
 فیلمش را دیده‌ام، ولی خودِ کتاب را نخوانده‌ام (*filmash rā dide-am, vali khod-e ketāb rā nakhānde-am*, I've seen its movie, but I haven't read the book itself.)

5.3.2 Reflexive function

Only the '*khod* + suffixes' form can be used for this reflexive function, which occurs when the subject of the verb ('initiator') is the same as the object ('target'). Examples:

بعد از سه روز خودم را در آینه دیدم (*ba'd az se ruz khodam rā dar āyene didam*, I saw myself in the mirror after three days.)
 چرا تصمیم گرفتید خودتان را بکشید؟ (*cherā tasmim gereftid khodetān rā bekoshid?*, Why did you decide to kill yourself / commit suicide?)
 این پیرمرد همیشه با خودش حرف می‌زند (*in pir-mard hamishe bā khodash harf mi-zanad*, This old man always talks to himself.)

5.3.3 Notes on خود when used alone

As it was stated above (Section 5.2), it is only in literary, written Persian that خود can be used either alone (without the personal suffixes) or be preceded by nouns / pronouns (while they more commonly follow it, connected through *ezāfe*). There are two points that need to be taken into consideration when using this form:

- When خود is preceded by pronouns or by nouns / names, it can *only* be used for the subject, not for the object: خود من (*man khod*) is always *I myself* and never *me myself*.

Correct: من خود مینا را دیدم (*man khod minā rā didam*, I myself saw Mina.)

Wrong: You can't say من مینا خود را دیدم (*man minā khod rā didam*) when you want to say 'I saw Mina herself.' (Here خود مینا (*khod-e minā*) with *ezāfe* would be correct, or مینا خودش (*mina khodash*), but not مینا خود [*minā khod*].)

- When خود is used alone, usually the subject of the verb or the context shows which person is the antecedent. In a sentence like: از خود سؤال کرد (چرا آنها می‌دوند) (*az khod so'al kard cherā ānhā mi-davand*, He asked himself why they were running), it is the verb کرد (3Sg.) which shows that خود here is equal to خودش (3Sg.).

The following examples, which are mixed in nature (including even the possessive function, to be covered in the next chapter), can show the similarities and differences:

او خود کتاب را آورد (*u khod ketāb rā āvard*, He himself brought the book.) – This form in formal, written Persian only.

او خود کتاب را آورد (*u khod-e ketāb rā āvard*, He brought the book itself.)

او کتاب خود را آورد (*u ketāb-e khod rā āvard*, He brought his [own] book.) – This form in formal, written Persian only.

او کتاب خودش را آورد (*u ketāb-e khodash rā āvard*, He brought his [own] book.)

او خودش کتاب را آورد (*u khodash ketāb rā āvard*, He himself brought the book.)

از خودت خجالت بکش! (*az khodat khejālat bekesh!*, Shame on you! – lit. 'Be ashamed of yourself!')

از سایه خودش هم می‌ترسد (*az sāye-ye khodash ham mi-tarsad*, He's even afraid of his own shadow.)

روز بعد به سفر خود ادامه داد (*ruz-e ba'd be safar-e khod edāme dād*, The next day he continued his [own] trip.)

شاید شما از خود بپرسید که من چرا اینجا هستم (*shāyad shomā az khod bepor-sid ke man cherā injā hastam*, You may ask yourself why I am here.)

او هیچوقت سؤالهای خودش را فراموش نمی‌کرد (*u hich-vaght so'al-hā-ye khodash rā farāmush nemi-kard*, He never forgot his own questions.)

Apart from the above functions, خود is used in many idioms or is used to form compound words. The following are some examples:

خودکشی (*khod-koshi*, suicide)

خودآگاهی (*khod-āgāhi*, self-consciousness)

خودکار (*khod-kār*, automatic; a ball-point pen)

خودنویس (*khod-nevis*, fountain pen)
 خودآموز (*khod-āmuz*, self-teaching)
 خودپسندی (*khod-pasandi*, selfishness)
 خودمختاری (*khod-mokhtāri*, autonomy)
 خودداری (*khod-dāri*, self-control, refraining)
 خودبخود (*khod-be-khod*, spontaneity; automatically)
 خودی (*khodi*, familiar)

5.4 Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns in Persian are این (*in*, this) and آن (*ān*, that) for singular. The two plural suffixes *ها* (*-hā*) and *ان* (*-ān*) that make nouns plural (see Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2) can be added here to form plural demonstrative pronouns, the former being the more common and universal one (اینها and آنها), the latter used in literary language and for humans only (اینان and آنان).

این خیلی بهتر از آن است (*in kheyli behtar az ān ast*, This is much better than that.)

فعلاً دربارهٔ آن موضوع با این و آن صحبت نکن
bā in va ān sohbat nakon, At present don't talk about that issue to this and that [person].)

خیلی منتظر شدم ولی آنها نیامدند
kheyli montazer shodam vali ānhā nayāmadand, I waited a lot, but they didn't come.)

حافظ: آنان که خاک را به نظر کیمیا کنند / آیا بود که گوشهٔ چشمی به ما کنند؟
ānān ke khāk rā be nazar kimiyā konand / āyā bovad ke gushe-ye chashmi be mā konand?, Couplet by the poet Hāfez: Those who can turn dust to elixir just by a glance / could they not throw a kind glance at us [= me]?)

These can be combined with indefinite pronouns یکی (*yeki*, one) and یکی‌ها (*yeki-hā*, ones), giving: این یکی (*this one*), آن یکی (*that one*), این یکی‌ها (*these ones*) and آن یکی‌ها (*those ones*). When combined, they will be treated as definite. (In more literary, written Persian, also یک instead of یکی is possible: این یک / آن یک, *in-yek, ān-yek*). Examples:

این را نمی‌خواهم، آن یکی را بده
in rā nemi-khāham, ān-yeki rā bedeh, I don't want this, give that one [to me].)

این یکی بد نیست، ولی آن یکی‌ها بهترند
in yeki bad nist, vali ān-yeki-hā behtar-and, This one is not bad, but those ones are better.)

5.5 Interrogative pronouns

A couple of general rules about interrogative words in Persian:

- (a) No change of word order, subject / verb inversion or use of auxiliaries is required in Persian: a change of intonation is all that is needed. (See more in Chapter 11, Section 11.2.)
- (b) Interrogative words do not need to be placed at the beginning of the sentence, and they seldom are. There is a lot of flexibility here, and the most natural position for an interrogative word is the position of the word about which the question is being made. If the question is about the whole statement (as it is often the case with چرا؟ [*cherā?*, Why?]), then it is usually placed at the beginning of the sentence (or, even then, after the subject or a time adverb).

Most of the interrogative words in Persian have compound synonyms also, using چه؟ (*che?*, What?), not unlike English (compare: *who* = *what* person?; *when* = *what* time?; etc.). The following are the Persian interrogative pronouns:

کی (ki?, Who? / Whom?). In more literary Persian also که (ke?). With the verb 'to be' (3Sg.), the contraction کیست (*kist?*, Who is he / she?; in colloquial Persian کیه؟ [*ki-ye?*]) is common. Examples:

Subject: کی آن مقاله را خوانده؟ (*ki ān maghāle rā khānde?*, Who has read that article?)

نویسنده آن کتاب کیست؟ (*nevisande-ye ān ketāb kist?*, Who is the author of that book?)

Direct object (treated as DDO: needs *rā*): تو برای شام کی را دعوت کردی؟ (*to barāye shām ki rā da'vat kardi?*, Whom did you invite for dinner?)

Indirect object (after preposition): مینا با کی صحبت می کرد؟ (*mina bā ki sobbat mi-kard?*, Who was Minā talking to?)

Possessive (connected to previous word through *ezāfe*), with examples for the subject, direct and indirect objects:

Subject: مال کی برنده شد؟ (*māl-e ki barande shod?*, Whose [= that of whom] won?); شماره کی برنده شد؟ (*shomāre-ye ki barande shod?*, Whose number won / was the winner?)

Direct object: مال کی را پیدا کردی؟ (*māl-e ki rā peydā kardi?*, Whose [= that of whom] did you find?); کیف کی گم شده بود؟ (*kif-e ki gom shode bud?*, Whose bag / purse had been lost?)

Indirect object / object of preposition: با مال کی نوشتی؟ (*bā māl-e ki neveshti?*, Whose [= that of whom] did you write with?); با قلم کی نوشتی؟ (*bā ghalam-e ki neveshti?*, Whose pen did you write with?)

کس (*kas*) means 'person,' and چه کسی؟ (*che kasi?*, what person?) is a very common synonym of کی؟; other words having a similar or close meaning like شخص (*shakhs*, person) or فرد (*fard*, individual) are not so common in this usage.

Both *ki* and *che kasi* are considered as singular and a singular verb is used when they are subject. But each of them can have their plural forms and would then need plural verbs:

کیان؟ (*kiyān?*) – or, only in poetical language, کیها؟ (*ki-hā?*) – or, only in poetical language, کیها؟
 چه کس هائی؟ (*che kas-hā'i?*) – or, in written Persian but very common, چه کسانی؟ (*che kasāni?*)

The plural forms, contrary to what one might think, limit the scope of the group. Examples:

کیها هنوز گرسنه هستند؟ (*ki-hā hanuz gorosne hastand?*, Who [among you] are still hungry?)
 چه کسانی این فیلم را دیده‌اند؟ (*che kasāni in film rā dide-and?*, Who [are those who] have seen this movie?)

چه؟ (*che?*, What?). In more colloquial Persian also چی؟ (*chi?*). With the verb 'to be' (3Sg.), the contraction چیست؟ (*chist?*, What is [it]?; in colloquial Persian [چی-یه؟] (*chi-ye?*)) is common.

چه‌ها / چه‌ها (*che-hā*) or چی‌ها (*chi-hā*) is common when plurality needs to be emphasized; as synonyms the expressions چه چیزی؟ (*che chizi?*, What thing?) and, for plural, چه چیزهائی؟ (*che chiz-hā'i?*, What things?) are used. Examples:

چه خواهد شد؟ (*che khāhad shod?*, What will happen?)
 ببین چه می‌خواهد (*bebin che mi-khāhad*, See what he wants.)
 این کتاب را برای چه می‌خواهی؟ (*in ketāb rā barāye che mi-khāhi?*, What do you want this book for?)
 دیگر چه چیزهائی به تو گفت؟ (*digar che chiz-hā'i be to goft?*, What else did he tell you?)
 در فکر چه هستی؟ (*dar fekr-e che hasti?*, What are you thinking about?
 [lit. you are in thought of what?])
 منتظر چه اند؟ (*montazer-e che-and?*, What are they waiting for?)

چه is usually treated as indefinite and used without the DDO-marker *rā*; only when some special emphasis is needed (as when you have not heard something very clearly), the use of *rā* might be justifiable, although even in those cases one is more likely to use چه چیزی instead of just چی / چه. Examples:

آن سنجاق را پیدا نمی‌کنم. - گفتی چی را پیدا نمی‌کنی؟
(-ān sanjāgh rā peydā nemi-konam, - gofti chi rā peydā nemi-koni?, - 'I don't find that pin.' - 'You said you don't find what?)

کدامین (*kodām?*, Which?). There is the more literary version کدامین (*kodāmin*) also in written Persian, as well as the plural کدامها (*kodām-hā*). Both *kodām* and *kodāmin* are used predominantly as adjectives followed by definite nouns (see Chapter 6 on adjectives); whether adjective or pronoun, they always require the DDO-marker *rā* when used for direct objects. Examples:

کدام زودتر رسید؟ (*kodām zud-tar resid?*, Which arrived earlier?)
 کدام را بالاخره خرید؟ (*bel'akhare kodām rā kharid?*, Which [one] did he / she finally buy?)
 کدام بیشتر خوش می‌آید؟ (*az kodām bishter khosh-at mi-āyad?*, Which [one] do you like more / better?)
 کدامها مال توست؟ (*kodām-hā māl-e to-st?*, Which [ones] are yours?)

Similar to demonstrative pronouns (see Section 5.4), for which *kodām* is used as the interrogative word, کدام can be combined with the indefinite pronoun یکی (*yeki*, in plural یکی‌ها *yeki-hā*, in more literary usage just یک, *yek*, which can be written joined or separately). As pronouns, these combinations are in fact much more common than *kodām* alone; also common are combinations with possessive suffixes (with or without *yek / yeki*), in which case for humans the plural suffix is always used and for non-humans the singular is more common. Examples:

کدام یکی گرانترست؟ (*kodām-yeki gerān-tar ast?*, Which one is more expensive?)
 کدام یکی‌ها آمدند؟ (*kodām-yeki-hā āmadakn?*, Which ones came?)
 کدام یکی‌شان استاد میناست؟
 Which one of them [humans!] is Minā's professor?)
 کدام یکیش را به من می‌دهی؟
 Which one of them [non-humans!] will you give to me?)

کدامتان این را با چشم خودش دید؟ (*kodām-etān in rā bā cheshm-e khodash did?*, Which of you saw this with his / her own eyes?)

چند (*chand*) is actually a quantitative adjective meaning ‘some’ (for countables), ‘several’ or ‘a few’; چندین (*chandin*) is both the more literary version and, when pronounced with more stress, can mean ‘quite a few’ – almost ‘many.’ *Chand* can be combined with other words to make new words with different functions, like the temporal adverb چندگاه (*chand-gāh*, for some time). This quantitative adjective can be used as an interrogative adjective also, and in both of these functions, it is followed by a singular noun.

When used as a question word for ordinal numbers (something like *how many* + the ordinal *-th* suffix, which is not possible in English; compare with the German *wievielt-*), it becomes چندم (*chandom?*) or چندمین (*chandomin?*), which are still adjectives, but the latter can be used as pronoun also, and especially its shorter version چندمی (*chandomi?*) is very common (and is very close to *kodām*):

این سومین ازدواجت نیست؟ پس چندمی است؟ (*in sevvomin ezdevājat nist? Pas chandomi ast?*, This is not your third marriage? What number / Which is it, then?)

به عکسهای ۱ تا ۴ نگاه کن، چندمی را بیشتر می پسندی؟ (*be aks-hā-ye yek tā chahār negāh kon, chandomi rā bishtar mi-pasandi?*, Look at pictures 1 to 4; what number /which do you like better / more?)

چند alone can sometimes be the short for other interrogative phrases (which could be adverbial). چند in the sense of *how many times?* may sound now archaic or too poetical, and چند بار (*chand bār*) is used instead, but چند is frequently used in the sense of *for how much money?* Example:

این را چند خریدی؟ (*in rā chand kharidi?*, You bought this [for] how much?)

In the same way that چند بار (*chand bār*, How many times?) was formed by using a counting word after چند, other counting words can be used to form other interrogative compounds. See how the expression *how many* in the following English sentences can be translated into Persian:

- How many came? (people) → چند نفر (*chand nafar?*)
- How many did you see? (non-humans) → چند تا (*chand tā?*)
- How many did he write? (volumes of books) → چند جلد (*chand jeld?*)

As mentioned earlier, *chand* is now only used for countables as *how many*, its common *che*-synonym being تعداد چه / چه تعدادی (*che te'dād[i]*, What number?). For uncountable amounts ('how much'), there are some other compounds with *che* which are used predominantly, though not exclusively, for this group, the most common among them being چقدر (*che-ghadr?*, How much? How many? [In colloquial also:] How?). Other compounds for *how much / how many* include: چه مقدار؟ (*che-meghdār?*), چه اندازه؟ (*che-andāze?*), چه میزان؟ (*che-mizān?*). Example:

چقدر لازم داری؟ (*che-ghadr lāzem dāri?*, How much do you need?)

For چه and چقدر in exclamations, see Section 3.7. See Section 13.15 for some idiomatic usages of the exclamative چه.

The following are three interrogative adverbs with their *che*-synonyms:

کجا؟ (*kojā*, Where?) = چه جایی؟ (*che-jā'i?*, What place?)

کی؟ (*key*, When?) = چه زمانی؟ / چه وقتی؟ / چه وقت؟ (*che-vaght?* / *che-vaghti?* / *che-zamāni?*, What time?)

چرا؟ (*cherā*, Why?) = برای چه؟ (*barāye che?*, What for?), به چه دلیل؟ (*be che dalil?*, For what reason?)

The reason we are mentioning these interrogative adverbs here is that they can, in certain cases, be used pronominally (notice the plural forms in the examples), although the last example shows چرا to have been used more like a simple noun. Mixed examples of adverbial / pronominal usage:

کجا خواهید رفت؟ (*kojā khābi raft?*, Where will you go?)

کجاها را علامت زدی؟ (*kojā-hā rā alāmat zadi?*, Where / what places did you mark?)

کی برمی گردی؟ (*key bar-mi-gardi?*, When will you return?)

معمولاً کی ها را ترجیح می دهی؟ (*ma'mulan key-hā rā tarjih mi-dahi?*, When / what times do you usually prefer?)

چرا ما را نخواستند برویم ولی نگفتند چرا؟ (*goftand beravim vali na-goftand cherā*, They asked us to leave but didn't say why.)

چرا نمی دانم؟ (*cherā-yash rā nemi-dānam*, I don't know the 'why' of it / its reason.)

چطور (*che-towr*) and the more formal چگونه (*che-gune*) both mean 'how' in the sense of (a) 'in what way,' and (b) 'of what kind.' چسان (*che-sān*) would be the poetical synonym.

5.6 All, none, each

همه (*hame*, all) can be used for people or things, and همهٔ (*hame-ye*) is used for *all of*. Both versions should be treated as definite when used for the object, requiring the DDO-marker *rā*. Examples:

بچه‌ها همه در حیاط هستند (*bach.che-hā hame dar hayāt hastand*, The kids are all in the yard.)

همهٔ بچه‌ها در حیاط هستند (*hame-ye bach.che-hā dar hayāt hastand*, All of the kids are in the yard.)

من همه را / همهٔ آنها را نمی‌شناسم (*man hame rā / hame-ye ānhā rā nemi-shenāsam*, I don't know all / all of them.)

Some compounds with singular nouns (no *ezāfe* or glide needed): همه کس (*hame-kas*, everyone, all the people), همه جا (*hame-jā*, everywhere), همه چیز (*hame-chiz*, everything), همه وقت (*hame-vaght*, all the time, always). If used with *ezāfe*, these will no longer be compounds, and you will need a plural noun: همهٔ چیزها (*hame-ye chiz-hā*, all of the things) and so on.

هیچ (*hich*, no, none, nothing, not any, at all). This negative word, which is either used alone or used to make several other negative compounds, requires a negative verb – as do some other negative words in Persian. In interrogative sentences, the verb can be either affirmative or negative. Examples:

من هیچ پرنده‌ای نمی‌بینم (*man hich parande'i nemi-binam*, I don't see any bird[s] / I see no birds.)

تو هیچ نمی‌دانی (*to hich nemi-dāni*, You know nothing / You don't know anything.)

هیچ می‌دانی او کجاست؟ (*hich mi-dāni u kojā-st?*, Do you know at all [= have any idea] where he is?)

هیچ نمی‌دانی او کجاست؟ (*hich nemi-dāni u kojā-st?*, Don't you know at all where he is?)

هیچکدام (*hich-kodām*) or هیچیک (*hich-yek*) both mean 'neither' or 'none'; these are the negative versions of هر یک or هر کدام (see below under هر). It is more common to use the preposition از after them instead of *ezāfe* to say 'neither of' or 'none of.' And the possessive suffixes can be added also to say 'neither of / none of us / you / them,' where the singular *-ash* is used for non-humans and the plural *-eshān* for both humans and non-humans. They are

used with a negative verb, and a plural verb is permissible even for singular, even more common. Examples:

هیچکدام ارزان نیست / نیستند (*hich-kodām arzān nist / nistand*, None of them /neither one is cheap.)

این قلمها هیچکدام مال شما نیستند (*in ghalam-hā hich-kodām māl-e shomā nistand*, These pens are none of yours.)

هیچکدام از این قلمها مال شما نیستند / نیست (*hich-kodām az in ghalam-hā māl-e shomā nist / nistand*, None of these pens is yours.)

هیچکدامتان به موقع نیامدید (*hich-kodām-etān be-mowghe' na-yāmadid*, None of you came on time.)

هیچکدامشان جواب ندادند (*hich-kodām-eshān javāb na-dādand*, None of them replied.)

هیچکدامش را نبرد (*hich-kodām-ash rā na-bord*, He took neither / none of them / those [non-humans].)

Some other compounds with هیچ, all requiring a negative verb (though not always when interrogative):

هیچکس (*hich-kas*, no one, nobody)

هیچ چیز (*hich-chiz*, nothing)

هیچوقت (*hich-vaght*, never) (or, more formal: هیچگاه *hich-gāh*, هرگز *hargez*)

هیچ کجا (*hich-kojā*) or هیچ جا (*hich-jā*, nowhere)

هیچگونه (*hich-gu.ne*, in no way / no . . . whatsoever)

به هیچ وجه (*be hich vajh*, by no means / not at all), its synonym being اصلاً (*aslan*)

هر (*har*, each, every) is a pre-positioned adjective that is never used alone and, therefore, cannot be a pronoun by itself; however, similar to همه and هیچ (see above), it can be combined with other words to make pronouns, adverbs, conjunctions and so on. Some of its various functions:

- It is used with singular nouns (with or without indefinite *-i*); the verb is also singular: هر انسان / انسانی حقوقی دارد (*har ensān / ensāni hoghubghi dārad*, Each human being has some rights.)
- It is used with expressions of time to make frequency adverbs (no *-i* suffix): هر روز (*har ruz*, everyday), هر سال (*har sāl*, every year), هر بار (*har bār*, each time), etc.
- It is used with numbers: هر دو (*har do*, both), هر سه (*har se*, all three [of them]), etc.

- It is used for compounds like: هرکس / هرکسی (*har-kas / har-kasi*, anyone, everyone), هرچیزی / هرچیزی (*har-chiz / har-chizi*, anything, everything) . . .
- Some conjunctions use *har* (followed by the relative که [*ke*, that, which], which can usually be dropped): هر بار که (*har bār ke*, each time that), هر وقت که (*har vaqht ke*, each time that, whenever), هر طور که (*har tour ke*, in whatever way, as).

هر یک (*har-yek*) and هر کدام (*har-kodām*) mean ‘each / either (one),’ and the verb is often plural, especially when *از* follows and a plural subject has been mentioned. Compare:

هر کدام در یک اتاق است / هستند (*har-kodām dar yek otāgh ast / hastand*,
Each /either one is in a [separate] room.)

این پسرها هر کدام هشت سال دارند (*in pesar-hā har-kodām hasht sāl dārānd*,
These boys are each 8 years old.)

هر کدام از این پسرها هشت سال دارند / دارد (*har-kodām az in pesar-hā hasht sāl dārānd / dārad*,
Each one of these boys is 8 years old.)

5.7 Other words and phrases with pronominal functions

دیگر (*digar*) means ‘other.’ As an adjective, it has nothing so special to deserve to be mentioned in the next chapter. As an adverb, however, it deserves some mentioning in Chapter 7 (see Section 7.11). But it has some pronominal functions too.

دیگری (*digari*), with *unstressed* indefinite *-i* suffix added, means ‘another (one)’ or ‘someone else’; it sounds a little formal, is used for humans only and has its plural as دیگران (*digarān*, others). The colloquial version, which can be used for both humans and non-humans, is یکی دیگر (*yeki digar*) and has no plural. (This version is actually the indefinite pronoun *yeki* + *digar* as adjective, a fact which becomes more obvious when an *ezāfe* is also used: *yeki-ye digar*.) Examples:

خوشمزه بود، می توانم یکی دیگر هم بخورم؟ (*khosh-maze bud, mi-tavānam yeki[-ye] digar ham bekhoram?*, It was delicious, can I eat another one also?)

اگر من این کار را نکنم، دیگری (/ یکی دیگر) خواهد کرد (*agar man in kār rā nakonam, digari [/ yeki digar] khāhad kard*, If I don’t do this, someone else / another will do.)

A couplet by the poet Bahār (1884–1951):

دیگران کاشتند و ما خوردیم / ما بکاریم، دیگران بخورند
digarān kāshtand-o mā khordim / mā bekārim, digarān bekhorand, Others planted and we
 ate, [now] we plant so others can eat.)

دیگری (*digari*), this time with *stressed -i* suffix added, means ‘the other (one),’ can be used for both humans and non-humans in formal Persian and uses the same formal **دیگران** (*digarān*, the others) as plural. The colloquial version of this definite pronoun is **آن / این یکی دیگر** (*ān / in yeki digar*, this [or that] other one), and for plural, *-hā-ye* is added to *yeki*. Examples:

بدتر از دیگری (yeki az digari bad-tar, One worse than the other.)
 از این دو برادر، یکی در تهران است و دیگری (/ آن یکی دیگر) در اصفهان
az in do barādar, yeki dar tehrān ast va digari [/ ān yeki digar] dar esfahān, From
 these two brothers, one is in Tehran and the other [one] in Isfahan.)
 یکی را می بینم ولی دیگری (/ آن یکی دیگر) را نمی بینم
yeki rā mi-binam vali digari [/ ān yeki digar] rā nemi-binam, I see one [of them] but don’t
 see the other one.)
 این دوتاشان کثیفند ولی آن یکی های دیگر همه تمیزند
in do-tā-shān kasif-and vali ān yeki-hā-ye digar hame tamiz-and, These two of them are dirty,
 but the other ones are all clean.)

یکدیگر (*yek-digar*) and **همدیگر** (*ham-digar*) are used as reciprocal pronouns, both meaning ‘each other’ or ‘one another,’ and either one can be used for two or more. **یکدیگر** is used in formal / written Persian only, while **همدیگر** is used in colloquial Persian also, sometimes shortened as just **هم** (*ham*), which would thus make **هم** also a reciprocal pronoun. (See Section 7.12 for more on **هم**.) Examples:

این دو همسایه از یکدیگر (/ از همدیگر / از هم) بدشان می آید
in do hamsāye az yek-digar [/ az ham-digar / az ham] bad-eshān mi-āyad, These two
 neighbors hate each other.)
 چرا مردم باید همیشه به یکدیگر (/ به همدیگر / به هم) دروغ بگویند؟
*cherā mardom bāyad hamishe be yek-digar [/ be ham-digar / be ham] dorugh
 beguyand?*, Why should people always lie to each other?)

Similarly, **با یکدیگر** (*bā yek-digar*) and **با همدیگر** (*bā ham-digar*) – or just **با هم** (*bā ham*) – mean ‘with each other’ or ‘with one another,’ used for two or more, and again *yek-digar* is the more formal version.

5.8 Relative pronoun(s) in Persian

The omnipotent Persian **که** (*ke*), which has so many other functions also (remember *ke = ki = who?*, Section 5.4), is the single, unavoidable and irreplaceable actor for all sorts of relative clauses (see Section 13.7), standing for all *wh*-words (+ ‘that’) which introduce a relative clause in English.

5.9 Numbers as pronouns?

As in the case with the quantitative adjective **چند** (see Section 6.8), numbers alone – the *cardinal* numbers – cannot be used as pronouns in Persian, and they need at least a counting word to be mentioned after them, the universal counting word being **تا** (*tā*), and there is a long list of more specific counting words, most of which have little currency outside of formal or legal language. For people, **نفر** (*nafar*) is a very common counting word, though not used for children and not for very close or family relationships!

For instance, when responding to a question like ‘How many students came today?’, in English, you can simply say, ‘Five.’ In Persian, your response can’t be just **پنج** (*panj*, five); if you don’t want to repeat the word for student after the number, you say **پنج تا** (*panj-tā*, five [ones]) or **پنج نفر** (*panj nafar*, five [people]). But if the question is ‘How many children came?’ (regardless of whose children) or ‘How many brothers / uncles do you have?’, then **نفر** is not used and **پنج تا** would be the only option.

تا, this almost universal *counting word*, is used, understandably, for *countable* nouns. In colloquial Persian, **تا** is frequently used between the number and the noun also (like **دو تا کتاب** [*do tā ketāb*] for ‘two books’ instead of simply **دو کتاب**), where it is actually not needed, but it is rarely used in written (especially more formal) Persian. This does not mean, however, that using **تا** is *always* optional, opted for mainly in colloquial Persian.

Some limitations in using *tā*:

- (a) It cannot be used for uncountable nouns.
- (b) It cannot be used when some other measure word (or count word), such as those used for time, weight, length, etc., is present.
- (c) It cannot be used after the number **یک** (*yek*, one): the pronoun form of **یک** is **یکی** (*yeki*), or **یک** followed by count words like **دانه** (*dāne*) and

عدد (*adad*) for smaller items or fruits, جلد (*jeld*, volume, count word for books), or, for people, نفر (*nafar*), with the limitations that were mentioned above.

Example: دو ساعت (*do sā'at*, 2 hours), but not دو تا ساعت (*do tā sā'at*) – unless, of course, another meaning of ساعت ('watch' or 'clock') is intended!

بار (*bār*) is the most common word used after numbers when you want to say how many times something happened or was done; دفعه (*daf'e*) and مرتبه (*martebe* or *martabe*) are also common:

روزی دو بار (*ruzi do-bār*, twice a day)
پنج مرتبه دیگر (*panj martebe-ye digar*, five more times)

Last but not least, it should not be forgotten that the *ordinal* numbers, unlike the *cardinal* ones, do have their own pronominal forms – without any need for counting words. A discussion of numerals and different types of ordinal numbers will remain for Chapter 8, and here it would be enough to know that the rule is to add the suffix *-omi* (and not *-om* or *-omin*, both of which are used to form ordinal numbers) to the numbers. The first three numbers, as expected, are not quite regular. Table 5.3 lists the numeric ordinal pronouns for numbers 1 to 5, the column to the right with Persian pronouns.

Examples:

سه تاشان را پلیس گرفت، ولی چهارمی فرار کرد (*se-tā-shān rā polis gereft, vali chahāromi farār kard*, The police caught three of them, but the fourth one fled.)

Table 5.3 Ordinal numbers: adjectival and pronominal

one یک (<i>yek</i>)	first اول (<i>avval</i>) or اولین (<i>avvalin</i>)	the first one اولی (<i>avvali</i>)
two دو (<i>do</i>)	second دوم (<i>dovvom</i>) or دومین (<i>dovvomin</i>)	the second one دومی (<i>dovvomi</i>)
three سه (<i>se</i>)	third سوم (<i>sevvom</i>) or سومین (<i>sevvomin</i>)	the third one سومی (<i>sevvomi</i>)
four چهار (<i>chahār</i>)	fourth چهارم (<i>chahārom</i>) or چهارمین (<i>chahāromin</i>)	the fourth one چهارمی (<i>chahāromi</i>)
five پنج (<i>panj</i>)	fifth پنجم (<i>panjom</i>) or پنجمین (<i>panjomin</i>)	the fifth one پنجمی (<i>panjomi</i>)

پنج تا بچۀ اولم همه پسر بودند، امیدوارم ششمی دختر بشود
(panj-tā bach. che-ye avval-am hame pesar budand, omidvāram sheshomi dokhtar beshavad, My first five children were all boys, I hope the sixth one will be [lit. become] a girl.)

The interrogative form چندی (*chandomi?*) was already mentioned under Section 5.4.

In literary / poetical language, the *-omin* version of the ordinal numbers (one of the two versions in the middle column in Table 5.3) can be used as pronoun, while the *-omi* version (right column) can be considered colloquial.

Notes

- 1 For possessive, the *possessor + ezāfe* must be placed before these pronouns. See Section 6.7.
- 2 See verbs (Section 11.8) for the non-enclitic form, which uses the same suffixes.

Chapter 6

Adjectives

For numerals, which can be regarded as a major category of adjectives, see Chapter 8.

6.1 Adjectives describe nouns

An adjective describes a noun (a person or something), either attributively, as in ‘good weather’ (*havā-ye khub* هوای خوب), or predicatively, as in ‘the weather is good’ (*havā khub ast* هوا خوب است). Many adjectives can be nouns also (‘wrong’ in English and غلط [*ghalat*] in Persian), and many nouns can be used as adjectives describing other nouns (‘sport shoes’ = کفش ورزش [*kafsh-e varzesh*]); moreover, almost all adjectives can be used as adverbs also without any change (see Chapter 7). Therefore, if a word, or a group of words, is describing a noun, it is functioning as an adjective in that particular context.

6.2 Position in relation to nouns

When compared with English, the feature that stands out most in the Persian adjective is that:

- (A) when used attributively, it is normally not placed *before* the noun, but rather *after* it (as in French, but using the connector *ezāfe*; for more on *ezāfe*, the way it is written and pronounced as well as the glide which is needed after vowels, see Chapter 4);
- (B) when used predicatively, since the Persian verb is usually placed at the end of the sentence, the only thing which separates the adjective from the noun (in English: the verb) is the *lack* of a connecting *ezāfe*, and since

ezāfe is normally not written, some basic reading skill is needed to avoid possible mistakes.

Examples for (A):

شب (*shab*, night) + تاریک (*tārik*, dark) = شب تاریک (*shab-e tārik*, dark night)
مادر (*mādar*, mother) + جوان (*javān*, young) = مادر جوان (*mādar -e javān*,
young mother)

Examples for (B):

شب تاریک است (*shab tārik ast*, the night is dark)
مادر جوان است (*mādar javān ast*, the mother is young)

Here the lack of the connecting *-e (ezāfe)* after *shab* and *mādar* shows that the adjective is being used predicatively. If the first example is read mistakenly with *ezāfe* (as *shab-e tārik*), one would immediately realize that ‘the dark night is’ makes no sense and the sentence is incomplete. In some rare cases, in longer sentences two (or more) different readings, with or without *ezāfe*, can be possible, especially when it is not immediately clear whether a word is being used as noun or adjective. In the following example, *javān* can mean ‘young’ or ‘a young person,’ and *faghir* can mean ‘poor’ or ‘beggar’; different possible readings:

زن جوان فقیر را به مغازه برد

- 1 *Zan-e javān faghir rā be maghāze bord*, The young woman took the beggar to the store.
- 2 *Zan javān-e faghir rā be maghāze bord*, The woman took the young beggar (or the penniless young man) to the store.
- 3 *Zan-e javān-e faghir rā be maghāze bord*, He /she took the poor young woman to the store. (In this case it is assumed that the subject has not been mentioned and is indicated only by the verb.)

Given the ambiguity of a sentence like this, in Persian, a comma might be added either after *zan* or after *javān* (based on the intended meaning) to make the correct reading easier. (See Chapter 15.)

6.2.1 Ezāfe dropped in lexicalized compounds

The connecting *ezāfe* can occasionally be omitted if the two words form a fixed (or ‘lexicalized’) compound, a lexical unit with an independent meaning.

One such example is تخته سیاه (*takhte-siyāh*, blackboard), which differs from تخته سیاه (*takhte-ye siyāh*, a black plank or board). Other examples: تندرست (*tan-dorost*, healthy); دلخوش (*del-khosh*, satisfied and happy), which slightly differs from its reverse version خوشدل (*khosh-del*, cheerful); and other common compounds referring to family relations like پدربزرگ (*pedar-bozorg*, grandfather) and مادرشوهر (*mādar-showhar*, mother-in-law), پسر عمو (*pesar-amu*, cousin [son of your father's brother]) and so on.

6.2.2 When and how the adjective can be placed before a noun

Although adjectives, when used attributively, are usually placed after the noun (connected through an *ezāfe*), as a remnant of older usage, to be found only in poetical language now, the adjective can be placed before noun, the two words making some sort of compound, and no *ezāfe* would then be used. The words thus used must also belong to a more elevated level of the language. Apart from poetical language, some very common compound words also can be found that are using this form, like:

خوشمزه (*khosh-maze*, good-tasting or delicious)
 بداخلاق (*bad-akhlāgh*, bad-tempered or ill-mannered)
 سبز چشم (*sabz-cheshm*, green-eyed)
 سیاهپوست (*siyāh-pust*, black-skinned, belonging to the black race)
 نگونبخت (*negun-bakht*, ill-starred, unfortunate)

In very rare cases, the *ezāfe* might not be dropped, as if the pre-positioned adjective assumes the role of a noun, and both versions have almost the same meaning. Two or three such rare examples:

پدرِ مرحوم (*pedar-e marhum-am*, my deceased father [r.i.p.]) versus مرحومِ پدرم (*marhum-e pedar-am*, same meaning). The Persian phrase خدا بیامرز (*khodā-biyāmorz*) has the same meaning and can be used in these two ways:
 پدرِ خدا بیامرز (*pedar-e khodā-biyāmorz-am*, my deceased father [r.i.p.]) versus خدا بیامرزِ پدرم (*khodā-biyāmorz-e pedar-am*, same meaning).
 از بدِ بختِ بد (*az bad-e bakht-e bad*, from bad luck) versus بختِ بد (*az bad-e bakht*, from badness / ill of luck) – in the latter case the adjective بد used like the noun بدی (*badi*, badness, evil).

Also note here that you can have the compound adjective بدبخت (*bad-bakht*, unlucky, unfortunate, poor), where the *ezāfe* is dropped and the meaning totally changes.

6.3 No declension or inflection

Adjectives always keep the same form, with no declension – i.e., they do not change their form to reflect the case, number or gender. (See Sections 6.15 and 18.2 for remnants of Arabic influence in occasional use of a feminine ending.) Examples with the adjective بزرگ (*bozorg*, big):

مرد بزرگ <i>mard-e bozorg</i> big man	زن بزرگ <i>zan-e bozorg</i> big woman	اسب بزرگ <i>asb-e bozorg</i> big horse	میز بزرگ <i>miz-e bozorg</i> big table
مردان بزرگ <i>mardān-e bozorg</i> big men	زنان بزرگ <i>zanān-e bozorg</i> big women	اسبان بزرگ <i>asbān-e bozorg</i> big horses	میزهای بزرگ <i>mizhā-ye bozorg</i> big tables

سر اسب بزرگ (*sar-e asb-e bozorg*, head of big horse)

اسب بزرگ آن مرد (*asb-e bozorg-e ān mard*, that man's big horse; here with *ezāfe*)

اسب بزرگ آمد (*asb-e bozorg āmad*, big horse came)

یک اسب بزرگ دیدم (*yek asb-e bozorg didam*, I saw a big horse)

به اسب بزرگ آب دادم (*be asb-e bozorg āb dādam*, I gave water to the big horse)

6.4 Kinds of adjectives, their order and how they are connected

Table 6.1 shows (from right to left) the normal order of adjectives in Persian.

As the examples in Table 6.1 show, the most striking difference with English is the position of the possessive adjective, which is always mentioned *last* in Persian (see Section 6.8 below).

If there are several adjectives of quality, no strict order is required for them, except that the most essential qualifier (determining the kind or showing the purpose) usually comes closest to the noun and adjectives of origin are likely

Table 6.1 Order of adjectives (from right to left)

Possessive adjectives	Adjectives of quality	Noun	Quantitative or distributive adjectives	Demonstrative or interrogative adjectives
م - am, my	قشنگ <i>ghashang</i> , pretty گران <i>gerān</i> , expensive	پیراهن <i>pirāhan</i> , shirt	دو <i>do</i> , two	آن <i>ān</i> , that / those
آن دو پیراهن قشنگ و گرانم را به او نده <i>ān do pirāhan-e ghashang va gerānam rā be u nadeh.</i> Don't give him / her those two pretty and expensive shirts of mine.				
من - e man, my	شکسته <i>shekaste</i> , broken زشت <i>zesht</i> , ugly	قوری <i>ghuri</i> , teapot	چند <i>chand</i> , several	این <i>in</i> , this / these
این چند قوری شکسته و زشت من برایم خیلی عزیز است. <i>In chand ghuri-ye shekaste va zesht-e man barāyam kheyli aziz ast.</i> These (several) broken and ugly teapots of mine mean a lot to me.				

to be mentioned last (though not always). Examples of several adjectives of quality used together:

← صندلی تاشو چوبی کوچک و زرد آلمانی
→ *sandali-ye tā-show-e chubi-ye kuchek va zard-e ālmāni*
→ chair [e] folding [e] wooden [e] small and yellow German
= the small yellow wooden German folding chair

As shown in the above example, the following rules apply:

- If there are two or more adjectives of quality, they are connected by using either *ezāfe* or by placing the conjunction و (*va*, 'and') between them. This *va* can be, and often is, pronounced as *-o*, or as *-wo* after vowels – but only if it is properly connected (in pronunciation, not in writing) to the last sound in the previous word; otherwise, if one makes a pause and does not connect, it has to be pronounced as *va*.
- All adjectives can be connected by *ezāfe* (= *-e*) or by *va* ('and'), or, as here, when there are too many adjectives, by a combination of both, to avoid the awkward effect of having too many *ezāfes* or 'and's in one sentence. In this last case, the adjectives that are closest in category are more likely to be connected by 'and.'
- As in English, the qualifier 'folding' (*tā-show*) is the closest to the 'chair' (*sandali*).

Some more examples, with some exaggeration in the number of adjectives:

← یک فیلم صامت کوتاه خنده‌دار سیاه و سفید فرانسوی
 → *yek film-e sāmet-e kutāh-e khande-dār-e siyāh-o-sefid-e farānsavi*
 → one film [e] silent [e] short [e] funny [e] black-and-white [e] French
 = a short black and white silent French comedy film

← دو قاب عکس فلزی بزرگ و سنگین
 → *do ghāb-e aks-e felezzī-ye bozorg-o sangin*
 → two frame [e] picture [e] metal [e] large and heavy
 = two large and heavy metal picture frames

← چند شلوار جین تنگ و چسبان خاکستری رنگ سایز متوسط
 → *chand shalvār-e jin-e tang-o chasbān-e khākestari-rang-e sāyz-e motevasset*
 → several trousers [e] jeans [e] tight and tight-fitting [e] gray-colored
 [e] size [e] medium
 = several tight-fitting gray medium-size jeans trousers

6.5 Definite / indefinite markers and how they affect the use of *ezāfe*

Chapter 3 deals with definite and indefinite markers in detail (see Section 3.4.2.2 especially for how to write). That chapter explains where these markers are necessary and where they are not. Here only what is relevant in relation to adjectives will be highlighted, assuming that those markers are necessary.

6.5.1 Definite

The definite marker *rā* (را), when necessary, is placed after the last adjective (which can be the possessive adjective):

آن دو کتاب جدید را خریدم (*ān do ketāb-e jadid rā kharidam*, I purchased those two new books.)
 تو دوست دختر زیبا و جوان ایتالیائی اش را ندیده‌ای (*to dust-e dokhtar-e zibā va javān-e itāliyā'i-ash rā nadide'i*, You haven't seen his young and pretty Italian girlfriend.)

6.5.2 Indefinite

For indefinite, if یک (*yek*, one / a / an) is used, it is always placed before the noun: یک روز آفتابی زیبا (*yek ruz-e āftābi-ye zibā*, a beautiful sunny day). If plural, چند (*chand*, some or several) is used, followed by a singular noun (though plural in meaning) and never adding *-i*: چند ساختمان قرمز نوساز (*chand sākhtemān-e ghermez-e nowsāz*, several new-built red buildings).

If the unstressed indefinite *-i* is used, it is usually added to the last adjective, a practice common at all levels of language; the adjectives can then be connected to one another by *ezāfe* or *va*, and it would sound best if both forms are used alternately, and one is less likely to use *ezāfe* between all adjectives. Compare the possibilities:

- به شهر کوچک، سرد و دوری رفت (*be shahr-e kuchek, sard va duri raft*, He went to a small, cold and remote city.)
 به شهر کوچک و سرد و دوری رفت (*be shahr-e kuchek va sard va duri raft*, He went to a small and cold and remote city.)
 به شهر کوچکِ سرد و دوری رفت (*be shahr-e kuchek-e sard va duri raft*, He went to a small, cold and remote city.)
 به شهر کوچک و سردِ دوری رفت (*be shahr-e kuchek va sard-e duri raft*, He went to a small and cold, remote city.)
 به شهر کوچکِ سردِ دوری رفت (*be shahr-e kuchek-e sard-e duri raft*, He went to a small, cold, remote city.)

The still more colloquial version which allows using both *yek* and *-i* is possible in these sentences (placing *yek* before *shahr*).

Formal, written Persian, however – and never colloquial Persian! – would allow this indefinite *-i* to be added to the noun instead of the last adjective, in which case the *ezāfe* between the noun and adjective(s) is dropped, and if there are several adjectives they can only be connected by *va* and not by *ezāfe*. Our previous example would then have only these two forms:

- به شهری کوچک، سرد و دور رفت (*be shabri kuchek, sard va dur raft*, He went to a small, cold and remote city.)
 به شهری کوچک و سرد و دور رفت (*be shabri kuchek va sard va dur raft*, He went to a small and cold and remote city.)

6.6 Demonstrative adjectives

For demonstrative pronouns, see the previous chapter.

Demonstrative adjectives are این (*in*, this) and آن (*ān*, that). They can be used for singular and plural nouns: adjectives do not change with number. When used for plural nouns, however, the English translation would then require using ‘these’ and ‘those.’ Examples:

Singular: این خانه (*in khāne*, this house) and آن مرد (*ān mard*, that man)
 Plural: این خانه‌ها (*in khāne-hā*, these houses) and آن مردان (*ān mardān*, those men)

6.7 Possessive adjectives

Possessive pronouns were introduced in Chapter 5; here some of them will be met again in their function as possessive adjectives.

The equivalent of English *possessive adjectives* (‘my,’ ‘your,’ ‘his,’ etc.) in Persian can either be the *personal pronouns* mentioned in the previous chapter while preceded by *ezāfe* or a set of *possessive suffixes* (see Table 6.2).

The pronoun *vey* (3Sg.) is used in formal, written Persian only, and *ishān* (3Pl.) is the polite form that, where respect is needed, can be used for singular also.

Table 6.2 Possessive adjectives

	Singular		Plural	
	Suffixed	Separate	Suffixed	Separate
1st person	my م- (-am)	my من- (-e man)	our مان- (-emān)	our ما- (-e mā)
2nd person	your / thy ت- (-at)	your / thy تو- (-e to)	your تان- (-etān)	your شما- (-e shomā)
3rd person	his / her / its ش- (-ash)	his / her او- (-e u) / وی- (-e vey)	their شان- (-eshān)	their (for people) آنها- (-e ānhā) / ایشان- (-e ishān)
		its آن- (-e ān)		their (non-humans) آنها- (-e ānhā)

Examples for دست (*dast*, hand):

- my hand: دستم (*dastam*) or دستِ من (*dast-e man*)
- your / thy hand: دستت (*dastat*) or دستِ تو (*dast-e to*)
- his / her hand: دستش (*dastash*) or دستِ او (*dast-e u*) / دستِ وی (*dast-e vey*)
- its hand: دستش (*dastash*) or دستِ آن (*dast-e ān*)
- our hand: دستمان (*dastemān*) or دستِ ما (*dast-e mā*)
- your hand: دستتان (*dastetān*) or دستِ شما (*dast-e shomā*)
- their hand (people): دستشان (*dasteshān*) or دستِ آنها (*dast-e ānhā*) / دستِ ایشان (*dast-e ishān*)
- their hand (non-humans): دستشان (*dasteshān*) or دستِ آنها (*dast-e ānhā*)

As mentioned above, possessive adjectives are always the last adjectives mentioned.

Note that in English, instead of ‘my small brother’s new book’ (with *my* coming first, whereas in Persian it comes last), it is also possible to say ‘the new book of my small brother’ with *my* placed in the middle. Persian has one form only, in which, in spite of the double possessive, *my* is the dominant, end possessor: کتابِ نوِ برادرِ کوچکِ من (*ketāb-e now-e barādar-e kucheke-man*) or کتابِ نوِ برادرِ کوچکم (*ketāb-e now-e barādar-e kucheke-am*).

The two types are usually interchangeable, except in the following cases:

- (a) *Separate (non-suffixed) pronouns* have to be used if some emphasis is needed – the kind of emphasis, for instance, that is needed when someone says, ‘This is *my* book, not *yours*!’ Here the form کتابِ من should be used and not کتابم: suffixed possessive adjectives are never pronounced with stress in Persian and have no emphasis.
- (b) On the contrary, *suffixed pronouns* have to be used if the person for whom the possessive is being used (i.e., the possessor) is at the same time the subject of the verb. It is not possible to say من به خانهٔ من رفتم (*man be khāne-ye man raftam*) in the sense of ‘I went to my house,’ even if the first *man* (i.e., the subject) is dropped, which is possible in Persian because the verb always clearly shows who the subject is. In this case the form خانهام (*khāne-am*) is the only possible option, and خانهٔ من (*khāne-ye man*) is wrong.

6.7.1 Possessive use of خود (*khod*, somebody’s own ...)

Similar to personal pronouns that can function as one type of possessive adjective when preceded by *ezāfe*, خود (*khod*) – and the more formal /

literary خویش (*khish*) and خویشان (*khishtan*) also, which were introduced as pronouns in the previous chapter – can function as the emphatic form of possessive adjectives when preceded by *ezāfe*, meaning ‘my own . . . , your own . . . ,’ etc.

Here also, the more common form is *khod* + possessive adjectives, while *khod* alone is used only in formal / literary language, the verb then indicating the person:

از سایهٔ خودش هم می‌ترسد. (*az sāye-ye khodash ham mi-tarsad*, He’s even afraid of his own shadow.)

در آن شهر زیاد نماند و به سفر خود ادامه داد. (*dar ān shahr ziyād namānd va be safar-e khod edāme dād*, He didn’t stay long in that city and continued his own trip.)

Apart from adding some emphasis, this form sometimes helps avoid the ambiguity in 3rd person possessive cases. Compare:

- i مریم سگش را دوست دارد (*maryam sagash rā dust dārad*, Maryam likes her dog.) – This *could* be her own dog but could also be someone else’s, maybe even ‘his’?
- ii مریم سگ او را دوست دارد (*maryam sag-e u rā dust dārad*, Maryam likes his / her dog.) – This time it is certainly someone else’s dog.
- iii مریم سگ خودش را دوست دارد (*maryam sag-e khodash rā dust dārad*, Maryam likes her [own] dog.) – Here also there is no ambiguity.

In written, more literary (or poetical) Persian, خویش (*khish*) and خویشان (*khishtan*) can be used as synonyms of خود (*khod*).

A line by the poet حافظ (*Hāfez*, Hafiz):

ما آزموده‌ایم در این شهر بختِ خویش (*mā āzemude'im dar in shahr bakht-e khish*, We have tried our (own) luck in this town.)

6.8 Quantitative, distributive and interrogative adjectives

One major group of quantitative adjectives, namely, the numerals, is covered in Chapter 8, along with expressions used for measures, so please refer to that chapter for this group.

There are, however, words that are about quantity and are used in an adjectival way to describe nouns, like words that mean ‘some, much / many, no,’ etc.:

- (a) Of these, the real adjectives are those followed by singular nouns (similar to numerals). To these belong the negative word هیچ (*hich*, none, no, any), which usually requires a negative verb also (except sometimes in the interrogative, where the use of negative is optional). Other examples are چند (*chand*, some, several) and هر (*har*, each, any). Examples:

- چند روز آنجا ماندم. (*chand ruz ānjā māndam*, I stayed there for some / several / a few days.)
- هر زبانی قواعد خود را دارد. (*har zabāni ghavā'ed-e khod rā dārad*, Each language has its own rules.)
- هر روز دو بار این دوا را می خورم. (*har ruz do bār in davā rā mi-khoram*, I take this medicine twice each day / every day / daily.)
- هیچ نامه‌ای دریافت نکردم. (*hich nāme'i daryāft nakardam*, I received no letter.)
- هیچ کس با او تماس نگرفت. (*hich-kas bā u tamās nagereft*, Nobody contacted him / her.)

There are some words like خیلی (*kheyli*, many, much, a lot of) and its more formal synonym بسیار / بسیاری (*besyār / besyāri*) that can be followed by both singular and plural nouns; when followed by plural nouns, they belong in fact to the next group (b). Compare:

- i خیلی کتاب روی میز بود (*kheyli ketāb ru-ye miz bud*, There were many / a lot of books on the table.)
- ii خیلی حرفهای زشت به من زد (*kheyli harfhā-ye zesht be man zad*, He / she told me a lot of ugly things [i.e., verbally abused me].)

Here (in sentence [ii]) one could also assume that *kheyli* is an adverb modifying the adjective *zesht* (ugly), though not placed immediately before it: *He / she told me very ugly things*. But compare this with a case where *kheyli* is followed by *az*: خیلی از حرفهایش درست بود (*kheyli az harfhāyash dorost bud*, A lot of what he / she said was correct.)

To this group – used with both singular and (only when with *az*) plural nouns – belong عدّه‌ای (*edde'i [az]*), تعدادی (*te'dādi [az]*), شماری (*shomāri [az]*), all meaning ‘a number of,’ the last one used only for people. Compare:

- تعدادی کتاب دزدیده شد. (*te'dādi ketāb dozdide shod*, A number of books were stolen.)

از کتابها دزدیده شد. (*te'dādi az ketābhā dozdide shod*, A number of the books were stolen.)

- (b) Some words and expressions are followed by plural nouns, a fact which indicates that, while functioning in a way similar to adjectives, they are in fact nouns that should normally be followed by *از* (*az*, here 'of') – and they often are – but they can be said to be on their way to becoming adjectives by developing the option of not using *az*. Some of them, like *بعضی* (*ba'zi*) and *برخی* (*barkhi*, both meaning 'some' or 'several') always precede plural nouns and can never be used with singular nouns. In the following examples, only the version without *az* brings them close to adjectives:

بعضی (*ba'zi [az] ruzhā u rā dar ketābkhāne mi-binam*, On certain days [*lit.* some (of the) days] I see him / her in the library.)

برخی (*barkhi [az] keshvar-hā dar jang bi-tarafi ekhtiyār kardand*, Some countries opted for neutrality in the war.)

بسیاری (*besyāri [az] ostādān-e fārsi hargez dar irān nabude'and*, Many of the professors of Fārsi have never been in Iran.)

There are many more words which are in fact nouns denoting quantity or are collective nouns and can be used in this way, like *گروهی* (*gorubi [az]*, a group of); *انبوهی* (*anbubi [az]*, a huge amount or number of); *تلی* (*talli [az]*, a heap of); and so on.

The quantitative adjective *chand* mentioned above can be a question word also and function as an *interrogative adjective* (in this function also followed by a singular noun). There are two more question words that have such an adjectival function: *چه* (*che*, what?; with indefinite nouns) and *کدام* (*kodām*, which?; with definite nouns; in more poetical language also *کدامین*, *kodāmin*). Examples:

چند کتاب خواندی؟ (*chand ketāb khāndi?*, How many books did you read?)

چه کتابی / کتابهایی خواندی؟ (*che ketābi / ketābhā'i khāndi?*, What book / books did you read?)

کدام کتاب / کتابها را خواندی؟ (*kodām ketāb / ketābhā rā khāndi?*, Which book / books did you read?)

6.9 Forms and formation of adjectives

An adjective can be (i) a simple word, (ii) a compound word, or (iii) an adjectival phrase.

6.9.1 Compound words used as adjectives

Compound words used as adjectives are made by adding prefixes or suffixes to a noun; it can be a preposition + noun compound, or noun + adjective, adjective + noun, verb stem + prefixes / suffixes, etc.

هوش (*hush*) is a noun and means ‘intelligence’ or ‘consciousness,’ and the following are some of the adjectives made with *hush*:

باهوش (*bā-hush*, intelligent): *prep.* + *n.*

کم هوش (*kam-hush*, forgetful or with little intelligence): *adj.* + *n.*

بی‌هوش (*bi-hush*, unconscious): *prep.* + *n.*

بهوش (*be-hush*, conscious): *prep.* + *n.*

تیزهوش (*tiz-hush*, of sharp intelligence, quick-witted): *adj.* + *n.*

هوشمند (*hush-mand*, intelligent and wise): *n.* + suffix

هوشیار (*hush-yār*, aware, vigilant, cautious): *n.* + suffix

هوشربا (*hush-robā*, mesmerizing, *lit.* robbing one of consciousness):
n. + verb *Stem I*

See also Chapter 9 on prepositions and prefixes / suffixes.

As for the contribution of verbs to producing all sorts of participial adjectives, in order to avoid repetition and overlap, refer to Chapter 10, from Section 10.2 onwards (covering derivatives from infinitive and the two verb stems).

6.9.2 Adjectival phrases

Adjectival phrases are often shortened versions of relative clauses (and in a relative clause, the whole clause is describing a noun, similar to what an adjective does).¹ In adjectival phrases, there are often prepositions, past or present participles or a combination of these. Examples:

the book which is on the table . . . → the book on the table . . .

کتابِ رویِ میز . . . → کتابی که رویِ میز است . . .
(*ketāb-e ru-ye miz*)

the damages that were paid . . . → the damages paid . . .

... خساراتِ پرداخت (khesārāti ke pardākht shod) → خساراتِ پرداخت شده (khesārāt-e pardākht-shode)

6.10 Comparison of adjectives

Persian uses the suffixes *-tar* and *-tarin* to form respectively comparative and superlative adjectives (or adverbs), which are usually written joined, but writing them separately is also becoming common. The suffixes have to be written separately, however, after the adjectives ending in silent *hé* and also for those that already end in the letter ت (*t*). With longer, compound adjectives also, or those ending in ی, writing the suffixes separately is preferable.

6.10.1 Comparative adjectives

For comparative, the suffix *-tar* (تر) is added to the adjective and the preposition *az* (از, here meaning ‘than’) is used before the second part of comparison (if it is mentioned). The comparative adjective can be placed either before or after *az* + *its object*. Examples:

این اتاق خیلی روشنتر است (*in otāgh kheyli rowshan-tar ast*, This room is much brighter.);

این اتاق از آن اتاق روشنتر است (*in otāgh az ān otāgh rowshan-tar ast*, This room is brighter than that room.); or

این اتاق روشنتر از آن اتاق است (*in otāgh rowshan-tar az ān otāgh ast*, This room is brighter than that room.)

When used attributively, it is treated like other adjectives, i.e., placed after the noun and connected to it by *ezāfe*.

More examples with definite / indefinite markers, possessive suffixes, and / or *ezāfe*:

به شهر بزرگتری می‌رود (*be shahr-e bozorgtari mi-ravad*, He / she goes to a larger city.)

برادرِ جوانترِ پروین امروز مریض است (*barādar-e javāntar-e parvin emruz mariz ast*, Parvin’s younger brother is sick today.)

بچه‌های کوچکترشان به مدرسه می‌روند (*bachchehā-ye kuchehtar-eshān be madrese mi-ravand*, Their smaller / younger children go / are going to school.)

آیا لباس گرمتری نمی خواهید؟ (*āyā lebās-e garmtari nemi-khābid?*, Don't you want warmer clothes?)

The preposition used for comparative is *az*. However, if the second part (or 'standard') of comparison is mentioned after the main verb, then *tā* (تا) is used instead – and this can occasionally reduce ambiguities.

The sentence (من) بهمن را بیشتر از تو می بینم (*[man] bahman rā bishtar az to mi-binam*) can have two meanings:

- i 'I see Bahman more than (I see) you,' or
- ii 'I see Bahman more than you (do).'

By changing (من) بهمن را بیشتر از تو می بینم to the version with تا, there will be two different versions for (i) and (ii):

- i (من) بهمن را بیشتر می بینم تا تو را (*[man] bahman rā bishtar mi-binam tā to rā*)
- ii (من) بهمن را بیشتر می بینم تا تو (*[man] bahman rā bishtar mi-binam tā to*)

As can be seen, in (i), it is the final *ra* that brings clarity, and in (ii), the subject cannot be dropped because of the emphasis which is required.

Similarly, the sentence به من کمتر از تو پول داد (*be man kamtar az to pul dād*) can have two meanings, while the version with تا (here given for each of those meanings) eliminates that ambiguity:

- i *He gave me less money than you (did).*
او به من کمتر پول داد تا تو. (*u be man kamtar pul dād tā to*) – Note that او cannot be dropped here.
- ii *He gave less money to me than to you.*
او به من کمتر پول داد تا به تو. (*[u] be man kamtar pul dād tā be to*) – Note the clarifying presence of the second به here.

هرچه (*har-che*) means 'whatever,' and when used with comparative adjectives (or adverbs), it can give these meanings:

- هرچه, followed by two comparatives is similar to two English comparatives preceded by *the*:
هرچه زودتر, بهتر (*har-che zudtar behtar*, The sooner, the better.)
هرچه پیرتر, داناتر (*har-che pirtar dānātar*, The older, the wiser.)

- هرچه followed by only one comparative has the meaning of ‘as . . . as possible’:

هرچه زودتر (*harche zudtar*, as soon as possible)

توفیقِ هرچه بیشترِ شما را آرزو می‌کنم. (*towfigh-e harche bishtar-e shomā rā arezu mi-konam*, I wish you the utmost success / as much success as possible.)

Sometimes هرچقدر (*har-cheghadr*) and هر اندازه (*har-andāze*) can have a similar function.

6.10.2 Superlative adjectives

Superlative adjectives are used only attributively (see Section 6.10.3 for an alternative which can be used predicatively).

For superlative, the suffix ترین (*-tarin*) is added to the adjective. Whereas comparative was treated like a normal adjective – following the noun and using the connector *ezāfe* – superlative precedes the noun and needs no *ezāfe*. (Adjectives preceding the nouns never need *ezāfe*.) Examples:

بزرگترین قاره (*bozorgtarin ghārre*, the largest continent)

کوچکترین پسر (*kuchektarin pesaram*, my youngest son)

When used before plural nouns, however, an *ezāfe* can be added to the superlative – if needed – to function like *of* after an English superlative. ‘The biggest *of* the apples,’ then, would be بزرگترین سیبها (*bozorgtarin-e sib-hā*) while بزرگترین سیبها (*bozorgtarin sib-hā*) without *ezāfe* would simply mean ‘the biggest apples.’

Other examples:

بهترین میوه (*behtarin mive*, the best fruit)

→ بهترین میوه‌ها (*behtarin mive-hā*, the best fruits)

→ بهترین میوه‌ها (*behtarin-e mive-hā*, the best of the fruits)

خوشگلترین دختر (*khoshgeltarin dokhtar*, the prettiest girl)

→ خوشگلترین دخترها (*khoshgeltarin dokhtar-hā*, the prettiest girls)

→ خوشگلترین دخترها (*khoshgeltarin-e dokhtar-hā*, the prettiest of the girls)

6.10.3 The mixed form *az hame*

Another variant of *superlative* is a *comparative* that uses از همه (*az hame*, ‘than all [others]’) as the standard or second part of comparison. This form

is usually used predicatively, and همه از can be placed before or after the comparative. Example:

این باغ از همه زیباترست / این باغ زیباتر از همه است
in bāgh zibātar az hame ast / In bāgh az hame zibātar ast
 (both meaning ‘This garden is more beautiful than all [others].’) =
 این زیباترین باغ است (*in zibātarin bāgh ast*, This is the most beautiful garden.)

Note: This variant (with *az hame*) is the only superlative form possible for adverbs:

او بهتر از همه می نویسد (*u behtar az hame mi-nevisad*, He / she writes better than anyone else.)

6.10.4 Better / best and more / most

The words خوب (*khub*, ‘good’) and زیاد (*ziyād*, ‘much’ or ‘a lot’) have their regular comparative and superlative forms, but also an irregular version which is more common, as shown in Table 6.3.

In بهترین / بهتر and بیشتر / بیشترین, the suffixes are always written joined. (In formal / poetical language, *beh* and *bish* can be used as comparative even without *-tar*; از بیش is almost as common as از بیشتر. (See also Section 16.7.)

6.10.5 Use of Arabic comparative / superlative

A small number of Arabic comparative / superlative adjectives are common in Persian; sometimes people use them without knowing the simple adjective from which they are derived, as is the case with ارجم (*arjah*, [more]

Table 6.3 ‘Better / best’ and ‘more / most’

Simple	Comparative	Superlative
GOOD خوب <i>khub</i>	BETTER بهتر <i>behtar</i> or: خوبتر <i>khubtar</i>	BEST بهترین <i>behtarin</i> or: خوبترین <i>khubtarin</i>
MUCH زیاد <i>ziyād</i>	MORE بیشتر <i>bishtar</i> or: زیادتر <i>ziyādtar</i>	MOST بیشترین <i>bishtarin</i> or: زیادترین <i>ziyādtarin</i>

preferable, used predicatively). Some of them are used within some phrases only that have become fixed clichés, like:

احسن (*ahsan*, better) in به نحو احسن (*be nahv-e ahsan*, in the best way possible)

اعلی (*a'lā*, higher and superior) in در حدّ اعلی (*dar had.d-e a'lā*, to the highest level) or به اعلی درجه (*be a'lā dareje*, to the highest degree)

اقل (*aghall*, less) used in the sense of 'at least' in حدّ اقل (*had.d-e aghall*) or اقلاً (*aghal.lan*)

اکثر (*aksar*, more) in حدّ اکثر (*had.d-e aksar*, at most) or اکثراً (*aksaran*, mostly, often)

اشدّ (*ashadd*, more severe) in legal jargon as اشدّ مجازات (*ashad.d-e mojāzāt*, most severe punishment)

اسرع (*asra'*, faster) used mainly in the phrase در اسرع وقت (*dar asra'-e vaght*, as fast as possible)

Some of them are merely used as first names in Iran; the name Akbar in fact means 'bigger / elder,' and the name Ahmad means 'more praiseworthy.'

6.10.6 Equal comparison, resemblance and sameness

For equal comparison, English uses *as . . . as . . .* with the positive form of the adjective. The most common structure used in Persian for equal comparison is:

be- / bā + abstract noun + ezāfe
به زیبایی (*be zibā'i-ye*) = as beautiful as

(To make abstract nouns from adjectives, stressed *-i* is added, as in زیبا → زیبایی; see Section 9.3.3). Examples:

دستهایش به سردی یخ بود (*dasthāyash be sardi-ye yakh bud*, His hands were as cold as ice.)

اردن به بزرگی مصر نیست (*ordon be bozorgi-ye mesr nist*, Jordan is not as large as Égypt.)

When the second part of comparison is a singular demonstrative pronoun (این or آن), it is more common to place it before the abstract noun (with no *ezāfe*):

گلی به این قشنگی (*goli be in ghashangi*, a flower as beautiful as this) is more common than گلی به قشنگی این (*goli be ghashangi-ye in*).

Expressions like اندازه / بقدر (be *andāze-ye / be ghadr-e*, to the size / extent / amount of) can also be used to convey this kind of equal comparison:

من به زرنگی تو نیستم (man be *zerangi-ye to nistam*, I'm not as smart as you.)
 = من به اندازه تو زرنگ نیستم (man be *andāze-ye to zerang nistam*.)

Using اندازه / بقدر is especially common in cases where the basis of comparison is not an 'abstract' noun, or with longer compound adjectives:

به قدر دهنّت حرف بزَن (be *ghadr-e dahanat harf bezan*, Talk as big as your mouth.)
 این فیلم به اندازه فیلم قبلی خسته کننده نبود (in *film be andāze-ye film-e ghabli khaste-konande nabud*, This film was not so boring as the previous one.)

Using همان (*hamān*, the same, that same) or the more colloquial همین (*hamin*, the same, this same) before اندازه and قدر is also very common, giving them the meaning of 'as much / to the same amount or extent,' while using که before the second part of comparison (which can then turn into a clause by adding a verb):

برادرش هم همانقدر پُرحرف بود (barādarash ham *hamān-ghadr por-harf bud*, His brother was also as [much] talkative.)
 برادرش هم همانقدر پُرحرف بود که خودش (barādarash ham *hamān-ghadr por-harf bud ke khodash*, His brother was also as talkative as himself.)

This is very close to using مثل (*mesl-e*, like) mentioned below:

برادرش هم مثل خودش پُرحرف بود (barādarash ham *mesl-e khodash por-harf bud*, His brother was also talkative like himself.)

Words that mean 'like' (used as *prep.*):

- Colloquial + formal: مثل (*mesl-e*), شبیه (*shabih-e*)
- Formal / written: مانند (*mānand-e*)
- Poetical: همانند (*hamānand-e*), چون (*chon*), همچون (*ham-chon*), به سان (*be sān-e*)

Words that mean 'alike' (*adj.*):

- Colloquial + formal: مثل هم (*mesl-e ham*), مشابه (*moshābeh*), شبیه (*shabih*)
- Formal / written: همانند (*hamānand*), همسان (*ham-sān*), یکسان (*yek-sān*)

For *exactly like*, use درست مثل (*dorost mesl-e*) or عین (*eyn-e*) before the noun, and for *the same as* use همان (*hamān*) predicatively.

هم can be used to make compound adjectives that are lexicalized equatives, like هم‌رنگ (*ham-rang*, of same color); هم‌زبان (*ham-zabān*, [people] of same language); هم‌زمان (*ham-zamān*, simultaneous); and هم‌سن (*ham-senn*, of same age).

6.11 Adjectives that need the *-āne* suffix

The suffix *-āne*, which is originally a suffix of manner, is used to make

- adjectives from nouns,
- adjectives (for non-humans) from other adjectives (that should be used for humans only) and
- adverbs from adjectives.

Examples for (a)

روز، ماه، سال (*ruz, māh, sāl*, day, month, year) → روزانه (*ruzāne*, daily), ماهانه (*māhāne*, monthly), سالانه (*sālāne*, yearly) – the last two sometimes add *-iyāne* and become ماهیانه / سالیانه.

مرد (*mard*, man) → مردانه (*mardāne*, manly, masculine, of men or men's). زن (*zan*, woman) → زنانه (*zanāne*, womanly, feminine, of women or women's).

کودک / بچه (*kudak / bachche*, child) → کودکانه / بچه‌گانه (*kudakāne / bachchegāne*, childish, childlike, of children or children's).

دوست (*dust*, friend) → دوستانه (*dustāne*, friendly).

عاشق (*āshegh*, in love) → عاشقانه (*āsheghāne*, romantic, amorous; amorously).

Examples for (b)

Some adjectives that are about specifically human qualities add this *-āne* suffix when used for inanimates or abstract nouns and activities:

این کارت عجولانه بود (*in kārat ajulāne bud*, This deed of yours / What you did was rushed / done too soon and not well-planned.)

من احمق نیستم (*man ahmagh nistam*, I am not stupid.) → جواب من احمقانه بود (*javāb-e man ahmaghāne bud*, My response was stupid.)

Examples for (c)

Although adjectives can generally be used as adverbs in Persian without any change, most of those describing human qualities (mentioned above) usually add the *-āne* suffix when used as adverbs.

او عاقل است (*u āghel ast*, He is wise.)

→ حرفهای او عاقلانه است (*harfhā-ye u āghelāne ast*, His words are wise.)

→ او عاقلانه حرف می‌زند (*u āghelāne harf mi-zanad*, He speaks wisely.)

شما زیرکید (*shomā zirakid*, You are smart.)

→ جوابتان زیرکانه بود (*javāb-etān zirakāne bud*, Your response was smart.)

→ خیلی زیرکانه عمل کردید (*kheyli zirakāne amal kardid*, You acted very smartly.)

When the *-āne* version of an adjective is not common, other solutions are found – like changing the adjective to an abstract noun (by adding stressed *-i*) and using با (*bā*, with) or از روی (*az ruye*, from): زیرک (*zirak*) and زرنگ (*zerang*) both mean ‘smart,’ but there is no زرنگانه, and the last example above would look like this if زرنگ is to be used:

شما زرنگید (*shomā zerangid*, You are smart.)

→ جوابتان از روی زرنگی بود (*javāb-etān az ru-ye zerangi bud*, Your response was smart.)

→ خیلی با زرنگی عمل کردید (*kheyli bā zerangi amal kardid*, You acted very smartly.)

6.12 Colors; adjectives from nouns

The common word for color is رنگ (*rang*), and sometimes it makes a compound adjective with the words for different colors, although they can also be used alone; for instance, *black* is سیاه (*siyāh*) or سیاه‌رنگ (*siyāh-rang*, lit. black-colored) or به رنگ سیاه (*be-rang-e-siyāh*, in color black).

Some of the terms for colors are derived adjectives made from nouns, like:

آبی (*ābi*, blue; from *āb* [آب], water)

قهوه‌ای (*ghahve'i*, brown; from *ghahve* [قهوه], coffee)

نارنجی (*nāranji*, orange; from *nāranj* [نارنج], sour orange)

صورتی (*surati*, pink, from *surat* [صورت], face)
 خاکستری (*khākestari*, gray, from *khākestar* [خاکستر], ashes)
 ارغوانی (*arghavāni*, purple, from ارغوان [*arghavān*], Judas Tree or *Cercis siliquastrum*)
 مشکی (*meshki*, another word for ‘black,’ used mostly for the color of eyes, hair or clothes; from *moshk* [مشک], musk) and so on.

Adding stressed *-i* suffix to nouns is a very common way of making adjectives (see Section 9.3.3).

Some of the basic colors:

red: قرمز (*ghermez*) or the more literary سرخ (*sorkh*)
 white: سفید (*sefid*) or the more literary سپید (*sepid*)
 yellow: زرد (*zard*)
 violet: بنفش (*banafsh*)

6.13 Adjectives used as nouns

Most adjectives can be used as nouns when necessary. They do become nouns when plural suffixes are added, similar to an adjective in English preceded by *the*:

جوانان / جوانها (*javānhā / javānān*) = the young
 ثروتمندان / ثروتمندها (*servatmandhā / servatmandān*) = the rich
 زردها (*zardhā*) = the yellow ones

(Reminder: the *-ān* suffix is used only for people and only in formal language.)

As the last example shows, Persian doesn’t have anything like ‘one’ or ‘ones’ to be placed after adjectives and thus avoid repeating a noun – this applies to comparative and superlative adjectives also; while, at least for singular, colloquial Persian would add the stressed definite marker *-e* from Tehrani accent (non-existent in formal Persian). (See Section 15.1.1 / I). Compare the following:

English: Not this pen, that red one!
 Formal Persian: این قلم نه، آن قلم قرمز! (*in ghalam na, ān ghalam-e ghermez!*) (Here the noun is repeated.)
 Colloquial / Tehrani Persian: این قلم نه، اون قرمزه! (*in ghalam na, un ghermeze!*)

English: These boxes are heavy, take one of those small ones.

Formal Persian: این جعبه‌ها سنگینند، یکی از آن کوچکیها بردار. (*in ja'behā sangin-and, yeki az ān kuchekhā bar-dār.*) (No need to repeat the noun this time.)

Colloquial / Tehrani Persian: این جعبه‌ها سنگینن، یکی از اون کوچیکا بردار. (*in ja'behā sangin-an, yeki az un kuchikā bar-dār.*)

Comparative and superlative adjectives can be used in the same way as nouns.

6.14 Nationalities and languages

For most of the countries, once the attributive suffix (a stressed *-i*) is added to the name of the country, it gives the name of the citizen and the language as well as the adjectives for those; for instance, in the case of Italy, the country is ایتالیا (*itāliyā*), and ایتالیائی (*itāliyā'i*) is Italian (for the citizen and the language, noun and adjective). Not so straightforward with all other countries, though. Table 6.4 lists only some countries.

Table 6.4 Countries, citizens, languages

Country	Native	Adjective	Language	Adjective for language	
Afghanistan	افغانستان <i>afghānestān</i>	افغان <i>afghān</i>	افغان <i>afghān</i>	فارسی (دری) <i>fārsi (dari)</i>	فارسی (دری) <i>fārsi (dari)</i>
			پشتو <i>pashtu</i>	پشتو <i>pashtu</i>	
Austria	اتریش <i>otrish</i>	اتریشی <i>otrishi</i>	اتریشی <i>otrishi</i>	آلمانی <i>ālmāni</i>	آلمانی <i>ālmāni</i>
Egypt	مصر <i>mesr</i>	مصری <i>mesri</i>	مصری <i>mesri</i>	عربی <i>arabi</i>	عربی <i>arabi</i>
England	انگلستان <i>engelestān</i>	انگلیسی <i>engelisi</i>	انگلیسی <i>engelisi</i>	انگلیسی <i>engelisi</i>	انگلیسی <i>engelisi</i>
France	فرانسه <i>farānse</i>	فرانسوی <i>farānsavi</i>	فرانسوی <i>farānsavi</i>	فرانسه <i>farānse</i>	فرانسوی <i>farānsavi</i>
Greece	یونان <i>yunān</i>	یونانی <i>yunāni</i>	یونانی <i>yunāni</i>	یونانی <i>yunāni</i>	یونانی <i>yunāni</i>
India	هند / هندوستان <i>hendustān / hend</i>	هندی <i>hendi</i>	هندی <i>hendi</i>	هندی <i>hendi</i>	هندی <i>hendi</i>
Jordan	اردن <i>ordon</i>	اردنی <i>ordoni</i>	اردنی <i>ordoni</i>	عربی <i>arabi</i>	عربی <i>arabi</i>

(Continued)

Table 6.4 (Continued)

Country		Native	Adjective	Language	Adjective for language
Pakistan	پاکستان <i>pākestān</i>	پاکستانی <i>pākestāni</i>	پاکستانی <i>pākestāni</i>	اردو <i>ordu</i>	اردو <i>ordu</i>
Poland	لهستان <i>lahestān</i>	لهستانی <i>lahestāni</i>	لهستانی <i>lahestāni</i>	لهستانی <i>lahestāni</i>	لهستانی <i>lahestāni</i>
Russia	روسیه <i>rusiyye</i>	روس <i>rus</i>	روسی <i>rusi</i>	روسی <i>rusi</i>	روسی <i>rusi</i>
Syria	سوریه <i>suriyye</i>	سوری <i>suri</i>	سوری <i>suri</i>	عربی <i>arabi</i>	عربی <i>arabi</i>
Tajikistan	تاجیکستان <i>tājikestān</i>	تاجیک <i>tājik</i>	تاجیکی <i>tājiki</i>	فارسی (تاجیکی) <i>fārsi (tājiki)</i>	فارسی (تاجیکی) <i>fārsi (tājiki)</i>
Turkey	ترکیه <i>torkiyye</i>	ترک <i>tork</i>	ترکی <i>torki</i>	ترکی <i>torki</i>	ترکی <i>torki</i>

6.15 Use of Arabic feminine ending

Persian has no gender and no declension / inflection, but Arabic does. Some grammatical features of the Arabic language also were introduced and occasionally implemented in Iran after the Conquest, like the use of some Arabic broken plurals (similar to some Latin broken plurals common in English) and the use of a feminine suffix for adjectives (if they had an Arabic origin). This feminine suffix, which is pronounced as a final *-e* in Persian (and not as *-a* in original Arabic), is used almost exclusively in written Persian, and that also in administrative, legal or religious texts (all using ‘bad Persian’ according to writers of ‘good’ Persian). Only very few of them are common at a colloquial level also, like the masculine and feminine versions of ‘the late’ for a deceased person: *مرحوم* (*marhum*, m.) and *مرحومه* (*marhume*, f.).

Sometimes (bad) Persian uses this suffix even out of place and without any justification, and reason can be the similarity in its Persianized pronunciation to the end sound in Persian past participles, as in *پول واصله* (*pul-e vāsele*, the received money) – comparable with *پول واصل شده* (*pul-e vāsel-shode*, same meaning).

Note

- 1 But aren’t all adjectives capable of being converted to relative clauses?
‘A red pen’ is ‘a pen which is red.’

Adverbs

The main job of an adverb is to modify or qualify a verb, an adjective or another adverb, but certain adverbs (like ‘almost’ – in Persian تقریباً, *taghriban*) can modify almost any other part of speech, from a preposition to a whole sentence. This chapter will not discuss in detail the *types* of adverbs – which are the same in all languages – or give lists of them, but it is necessary and helpful to see how they are used, what *forms* they have and how they are formed in Persian.

7.1 Position of adverbs

Adverbs are usually placed before what they modify, and no connecting *ezāfe* is required after them, although the words within an adverbial phrase might need this connector. Temporal frequency adverbs are usually placed at the beginning of the sentence (before or after the subject, if mentioned). In the following examples, the adverbs or adverbial phrases have been underlined:

سارا هر روز دیرمی آید / هر روز سارا دیر می آید (*sārā har-ruz / har-ruz sārā dir mi-āyad*, Every day Sarah comes late.) – Here *dir* (‘late’) – the adverb of manner – has been placed before the verb that it modifies.

اتاق خیلی گرم شده است (*otāgh kheyli garm shode ast*, The room has become very warm.) – In this sentence, the adverb *kheyli* can even be placed before *otāgh* if more emphasis is needed.

اتاق به حد کافی گرم شده است (*otāgh be hadd-e kāfi garm shode ast*, The room has become sufficiently [*lit. to a sufficient extent*] warm.)

یک گل بی اندازہ خوشبوی زیبا (*yek gol-e bi-andāze khosh-bu-ye zibā*, an extremely sweet-smelling, beautiful flower.)

7.2 Persian uses adjectives as adverbs

Most of the time, adjectives can be used as adverbs without any change. Compare:

این قلم خوب است (*in ghalam khub ast*, This pen is good.)
 این قلم خوب می نویسد (*in ghalam khub mi-nevisad*, This pen writes *well*.)
 عصبانی بود (*asabāni bud*, He was *angry*.)
 عصبانی حرف می زد (*asabāni harf mi-zad*, He talked *angrily*.)

7.3 'With' + abstract noun – and similar forms

This is similar to English, where 'with anger' or 'with interest' mean respectively 'angrily' or 'interestedly.' The preposition that contemporary Persian uses to make such adverbs – in a quite productive way – is با (*bā*, with); in earlier times this preposition was often به (*be*) and was usually written joined. Many of these older 'be-'prefixed adverbs are still common in Persian, and *be-* might be the preferred version in literary / poetical language, while *bā-* is used to make new adverbs when necessary. At the same time, contemporary Persian treats به as a preposition that means 'to' and should be written separately, while the older adverb-making *be-* prefix is *still* written predominantly joined, in spite of recent attempts to write this one also separately. Example:

او بسرعت به مدرسه رفت (*u be-sor'at be madrese raft*, He quickly went to school.)

In the above example, the first *be-* is the adverb-forming one and is written joined – بسرعت meaning 'with speed' – but the second *be* means 'to' and has been written separately.

Some Arabic loan words have their own abstract noun versions, which can be used in this way after *be-* or *bā-*, like سرعت (*sor'at*, speed) here, related to the adjective سریع (*sari'*, fast). But many of them simply add the Persian attributive *-i* suffix to become abstract nouns, similar to Persian adjectives, before being prefixed by *be-* / *bā-*. Examples: راحت (*rāhat*, comfort), براحتی (*be-rāhati*, comfortably).

Sometimes either به or با can be used, sometimes only one of them. Examples:

این قلم خوب / بخوبی می نویسد (*in ghalam khub / be-khubi mi-nevisad*, This pen writes well.) – But note that, for the opposite ('badly'), there is no ببدی (*be-badi*) version, and بد (*bad*, bad) should be used as adverb also. در را آسان / باسانی باز کردم (*dar rā āsān / be-āsāni bāz kardam*, I opened the door easily.)

با خوشحالی گفتم: البته! (*bā khosh-hāli goftam: albatte!*, 'Of course!' I said happily.)

با تعجب به من نگاه می کرد (*bā ta'aj.job be man negāh mi-kard*, He was looking at me with astonishment.)

Some examples of adverbs with *be-* for which you cannot use *bā-*:

بتدریج (*be-tadrij*, gradually)

بموقع (*be-mowghe'*, on time)

بزودی (*be-zudī*, soon)

بتنهائی (*be-tanhā'i*, alone)

بتازگی (*be-tāzegi*, recently)

For more emphasis, sometimes instead of به or با, expressions like در / با کمال (*dar / bā kamāl-e*) or در / با نهایت (*dar / bā nahāyat-e*) are used, in this usage both meaning 'with utmost' / 'at the height of' / 'extremely':

در نهایت بی سلیقه لباس می پوشید (*dar nahāyat-e bi-salighegi lebās mi-pushid*, He /she wore clothes very tastelessly.)

با نهایت احترام به او سلام کرد (*bā nahāyat-e ehterām be u salām kard*, He / she greeted him / her most respectfully.)

To say *in what way / manner / form* something happens or is done, an adjective / adverb can be preceded by phrases like بطور (*be-towr-e*), بطرز (*be-tarz-e*), بنحو (*be-nahv-e*), بشکل (*be-shekl-e*), بصورت (*be-surat-e*), بشیوه (*be-shive-ye*), all of them using the *ezāfe*. Examples:

او بطور عجیبی اصرار دارد که احمد را نمی شناسد (*u be-towr-e ajibi esrār dārad ke ahmad rā nemi-shenāsad*, She insists in a strange way [here: 'adamantly'] that she does not know Ahmad.)

شما بطرز خیلی زیبایی آن شعر را خواندید (*shomā be-tarz-e kheyli zibā'i ān she'r rā khānidid*, You read / recited that poem very beautifully / in a very beautiful way.)

همیشه بصورت مرموزی لبخند می زند (*hamishe be-surat-e marmuzi labkhand mi-zanad*, He /she always smiles in a mysterious way / form.)

As the above examples show, the words that mean ‘way / shape,’ etc. here would need the unstressed indefinite *-i* suffix also, which can be added to these words (more formal) or to the last adjective (more common). In the last example, for instance, instead of بصورت مرموزی (*be-surat-e marmuzi*), one could say بصورتی مرموز (*be-surati marmuz*).

7.4 -āne suffix

The *-āne* suffix was mentioned under adjectives in some detail (see Section 6.11, where its adverbial usage was explained), and it was mentioned that this suffix is used to make:

- (a) adjectives from nouns,
- (b) adjectives (for non-humans) from other adjectives (that should be used for humans only) and
- (c) adverbs from adjectives.

As mentioned above (Section 7.1.1), even normal adjectives can be used as adverbs, which means that adjectives of groups (a) and (b) here can also be used adverbially if needed. Here are examples for all three groups:

(a):

او مردانه جنگید (*lebās-e mardāne*, men’s clothes) versus او مردانه جنگید (*u mardāne jangid*, He fought bravely / in a manly manner.)
 او ماهانه حقوق ماهانه (*hoghugh-e māhāne*, monthly salary) versus او ماهانه گزارش می کند (*u māhāne gozāresh mi-konad*, He reports monthly.)
 باید کلاس شبانه (*kelās-e shabāne*, evening [‘nightly’] classes) versus باید شبانه فرار کنیم (*bāyad shabāne farār konim*, We have to flee during the night.)

(b):

یک جواب احمقانه (*yek javāb-e ahmaghāne*, a stupid answer) versus خیلی احمقانه رفتار کردی (*kheyli ahmaghāne raftār kardi*, You acted very stupidly.)

یک نامه عاشقانه (*yek nāme-ye āsheghāne*, an *amorous* / a love letter)
versus عاشقانه به او نگاه می کرد (*āsheghāne be u negāh mi-kard*, He
looked at her *amorously*.)

(c):

بی صبرانه منتظر جوابش بودم (*bi-sabrāne montazer-e javābash budam*, I
waited for her response *impatiently*.)
هزاران زندانی را وحشیانه قتل عام کردند (*hezārān zendāni rā vahshiyāne
ghatl-e ām kardand*, They *brutally* massacred thousands of prisoners.)

Certain adverbs (like those modifying the whole sentence) usually need *-āne*:

خوشبخت (*khosh-bakht*, lucky, fortunate, happy) → خوشبختانه (*khosh-
bakhtāne*, luckily, fortunately)
بدبخت (*bad-bakht*, unlucky, unfortunate) → بدبختانه (*bad-bakhtāne*,
unluckily, unfortunately)
متأسف (*mote'assef*, sorry, regretful) → متأسفانه (*mote'assefāne*, regret-
tably, unfortunately)

7.5 Adjective + *tanvin*

This is mostly for adjectives borrowed from Arabic, and in contemporary Persian, the *tanvin* sign (pronounced as a final *-an*; see Section 2.2.11) is usually placed on an *alef*, regardless of the original Arabic spelling. Adjectives borrowed from Arabic usually have a different form for abstract nouns. As already mentioned, سریع (*sari'*) is *fast*, and سرعت (*sor'at*) is *speed*. Compare in the following examples the different adverb forms:

‘He answered quickly.’

سریع جواب داد (*sari' javāb dād*)
به سرعت جواب داد (*be sor'at javāb dād*)
سریعاً جواب داد (*sari'an javāb dād*)

‘He strongly objected.’

او به شدت مخالفت کرد (*u be-sheddat mokhālefat kard*)
او شدیداً مخالفت کرد (*u shadidan mokhālefat kard*)

You can't usually find adjectives that have both *-āne* (Section 7.4) and *tanvin* forms; it is either one or the other.

Table 7.1 Firstly, secondly, etc.

	Common word	Literary
Firstly	أولاً (<i>av.valan</i>)	نخست (<i>nokhost</i>)
Secondly	دوماً (<i>dov.voman</i>) or ثانياً (<i>sāniyan</i>)	دو دیگر (<i>do digar</i>)
Thirdly	سوماً (<i>sev.voman</i>) or ثالثاً (<i>sālesan</i>)	سه دیگر (<i>se digar</i>)
Fourthly	چهارماً (<i>chahāroman</i>) or رابعاً (<i>rābe'an</i>)	–
Fifthly	پنجماً (<i>panjomān</i>) or خامساً (<i>khāmesan</i>)	–

Some very common adverbs with *tanvin*:

- فوراً (*fowran*, immediately)
نسبتاً (*nesbatan*, relatively)
بعداً (*ba'dan*, afterwards)
مخصوصاً (*makhsusan*, especially)
تقریباً (*taghriban*, approximately, almost)
معمولاً (*ma'mulan*, usually)
غالباً (*ghāleban*, often)
اتفاقاً (*ettefāghan*, incidentally, by chance)

Tanvin is also used to make numerative adverbs from ordinal numbers, as in English *-ly* is added to ordinal numbers. These are understandably common for the first few numbers only. Both Arabic and Persian versions are common for the numbers 1 through 5, as shown in Table 7.1.

7.6 Reduplication

Sometimes reduplication shows repetition or the order in which things appear and happen. (No *ezāfe* used to connect the words.)

This happens, for instance, with numbers, when their pronominal forms are reduplicated: یکی یکی (*yeki-yeki*, one by one), دو تا دو تا (*do-tā do-tā*, two by two), ده تا ده تا (*dah-tā dah-tā*, by tens), etc.

Or collective nouns can be used in this way: گروه گروه (*goruh-goruh*, in groups, group after group), موج موج (*mowj-mowj*, wave after wave).

In other cases reduplication may intensify a quality, like using the adverb *very* before some adjective or adverb, to emphasize that it is 100% like that.

Examples with nouns (connected through *ezāfe*):

این موسیقی ایرانی ایرانی هم نیست (*in musigbi irāni-ye irāni ham nist*, This music is not totally / 100% Iranian.)

این چیزی که نوشته‌ام شاید شعر شعر هم نباشد (*in chizi ke neveshte-am shāyad she'r-e she'r ham nabāshad*, Maybe what I have written is not a real poem / is not 100% a poem.)

Examples with adjectives (connected through *ezāfe*):

دستهایش سرد سرد بود (*dast-hā-yash sard-e sard bud*, His hands were very cold.)

لباس عروس باید سفید سفید باشد (*lebās-e arus bāyad sefid-e sefid bāshad*, The bride's dress must be totally white.)

Examples with adverbs or adjectives used adverbially (no *ezāfe* here!):

هوا داشت کم کم تاریک می‌شد (*havā dāsht kam-kam tārik mi-shod*, Little by little it was getting dark.)

جلو جلو می‌رفت و توجهی به پشت سری‌ها نداشت (*jelow-jelow mi-raft va tavaj.johi be posht-e-sari-hā na-dāsht*, He walked ahead and paid no attention to those behind [him].)

غذایش را تند تند خورد و رفت (*ghazāyash rā tond-tond khord va raft*, He ate very quickly and left.)

Sometimes a glide (usually *-ā-*) is used to connect the two duplicated words, and occasionally, the preposition *be* (or *dar*) is placed between them. Examples:

سراسر (*sarāsar*, all over)

پیشاپیش (*pishāpish*, in advance)

دوشادوش (*dushādush*, shoulder to shoulder)

پی‌پی / پی‌در پی (*peyāpey / pey-dar-pey*, successively)

زود به زود (*zud-be-zud*, at short intervals)

دیر به دیر (*dir-be-dir*, at long intervals)

روز به روز (*ruz-be-ruz*, day by day)

دست در دست (*dast-dar-dast*, hand in hand)

Present participles (in Persian formed by present stem of verb + *-ān*; see Section 10.2.2.2) belong to adjectives / adverbs that are sometimes duplicated to

make adverbs while intensifying the meaning / action. Sometimes it is a full duplication, sometimes partial with a slight change. This is less common with past participles, but there are a few common expressions using past participles also, like *رفته رفته* (*rafte-rafte*, gradually). Examples with present participles:

- پُرسان پُرسان* (*porsān-porsān*): after or while asking many times (for directions, for instance)
دَوان دَوان (*davān-davān*): running fast or for a long time
لنگان لنگان (*langān-langān*): limping; possible also with partial repetition: *لنگ لنگان* (*lang-langān*)

In some cases two present participles from two different verbs form a bond and are often said together:

- افتان و خیزان* (*oftān-o-khizān*): falling and rising; walking with difficulty
ترسان و لرزان (*tarsān-o-larzān*): fearing and trembling

A very common type of reduplication – with the same words used as nouns, adjectives or adverbs – is of an onomatopoeic nature. Examples:

- باران جرجر باران* (*jar-jar-e bārān*, rattle sound of rain); *باران جرجر می‌بارید* (*bārān jar-jar mi-bārid*, The rain rattled / hammered.)
آب غلغل (*ghol-ghol-e samāvar*, bubbling noise of samovar); *آب می‌جوشید* (*āb ghol-ghol mi-jushid*, The water bubbled up noisily.)
تمام مدّت هق هق گریه (*sedā-ye hegh-hegh*, sound of sobbing); *تمام مدّت هق هق گریه می‌کردند* (*tamām-e moddat hegh-hegh gerye mi-kardand*, The whole time they were sobbing noisily.)

7.7 Adverbial phrases with *dar* در حال / در حالت (*dar hāl-e / dar hālat-e*)

به *dar hāl-e* (*dar hāl-e*), *در حالت* (*dar hālat-e*) or sometimes other variants like *به صورت* / *به شکل* (*be hālat-e*) – all meaning ‘while’ or ‘in the state of’ – or *به صورت* / *به شکل* (*be surat-e / be shekl-e*, in the form of) can be followed by nouns, infinitives, present or past participles or adjectives, to make adverbial phrases:

- در حال دو* (*dar hāl-e dow*, while running)
در حال دویدن (*dar hāl-e davidan*, while running)
در حالت نشسته (*dar hālat-e neshaste*, while sitting, in a seated position)

7.8 Comparison of adverbs

When using the *comparative* form, there is no difference between adjectives and adverbs: the same *-tar* suffix should be used (see Section 6.10.1):

Adjective: رنگِ این دیوار روشنتر از آن یکی است (*rang-e in divār rowshan-tar az ān-yeki ast*, The color of this wall is brighter than that one.)

Adverb: شما خیلی روشنتر از او حرف می‌زنید (*shomā kheyli rowshan-tar az u harf mi-zanid*, You talk much more clearly than he [does].)

When it comes to *superlative*, however, there is a major difference: adverbs have no superlative in *-tarin*. The only superlative form possible for adverbs is the variant with *az hame* (see Section 6.10.3):

او سریعتر از همه دوید / او از همه سریعتر دوید (*u sari'-tar az hame david / u az hame sari'-tar david*, He / she ran the fastest = faster than anyone else.)

Here it is not possible to say او سریعترین دوید.

7.9 زیاد (*ziyād*, much, a lot), خیلی (*kheyli*, very, a lot), etc.

These are words that can be used as adjectives or adverbs.

The words خیلی (*kheyli*), زیاد (*ziyād*) and the slightly more formal بسیار (*besyār*), along with the quite formal فراوان (*farāvān*) and the literary / poetical بسی (*basi*), are all used to mean 'much,' 'many' or 'a lot of.'

زیاد versus خیلی – some differences

- (a) زیاد is not usually used adverbially to modify an *adj.* in affirmative sentences, though it is common in the negative:

هو خیلی سرد است (*havā kheyli sard ast*, The weather is very cold.) – Do not use زیاد here; but in the following example both are possible.

هو زیاد / خیلی سرد نیست (*havā ziyād / kheyli sard nist*, The weather is not much cold.)

- (b) خیلی is used with comparative adjectives and adverbs, not زیاد. In this case, even when negative, خیلی (or چندان, *chandān*) is the preferred adverb:

از برادرش خیلی باهوشتر است (*az barādar-ash kheyli bā-hush-tar ast*, She is much smarter than her brother.)

امروز هم خیلی / چندان زودتر نیامد (*emruz ham kheyli / chandān zud-tar nayāmad*, He didn't come much sooner today either.)

- (c) In affirmative sentences, the stress falls on the first syllable of *kheyli*; in negative sentences, on the second. No change of stress in *ziyād* (end stress).

7.9.1 Much too / too much

If you use زیادی (*ziyādī*) with the stressed *-i* suffix, the meaning would be 'much too' or 'too much.' Expressions like زیاد از حد (*ziyāde az had*), بیش از حد (*bish az had*) or بیش از اندازه (*bish az andāze*) can also be used. Examples:

این درس زیادی سخت است (*in dars ziyādī sakht ast*, This lesson is [much] too difficult.)

شما بیش از حد به خودتان مطمئن هستید (*shomā bish az had be khod-etān motma'en hastid*, You trust yourself too much.)

کار نمی‌کند و بیش از اندازه حرف می‌زند (*kār nemi-konad va bish az andāze harf mi-zanad*, He doesn't work and talks too much.)

7.10 کم (*kam*, few, little), کمی (*kami*, a few, a little), etc.

This group can also be used as adjectives or adverbs.

A more formal / literary synonym for کم is اندک (*andak*, few or little). To say a little / a few, unstressed indefinite *-i* suffix is added: کمی (*kami*, in colloquial Persian sometimes یک کمی, *yek kami*) or اندکی (*andaki*) in formal usage. Examples:

او کمی / اندکی زودتر از ما رسید (*u kami / andaki zud-tar az mā resid*, He arrived a little earlier than us.)

شما معمولاً کم حرف می‌زنید (*shomā ma'mulan kam harf mi-zanid*, You usually talk [too] little.)

او را خیلی کم می‌شناسم (*u rā kheyli kam mi-shenāsam*, I hardly know him. / I know him very little.)

The comparative کمتر (*kam-tar*, less, fewer) + an indefinite noun means ‘hardly any,’ as in:

کمتر کسی می‌داند که او کجاست (*kam-tar kasi mi-dānad ke u kojā-st*,
Hardly anyone knows where he is.)

کمتر روزی هست که او را نبینم (*kam-tar ruzi hast ke u rā na-binam*, There
is hardly any day when I don’t see him.)

کمتر مردی را می‌بینی که اینقدر در خانه کار کند
(*kam-tar mardī rā mi-bini ke in-ghadr dar khāne kār konad*, You hardly see a man who works
so much at home.)

7.11 دیگر (*digar*, other, more, any more) and هنوز (*hanuz*, still, yet)

The most basic difference between these two adverbs, regardless of affirmative / negative, is that:

- هنوز (‘still’) is about *continuation*: it shows that something – some situation – *still* continues.
- دیگر (‘other’) is about *change*: it shows that something – some situation – has become ‘other’ or something different.

هنوز in the sense of *still / yet* is very common in all levels of language; in literary language, همچنان (*ham-chenān* or *ham-chonān*) is also used in this sense. In present perfect tense, هنوز is used only in the negative: هنوز آن را ننوشته‌ام (*hanuz ān rā na-neveshte-am*, I have not written it yet / I still have not written it.) Because of its continuous / progressive nature, it is possible

Table 7.2 *Hanuz* versus *digar*

	<i>Affirmative</i>	<i>Negative</i>
هنوز	هنوز پول دارم (<i>hanuz pul dāram</i> , I still have money.) (‘having money’ continues)	هنوز پول ندارم (<i>hanuz pul na-dāram</i> , I still don’t have money. / I don’t have money yet.) (‘not having money’ continues)
دیگر	دیگر پول دارم (<i>digar pul dāram</i> , NOW I have money.) (Whereas I had none until a while ago.)	دیگر پول ندارم (<i>digar pul na-dāram</i> , I don’t have money any longer.) (Whereas I did have some until a while ago.)

to use it, however, in present perfect progressive tense: تا سالها بعد هنوز برایش نامه می‌نوشته است (*tā sāl-hā ba'd hanuz barāyash name mi-neveshte ast*, He has still been writing her letters for many years after that.)

In the simple past tense, هنوز is hardly possible, except with the verbs 'to be' and 'to have':

مینا رفته بود ولی کتابش هنوز روی میز بود (*mina rafte bud vali ketābash hanuz ru-ye miz bud*, Minā had left, but her book was still on the table.)

هنوز در بیمارستان بود که کتابش چاپ شد (*hanuz dar bimārestān bud ke ketābash chāp shod*, He was still in the hospital when his book was published.)

به همکارش هنوز اعتماد داشت (*be ham-kārash hanuz e'temād dāsht*, He still trusted his colleague.)

With a negative past perfect tense followed by a temporal *ke*-clause, the meaning would be 'had hardly / scarcely . . . when . . .'; a shorter version of this structure uses just a negative past participle and no *ke* at the beginning of the next clause, the meaning being more like 'having barely . . .' – but in these cases *hanuz* can also be dropped without a change in the meaning (see Section 13.5). Examples:

هنوز تنم را نشسته بودم که آب سرد شد (*hanuz tanam rā na-shoste budam ke āb sard shod*, I had scarcely washed my body when the water became cold.)

هنوز در را باز نکرده، فریاد زد که گرسنه است (*hanuz dar rā bāz na-karde, faryād zad ke gorosne ast*, Having barely opened the door, he shouted that he was hungry. Or: Scarcely had he opened the door when . . .)

As for دیگر, the pronominal functions were mentioned earlier (see Section 5.7); here some other usages (adjectival or adverbial) will be mentioned which would require different translations into English:

- *another:*

یک کتاب دیگر / کتابی دیگر / کتاب دیگری خریدم (*yek ketāb-e digar / ketābi digar / ketāb-e digari kharidam*, I bought another book.)

زبان دیگری هم بلد هستید؟ (*zabān-e digari ham balad hastid?*, Do you know another language also?)

• **other:**

در کشورهای دیگر / در دیگر کشورها اینطور نیست (*dar keshvar-hā-ye digar / dar digar-e keshvar-hā in-towr nist*, It's not so [/'this way'] in other countries.)

کتابِ دیگرِ گرانتر بود (*ketāb-e digar gerān-tar bud*, The other book was more expensive.)

• **else:**

دیگر چه می‌دانی؟ (*digar che mi-dāni?*, What else do you know?)

= چه چیزِ دیگری می‌دانی؟ (*che chiz-e digari mi-dāni?*, What other thing(s) do you know?)

دیگر با چه کسی حرف زد؟ (*digar bā che kasi harf zadi?*, Who else did you talk to?)

= با چه کسِ دیگری حرف زد؟ (*bā che kas-e digari harf zadi?*, What other person did you talk to?)

• **more:**

چند روزِ دیگر اینجا بمان (*chand ruz-e digar injā bemān*, Stay here for a few more days.)

باید دو سالِ دیگر درس بخواند (*bāyad do sāl-e digar dars be-khānad*, She has to study for two more years.)

تا دو ساعتِ دیگر خواهد آمد (*tā do sā'at-e digar khāhad āmad*, He will come in two hours [/'after two more hours'].)

• **next:**

تا هفتهٔ دیگر / تا هفتهٔ بعد کارم تمام می‌شود (*tā hafte-ye digar / tā hafte-ye ba'd kāram tamām mi-shavad*, My work will be finished until next week.)

قرارِ دیگریت / قرارِ بعدی‌ات با دکتر برای چه روزی است؟ (*gharār-e digar-at / gharār-e ba'di-yat bā doktorbarāye che ruzi ast?*, When [/'for what day'] is your next appointment with the doctor?)

• **anymore:**

تو را می‌بخشم به شرط آنکه دیگر دروغ نگوئی (*to rā mi-bakh.sham be shart-e ān-ke digar dorugh na-gu'i*, I forgive you, provided that you no more lie.)

بعد از آن عمل، دیگر نمی‌تواند بچه‌دار شود (*ba'd az ān amal digar nemi-tavānad bach.che-dār shavad*, After that operation, she cannot get pregnant anymore.)

• **now (showing change; in this sense often after حالا, but sometimes used alone):**

دیگر در مغازهٔ عمویش کار می‌کند (حالا) (*[hālā] digar dar maghāze-ye amuyash kār mi-konad*, Now he works at his uncle's store. [He didn't use to; this is new.])

دیگر وقتی فارسی حرف می‌زنیم می‌فهمد ([hālā] digar vaghti fārsi harf mi-zanim mi-fahmad, Now he understands when we talk in Persian.)

- **then:**

شما که می‌خواستید از هم جدا شوید، چرا دیگر بچه‌دار شدید؟ (*shomā ke mi-khāstid az ham jodā shavid, cherā digar bach-che-dār shodid?*, You [who] wanted to separate from each other [= get divorce], why then did you parent a child?)

او از تو بدش می‌آمد، چرا دیگر من را کتک زد؟ (*u az to bad-ash mi-āmad, cherā digar man rā kotak zad?*, He hated you; why then did he beat me?)

- **already:**

اگر آن ساعت بیائی، من دیگر خوابیده‌ام (*agar ān sā't at biyā'i, mad digar khābide-am*, If you come at that hour, I will already be asleep.)

تو را دیگر می‌شناسد (*to rā digar mi-shenāsad*, He already knows you. / He knows you now.)

- **finally (possible change):**

کی دیگر حالش خوب می‌شود؟ (*key digar hāl-ash khub mi-shavad?*, When will he finally get well?)

دیگر تمام شد (*digar tamām shod*, It's finally over. / It's finished now.)

- **also or at least (emphasis / reproach):**

دیگر نباید به پدرت هم می‌گفتی (*digar na-bāyad be pedar-at ham mi-gofti*, You shouldn't have told your father also. [It was already bad enough that you told others!])

دیگر از من که می‌توانست بپرسد (*digar az man ke mi-tavānest beporsad*, He could have asked me at least.)

7.12 هم (ham, too, also) and its synonyms

While هم is common at all levels of language, همینطور (*ham-in-towr*) is common in colloquial Persian, and همینجور (*ham-in-jur*) is still more colloquial (or further away from formal).

On the other hand, همچنین (*ham-chenin*) and نیز (*niz*) are formal versions used in written Persian only, while compounds like همین‌گونه (*ham-in-gune*) and همین‌سان (*ham-in-sān*) are still more literary / poetical.

As always, when there is an *in-* compound, there is an *ān-* version also (slightly more formal): همانطور (*ham-ān-towr*), همان‌گونه (*ham-ān-gune*), etc.

One major difference is that هم is usually post-positioned, placed *after* the word that it modifies, and therefore never at the beginning of a sentence (except as correlative conjunction . . . هم . . . هم [*both . . . and . . .*]; see Section 9.2.2).

Of these, نیز and همچنین are formal, used in written Persian only, while همینطور is colloquial. Examples in which هم is not possible:

همینطور باید دانست که زیاد وقت نداریم (*hamin-tour bāyad dānest ke ziyād vaqht nadārim*, We [one] must also know that we don't have much time.)

علی معلم خواهرم و همچنین از دوستان خوب من بود (*ali mo'alle-m-e khāharam va ham-chenin az dustān-e khub-e man bud*, Ali was the teacher of my sister and [was] also one of my good friends.)

من هم means 'me too' as well as 'me neither.' For still more emphasis, sometimes two of these words are used together: من هم همینطور (me too / same with me).

هم is sometimes used as the short version of همدیگر (*ham-digar*, each other; see Section 5.6), which makes adverbs like با هم (*bā ham*, together; with each other / with one another) possible.

باز هم means 'again / anew / still / more' (meanings that باز alone can have, only with less emphasis):

یک ساعت با او حرف زدم، ولی باز هم قبول نمی کرد (*yek sāt'at bā u harf zadam, vali bāz ham ghabul nemi-kard*, I talked to him for an hour, but he still wouldn't accept.)

پنج تا شکلات خورده بود، ولی باز هم می خواست (*panj-tā shokolāt khorde bud, vali bāz ham mi-khāst*, He had eaten five chocolates, but he [still] wanted more.)

باز هم فراموش کردی؟ (*bāz ham farāmush kardi?*, Did you forget again?)

Sometimes هم is used to show some contrast, difference or consequence, like 'as for the other side' / 'for my (or his, etc.) part':

کفشهایم را نمی داد، من هم به مادرش گفتم (*kafsh-hā-yam rā nemi-dād, man ham be mādar-ash goftam*, She wouldn't give my shoes, so I told her mother.)

آنها حرف می‌زدند، من هم در سکوت گوش می‌کردم (*ānhā harf mi-zadand, man ham dar sokut gush mi-kardam*, They were talking, [and] I was listening in silence.)

Not quite unrelated to the above meanings, هم can also mean ‘moreover,’ ‘additionally’ (‘what is more’) or ‘but / in contrast’:

تنهایی را دوست نداشت، ازدواج هم نمی‌خواست بکند (*tanhā'i rā dust na-dāsht, ezdevāj ham nemi-khāst bekonad*, She didn't like being alone, [but] she didn't want to marry either.)

درس نمی‌خواند، نمرهٔ خوب هم می‌خواهد (*dars nemi-khānad, nomre-ye khub ham mi-khāhad*, [As if it is not bad enough that] He is not studying / does not care for studying, he wants good grades [‘too’].)

زشت نیست، خیلی هم زیباست (*zesht nist, kheyli ham zibā-st*, It's not ugly; [on the contrary,] it's very beautiful.)

While هم means *also* in the idiom ‘not only . . . but also . . .’ (see Section 9.2.2), sometimes in the same idiom, it can have the meaning of ‘even’ or ‘in contrast.’ The last examples mentioned above can all be seen as such sentences but with ‘not only’ deleted. Compare:

نه تنها زشت نیست، خیلی هم زیباست (*na-tanhā zesht nist, kheyli ham zibā-st*, Not only is it not ugly, but it is very beautiful also.)

Thus, it can mean ‘even’ used for emphasis, with or without the word *حتی* (*hattā*, even) itself. In the following examples, one can use هم or حتی or both, but they have different positions in the sentence:

[حتی] به اندازهٔ الاغ هم نمی‌فهمد (*[hattā] be-andāze-ye olāgh ham nemi-fahmad*, He doesn't understand even as much as a donkey.)

[حتی] یک بچه هم می‌تواند این کار را بکند (*[hattā] yek bach.che ham mi-tavānad in kār rā bekonad*, Even a child can do this.)

این هفته [حتی] یک صفحه هم نخوانده‌ام (*in hafte [hattā] yek safhe ham na-khānde-am*, This week I haven't read even a single page.)

از تو هم بهتر بلدم (*az to ham behtar balad-am*, I know even better than you.)

After *hanuz* it means ‘even now / still / yet’:

هنوز هم او را ندیده‌ام (*hanuz ham u rā na-dide-am*, I haven't seen him even yet.)

7.13 تنها (tanhā) and فقط (faghat)

The only meaning of فقط is ‘only,’ and it is more common than تنها in this sense, while تنها means ‘only,’ ‘lonely,’ as well as ‘alone.’

In the conjunction ‘not only . . . but also . . .,’ both *tanhā* and *faghat* can be used in both colloquial and formal.

In the sense of ‘the only’ (or ‘my only,’ etc.), تنها should be used.

In the following examples, تنها is either the only option or the more formal / literary one:

تنها (فقط) کمی کوتاه است (*khub neveshti, vanhā [faghat] kami kutāh ast*, You wrote [it] well; only, it’s a little too short.)

تنها (فقط) یک برادر دارم (*vanhā [faghat] yek barādar dāram*, I have only one brother.)

او تنها برادر من است (*u vanhā barādar-e man ast*, He is my only brother.)

اینجا تنها هستم (*injā vanhā hastam*, I am alone here.)

من آدم تنهایی هستم (*man ādam-e vanhā’i hastam*, I am a lonely person.)

باید تنها (به تنهایی) غذا بخورم (*bāyad vanhā [be-tanhā’i] ghazā be-khoram*, I have to eat alone.)

بچه را تنها نگذار (*bach-che rā vanhā na-gozār*, Don’t leave the child alone.)

The way تنها is used to mean ‘the only’ (or *my* only, etc.) can sometimes leave room for another meaning also, the only difference being the stress and intonation:

A sentence like تنها برادر پروین مرد (*vanhā barādar-e parvin mord*) means:

- (a) Parvin’s only brother died. (*Tanhā* has no stress.)
- (b) Only Parvin’s brother died. (*Tanhā́* pronounced with stress.)

7.14 ‘Too . . . to . . .’ and ‘enough to . . .’

‘Too . . . to . . .’ and ‘enough to . . .’ will be covered in Chapter 13 (see Section 13.14).

Chapter 8

Numerals, time, age, measures

Persian numbers are in many ways similar to English, but also different in certain ways, most importantly when it comes to syntax.

8.1 General remarks

When written as numerals, numbers are written from left to right (as in English) – even when written in the middle of a text that is normally written from right to left.

In Persian numbers are used as pre-positioned adjectives followed by singular nouns. The meaning, however, would be plural (for numbers above 1), and the verb has thus to be plural for animates – for inanimates, however, the use of singular / plural would be optional and sometimes decided by context. (See Section 11.4 for *verbal agreement*.) Examples:

سربازها برگشتند (*sarbāz-hā bar-gashtand*, The soldiers returned.)
هشت سرباز زنده برگشتند (*hasht sarbāz zende bar-gashtand*, Eight soldiers returned alive.) – This time سرباز is singular, although the verb is still plural.

Numbers cannot be used pronominally in Persian; in the absence of a noun, there should at least be a counting word after them:

بیست کتاب دارم (*bist ketāb dāram*, I have 20 books.), بیست تا دارم (*bist tā dāram*, I have twenty [ones / items].)

8.1.1 Cardinal numbers

Cardinal numbers are those that tell *how many*. Table 8.1 lists the Persian cardinal numbers from 1 to 1001.

Table 8.1 Numbers

	<i>Numeral</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>
0	۰	صفر	<i>sefr</i>
1	۱	یک	<i>yek</i>
2	۲	دو	<i>do</i>
3	۳	سه	<i>se</i>
4	۴	چهار	<i>chahār</i>
5	۵	پنج	<i>panj</i>
6	۶	شش	<i>shesh</i>
7	۷	هفت	<i>haft</i>
8	۸	هشت	<i>hasht</i>
9	۹	نه	<i>nob</i>
10	۱۰	ده	<i>dah</i>
11	۱۱	یازده	<i>yāzdah</i>
12	۱۲	دوازده	<i>davāzdah</i>
13	۱۳	سیزده	<i>sizdah</i>
14	۱۴	چهارده	<i>chahārdah</i>
15	۱۵	پانزده	<i>pānzdah</i>
16	۱۶	شانزده	<i>shānzdah</i>
17	۱۷	هفده	<i>hefdah</i>
18	۱۸	هجده	<i>hejdah</i>
19	۱۹	نوزده	<i>nuzdah</i>
20	۲۰	بیست	<i>bist</i>
21	۲۱	بیست و یک	<i>bist-o-yek</i>
30	۳۰	سی	<i>si</i>
40	۴۰	چهل	<i>chehel</i>
50	۵۰	پنجاه	<i>panjāh</i>
60	۶۰	شصت	<i>shast</i>
70	۷۰	هفتاد	<i>haftād</i>
80	۸۰	هشتاد	<i>hashtād</i>
90	۹۰	نود	<i>navad</i>
100	۱۰۰	صد	<i>sad</i>
101	۱۰۱	صد و یک	<i>sad-o-yek</i>
200	۲۰۰	دویست	<i>devist</i>
300	۳۰۰	سیصد	<i>sisad</i>
400	۴۰۰	چهارصد	<i>chahārsad</i>
500	۵۰۰	پانصد	<i>pānsad</i>
600	۶۰۰	ششصد	<i>sheshsad</i>
700	۷۰۰	هفتصد	<i>haftsad</i>
800	۸۰۰	هشتصد	<i>hashtsad</i>
900	۹۰۰	نهصد	<i>nohsad</i>

(Continued)

Table 8.1 (Continued)

	<i>Numeral</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>
1000	۱۰۰۰	هزار	<i>hezār</i>
1001	۱۰۰۱	هزار و یک	<i>hezār-o-yek</i>

Note 1: The sign for zero is not much different in this alphabet from the punctuation mark *period*, which can sometimes be confusing.

Note 2: The signs for the numerals 4 (۴), 5 (۵) and 6 (۶) have slightly different shapes in Arabic and are written as ξ, Δ and ٦ respectively. Both versions, however, are familiar and common in Persian.

Note 3: **The conjunction و** (*va*, ‘and’). In combinations of numbers, the conjunction و (*va*, ‘and’) is used to connect numbers of different orders – for instance, between hundreds and tens and ones. Though always *written* separately, within numbers this *va* is always connected to the preceding number in pronunciation and pronounced as -o (see numbers 21, 101 and 1001 in the above table). (Even when not within numbers, it is usually pronounced as -o when connected to the preceding word in pronunciation – a practice very common in spoken Persian – but as *va* when not connected.)

Note 4: See Section 5.9 regarding using تا (*tā*) and other count words / measure words after numerals, also regarding using numbers as pronouns.

Note 5: **Pluralizing the numerals.** As in English (*tens, hundreds*, etc.), Persian numerals can add the plural suffix when necessary, and they would still need a noun or counting word and cannot be used pronominally. This plural suffix is -*hā*; it is only هزار (1000) that can add either plural suffix (-*hā* or -*ān*), regardless of modifying an animate or inanimate noun. Examples:

دهها سال (*dah-hā sāl*, tens of years)

صدها آزمایش (*sad-hā āzemāyesh*, hundreds of experiments)

هزارها / هزاران ستاره (*hezār-hā /hezārān setāre*, thousands of stars)

دهها هزار کتاب (*dah-hā hezār ketāb*, tens of thousands of books)

8.1.2 Ordinal numbers and fractions

Ordinal numbers are those that tell you the *order* of things in a set, not the quantity. Persian has two slightly different suffixes for ordinal numbers, which are used in two different ways:

(A) The suffix -*omin* is added to the number, and the ordinal number is treated as a normal number placed before a singular noun: هفت شهر

(*haft shahr*, seven cities) → هفتمین شهر (*haftomin shahr*, seventh city).

- (B) A shorter suffix, just *-om*, is added to the number, and then the ordinal number is treated as an adjective, meaning that it is placed after the noun, preceded by the connector *ezāfe*: شهر هفتم (*shahr-e haftom*, seventh city). (See Chapter 4 for *ezāfe*.) As it is the case with adjectives, the preceding noun can be singular or plural: روز ششم (*ruz-e sheshom*, sixth day) or روزهای ششم (*ruz-hā-ye sheshom*, the sixth days).

A plural noun is used when two or more ordinal numbers are mentioned:

کتابهای دوم و سوم (the second and third books)

The pre-positioned *-omin* version (A) is especially more common when the noun has other modifiers also; هفتمین شهر بزرگ (*haftomin shahr-e bozorg*, 7th big city) is preferred to شهر بزرگ هفتم (*shahr-e bozorg-e haftom*, same meaning).

However, it is the post-positioned *-om* version (B) that is used for fractions. Formation of fractions is very regular and similar to English, with the only difference that Persian fractions are not hyphenated in writing, and the ordinal number always remains singular: thus three-eighths would simply be سه هشتم (*se hashtom*). (When using numerals, Persian would not use a forward slash in fractions, but rather a horizontal line, with the numerator above the line and the denominator under it. Thus, ۴/۸ would normally not be understood as four-eighths in Persian, but rather as 4.8 [= 4 8/10].)

See below (Sections 8.1.2.1 to 8.1.2.3) for some Arabic ordinal numerals and fractions common in Persian.

8.1.2.1 First, last, etc.

It is only the first three numbers that have additional or slightly different ordinal forms, as shown in Table 8.2.

The words used for 'last' are آخرین (*ākharin*, Type A) and آخر (*ākhar*, Type B); in written Persian and more elevated language, the words واپسین (*vāpasin*) or بازپسین (*bāzpasin*) are also used (for both types: preceding the noun or following it after an *ezāfe*).

Table 8.2 Irregular ordinal numbers

	Type A	Type B	Form used in fractions
First	اُولَين (<i>av.va.lin</i>) less common versions: يکمين (<i>ye.ko.min</i>); نخستين (<i>no.khos.tin</i>)	اَوَل (<i>av.val</i>) less common versions: يکم (<i>ye.kom</i>); نخست (<i>no.khost</i>)	يکم (<i>ye.kom</i>)
Second	دَوَمين (<i>dou.vo.min</i>)	دَوَم (<i>dou.vom</i>)	دَوَم (<i>dou.vom</i>)
Third	سَوَمين (<i>seu.vo.min</i>)	سَوَم (<i>sev.vom</i>)	سَوَم (<i>sev.vom</i>)

8.1.2.2 Firstly, secondly, etc.

To say *firstly*, *secondly*, etc., *tanvin* is added to Persian ordinal numbers ending in *-om*, changing thus *-om* to *-oman*. Understandably, this is common for only the first few numbers. Both Arabic and Persian versions are common for numbers 1–5, as shown in Table 8.3.

Table 8.3 Firstly, secondly, etc.

	Common word	Literary
Firstly	اَوَلًا (<i>av.va.lan</i>)	نخست (<i>no.khost</i>)
Secondly	دَوَمًا (<i>dou.vo.man</i>) or ثانياً (<i>sā.ni.yan</i>)	دو ديگر (<i>do di.gar</i>)
Thirdly	سَوَمًا (<i>seu.vo.man</i>) or ثالثاً (<i>sā.le.san</i>)	سه ديگر (<i>se di.gar</i>)
Fourthly	چهارمًا (<i>cha.hā.ro.man</i>) or رابعاً (<i>rā.be.'an</i>)	–
Fifthly	پنجماً (<i>pan.jo.man</i>) or خامساً (<i>khā.me.san</i>)	–

8.1.2.3 Some common Arabic fractions

Some of the Arabic fractions that are common in Persian (sometimes preceded by the Persian یک [‘one’] or other numbers):

- نصف (*nesf*, half = نيم [nim]) – very common, but use نيم for half-hours
- ثلث (*sols*, one-third = يک سَوَم [yek-sevvom]) – used especially for quarters / terms in academic year (excluding summer)
- ربع (*rob'*, one-fourth = يک چهارم [yek-chahārom]) – used especially for a quarter of an hour

خمس (*khoms*, one-fifth = یک پنجم [*yek-panjom*]) – used mostly in an Islamic context for religious taxes
عشر (*oshr*, one-tenth = یک دهم [*yek-dahom*])

8.2 Telling the time

The word ساعت (*sā'at*) in Persian means a 'watch' (or 'clock'), an 'hour,' or the expression 'o'clock' used when telling the time. As 'hour,' ساعت follows numbers; as 'o'clock,' ساعت precedes numbers and needs the connector *ezāfe*. Examples:

یک ساعت (*yek sā'at*, one hour), پنج ساعت (*panj sā'at*, five hours)
ساعتِ یک (*sā'at-e yek*, one o'clock), ساعتِ پنج (*sā'at-e panj*, five o'clock)

In both cases, the word چند (*chand*) replaces the numbers to make questions:

چند ساعت؟ (*chand sā'at?*, How many hours?)
ساعتِ چند؟ (*sā'at-e chand?*, At what time? – *lit.* 'What o'clock?')

Two important words for telling the time are ربع (*rob'*, a quarter) and نیم (*nim*, half).

Two others are دقیقه (*daghighe*, minute) and ثانیه (*sāniye*, second).

The times of day are صبح (*sobh*, 'morning' or 'a.m.'), ظهر (*zohr*, noon), بعدازظهر (*ba'd-az-zohr*, 'afternoon' or 'p.m.'), شب (*shab*, night), نیمشب (*nim-shab*) or نیمه شب (*nime-shab*, midnight).

When it is past the half-hour, in Persian it is more common to say how much remains *to* (به [*be*]) the next hour (and ساعت is often dropped), although that is not the only option.

As an example, the expressions for the times between 6:00 and 7:00 are listed in Table 8.4.

More examples:

امروز چند ساعت درس می‌خوانی؟ (*emruz chand sā'at dars mi-khāni?*, How many hours are going to study today?)
امروز تا ساعتِ چند درس می‌خوانی؟ (*emruz tā sā'at-e chand dars mi-khāni?*, Till what time are going to study today?)
او همیشه ساعت پنج و چهارده دقیقه و سی ثانیه می‌رسد (*u hamishe sā'at-e panj-o chahārdah daghighe-wo si sāniye mi-resad*, He always arrives at 5:14:30.)

Table 8.4 The times from 6 to 7

	ساعت شش six o'clock
پنج دقیقه به هفت five to seven, or 6:55	(ساعت) شش و پنج دقیقه five past six, or 6:05
یک ربع به هفت a quarter to seven, or 6:45	(ساعت) شش و ربع a quarter past six, or 6:15
بیست و هفت دقیقه به هفت twenty-seven minutes to seven, or 6:33	(ساعت) شش و بیست و هفت دقیقه twenty-seven minutes past seven, or 7:27
	(ساعت) شش و نیم 6:30

Table 8.5 The times of day

	YESTERDAY دیروز <i>diruz</i>	TODAY امروز <i>emruz</i>	TOMORROW فردا <i>fardā</i>
MORNING صبح <i>sobh</i>	دیروز صبح <i>diruz sobh</i> or صبح دیروز <i>sobh-e diruz</i>	امروز صبح <i>emruz sobh</i> or صبح امروز <i>sobh-e emruz</i>	فردا صبح <i>fardā sobh</i> or صبح فردا <i>sobh-e fardā</i>
NOON ظهر <i>zohr</i>	دیروز ظهر <i>diruz zohr</i> or ظهر دیروز <i>zohr-e diruz</i>	امروز ظهر <i>emruz zohr</i> or ظهر امروز <i>zohr-e emruz</i>	فردا ظهر <i>fardā zohr</i> or ظهر فردا <i>zohr-e fardā</i>
AFTERNOON بعد از ظهر <i>ba'd az zohr</i>	دیروز بعد از ظهر <i>diruz ba'd az zohr</i> or بعد از ظهر دیروز <i>ba'd az zohr-e diruz</i>	امروز بعد از ظهر <i>emruz ba'd az zohr</i> or بعد از ظهر امروز <i>ba'd az zohr-e emruz</i>	فردا بعد از ظهر <i>fardā ba'd az zohr</i> or بعد از ظهر فردا <i>ba'd az zohr-e fardā</i>
NIGHT شب <i>shab</i>	دیشب <i>dishab</i>	امشب <i>emshab</i>	فردا شب <i>fardā shab</i>

8.2.1 Times of day; days of the week

For different times of 'today,' Persian repeats the word امروز (*emruz*, today) instead of using 'this.' The name of the day (e.g., yesterday, today, tomorrow, Monday, etc.) usually comes before the time of the day (morning, noon, etc.) without any *ezāfe*, but can also follow it (less common) and would then need an *ezāfe*, as shown in Table 8.5.

The same would apply to the days of the week (like Monday) or to the days before yesterday or after tomorrow: *پریروز* (*pariruz*, the day before yesterday), *پس فردا* (*pas-fardā*, the day after tomorrow).

The days of the week in Persian start with Saturday, and Friday is a holiday. Five of them start with the numbers 1 to 5. Here are their names:

شنبه (*shanbe*, Saturday)
یکشنبه (*yek-shanbe*, Sunday)
دوشنبه (*do-shanbe*, Monday)
سه شنبه (*se-shanbe*, Tuesday)
چهارشنبه (*chahār-shanbe*, Wednesday)
پنجشنبه (*panj-shanbe*, Thursday)
جمعه (*jom'e*, Friday)

Note: Though written as شنبه with the letter ن (*n*), the more common pronunciation is *shambe* instead of *shanbe*.

The use of numbers at the beginning of most of the days allows you to use چند (*how many?*; pronounced unstressed) to ask about them:

امروز چند شنبه است؟ (*emruz chand shanbé ast?*, What day of the week is today?) – with main stress on *-bé*.

Compare with:

هر ماه چند شنبه دارد؟ (*har māh chānd shanbe dārad?*, How many Saturdays are there in a month?) – with main stress this time on چند.

8.3 Age

You can mention – or ask about – a person's age in different ways.

- 1 *X years* (or *chand sāl* in questions) + possessive suffixes + verb 'to be' (always 3rd person singular, because the grammatical subject in this construction is always *sāl*, 'year,' while the possessive suffix shows whose age we are talking or asking about; see Section 13.16.3):

مینا بیست سالش است (*minā bist sālsh ast*, Mina is 20 years old.)
چند سالت است؟ (*chand sālāt ast?*, How old are you?)

فکر می‌کنی (من) چند سالم است؟
(*fekr mikoni (man) chand sālam ast?*,
How old do you think I am?)

2 X years (or *chand sāl* in questions) + verb ‘to have’:

من سی سال دارم (*man si sāl dāram*, ‘I am 30’ – *lit.* ‘I have 30 years.’)
شما چند سال دارید؟ (*shomā chand sāl dārid?*, How old are you?)

3 X ساله (*sāle*) (or *chand sāle* in questions) + verb ‘to be’:

پری هفده ساله است (*pari hefdah-sāle ast*, Pari is 17 [*lit.* Pari is a 17-year old].)
شما چند ساله اید؟ (*shomā chand sāle id?*, How old are you?)

The last option (with ساله) can be used like an adjective:

یک پسر دو ساله (*yek pesar-e do sāle*, a two-year-old boy)

By adding a stressed ی to ساله (which would require the glide گ also) we can mention the *age*:

او در هفده سالگی به تهران می‌رود
(*u dar hefdah sālegi be tehrān mi-ravad*,
He goes / will go to Tehran at the age of 17.)

8.4 Measures

Modern Iran has adopted the metric system, borrowing many measure words from French, like کیلو (*kilu*, kilo); گرم (*geram*, gram); or متر (*metr*, metre), etc.

8.5 Asking questions about numbers and quantities

See also Section 5.5 (under چند, *chand*) to learn more about asking questions about numbers and quantities.

Prepositions, conjunctions and some common prefixes / suffixes

The categories of words covered in this chapter might seem to be very different, but there are many similarities and overlaps also.

9.1 Prepositions

Persian has only a few ‘primary’ prepositions; the rest are ‘derived’ prepositions (mostly nouns / adverbs + *ezāfe*) or prepositional phrases. The prepositions can have different meanings and usages, each time being the equivalent of a different preposition in English. In spoken Persian when using rapid speech, the *ezāfe* in prepositional phrases may be dropped, giving them the appearance of primary or proper prepositions. The following are some of the most important of them with their most common meanings.

از (*az*): *from; since; out of / because of; about / concerning; also of* (after numbers and quantitative pronouns) and *than* (with comparative).

Examples:

از خانه به دانشگاه رفت (*az khāne be dāneshgāh raft*, He went from home to the university.)

ساعت ۸ از خانه رفت (*sā'at-e hasht az khāne raft*, He left home at 8.)

از بچگی عاشق رقص بود (*az bach.chegi āshegh-e raghs bud*, She loved dance since childhood.)

یکی از پسرها آمد (*yeki az pesar-hā āmad*, One of the boys came.)

خیلی از آنها را می‌شناسم (*kheyli az ānhā rā mi-shenāsam*, I know many of them.)

با کلاهی از گل می‌رقصید (*bā kolāhi az gol mi-raghsid*, She danced with a hat [made] of flowers.)

از عصبانیت نمی‌توانست حرف بزند (*az asabāniyyat nemi-tavānest harf bezanad*, He couldn't speak from / because of anger.)

برای من از ایران بگوئید (*barāye man az irān begu'id*, Tell me about Iran.)
 از آن بی خبر بودم (*az ān bi-khabar budam*, I didn't know about that.)
 از مادرت چیزی شنیده‌ای؟ (*az mādarat chizi na-shenide'ī?*, Haven't
 you heard from / about your mother?)
 از کجا می‌دانی؟ (*az kojā mi-dāni?*, How [*lit.* 'from where'] do you
 know?)
 از این بیشتر ندارم (*az in bishtar na-dāram*, I don't have more than this.)
 از همه پیرتر است (*az hame pīr-tar ast*, He is the oldest / older than
 all [others].)

با (*bā*): *with; together with; by means of; on* (for means of transporta-
 tion). Examples:

با دوستم به آنجا خواهیم رفت (*bā dustam be ānjā khāham raft*, I'll go
 there with my friend.)
 چرا با مداد نمی‌نویسی؟ (*cherā bā medād nemi-nevisi?*, Why don't you
 write with a pencil?)
 سفر با قطار را دوست دارم (*safar bā ghatār rā dust dāram*, I like travel-
 ing by train.)

برای (*barāye*): *for*. In literary / poetical Persian sometimes preceded by *از*
 (*az*); a still more literary / archaic version would be *بهر* (*az*) (*[az] bahr-e*).
 Examples:

یک هدیه برای مادرش خرید (*yek hedye barāye mādar-ash kharid*, She
 bought a gift for her mother.)
 برای چه؟ (*barāye che?*, What for? / Why?)

Colloquial / Tehrani synonym:

واسه (*vāse[-ye]*)

بعد از (*ba'd-az*) *after (temp.)*. Example:

بعد از ظهر پیش خواهرم رفتم (*ba'd-az-zohr pish-e khāharam raftam*, In
 the afternoon, I went to my sister[s].)

Synonyms:

پس از (*pas-az* [*form.*])

به دنبال (*be-donbāl-e*) – in *colloq.* *به* is dropped

در پی (*dar-pey-e*) – in *colloq.* *در* is dropped

به (*be*): *to; at; in* (for directions and locations, also for indirect objects
 of many verbs, usually written separately); *with* (to make adverbs of
 manner with abstract nouns, in this usage sometimes written joined).

Note: It is ‘to a location,’ not ‘to a person’ (the latter would need پیش instead of به).

Examples:

بود (bābak be madrese nemi-ravad, Bābak doesn’t go to school.)

به سختی نفس می کشید (be-sakhti nafas mi-keshid, She breathed with difficulty.)

به سرعت (بسرعت) برگشت (be-sor’at bar-gasht, He returned quickly [= with speed].)

بی (bi): *without*. Example:

بی هیچ توضیحی نامه را داد و رفت (bi hich towzihi name rā dād va raft, Without any explanation, he gave the letter and left.)

Synonym:

بدون (bedun-e)

پشت (posht-e): *behind; at the back of*. (پُشت = ‘back’). Example:

پشتِ خانه شان یک باغ بود (posht-e khāne[eshān yek bāgh bud, There was a garden behind their house.)

پیش (pish-e): *to or with a person (similar to the French chez); in the presence of; next to*. Examples:

پیش مینا رفتم (pish-e minā raftam, I went to Mina[’s].)

پیش مینا هستم (pish-e minā hastam, I am with Mina / at Mina’s.)

کتابت پیش من است (ketāb-at pish-e man ast, Your book is with me / at my place.)

پیش از (pish az) or قبل از (ghabl az): *before (temp.)*. Example:

پیش از خواب، کمی آب خوردم (pish az khāb, kami āb khordam, I drank some water before sleep.)

تا (tā): *until; up to; as far as*. Examples:

تا ظهر آنجا ماندیم (tā zohr ānjā māndim, We stayed there until noon.)

تا شیراز رفتیم (tā shiraz raftim, We went as far as Shirāz.)

جز (joz / be-joz): *except*. Example:

همه چیز دارد جز عقل (hame-chiz dārad joz aghl, He has everything except reason / brain.)

Synonyms:

غیر از / بغیر از (*gheyr-az / be-gheyr-az*)
مگر (*magar*)

جلو (*jelow-e*): *opposite; in front of; before; ahead of.*

Synonyms (for 'in front of'):

مقابل (*moghābel-e*)
روبروی (*ru-be-ru-ye*)
در برابر (*dar barābar-e*)

Examples:

جلو من نشسته بود (*jelow-e man neshaste bud*, She was sitting opposite / in front of me.)

او جلو من راه می‌رفت (*u jelow-e man rāh mi-raft*, He was walking ahead of / before me.)

در (*dar*): *in; inside; into; within.* (With some compound verbs, it can have the opposite meaning: 'out / outside'). Some synonyms:

توی (*tu-ye, col.*)
داخل (*dākhel-e, form.*)
درون (*darun-e, lit.*)
ظرف (*zar.f-e, 'within' – temp.*)

Examples:

او در اتاقش نیست (*u dar otāghash nist*, She is not in her room.)

کتاب را در کیفش گذاشت (*ketāb rā dar kif-ash gozāsh*, He put the book in / inside his bag.)

در ۳۰ ثانیه غذایی را خورد (*dar si sāniye ghazā-yash rā khord*, He ate his food in 30 seconds.)

درباره (*darbāre-ye*): *about; concerning.*

Synonyms:

راجع به (*rāje' be*)
در مورد (*dar mowred-e*)

Example:

درباره سفرش حرف زد (*dar-bāre-ye safar-ash harf zad*, She talked about her trip.)

در مورد زندگی گذشته‌اش چه می‌دانید؟ (*dar-mowred-e zendegi-ye goza-shte-ash che mi-dānid*, What do you know about his past life?)

روی (*ru-ye*): *on; over; above*. Two synonyms:

بالای (*bā.lā-ye*, *over*)

بر (*bar*, *upon – lit.*)

Example:

پرنده روی درخت است (*parande ru-ye derakht ast*, The bird is on the tree.)

زیر (*zir-e*): *under*. Example:

گربه زیر میز است (*gorbe zir-e miz ast*, The cat is under the table.)

مثل (*mesl-e*): *like*. Example:

مثل روز روشن است (*mesl-e ruz rowshan ast*, It's clear ['bright'] like day.)

Formal / literary synonyms:

مانند (*mānand-e*)

چون / همچون (*chon / ham-chon*) (*lit.*)

بسان (*be-sān-e*) (*poet.*)

نزدیک (*nazdik-e*) or به نزدیک (*naz.dik be*): *near* (or *nearly* with quantities); *close to*. Example:

خانه‌اش نزدیک رودخانه است (*khāne-ash nazdik-e rud-khāne ast*, His house is near the river.)

نزدیک به یک ماه در بیمارستان بود (*nazdik be yek māh dar bimārestān bud*, For nearly a month he was in the hospital.)

Sometimes some of the above prepositions are combined, although only one might seem to be enough: for instance, روی can be preceded by the prepositions در, به, or بر.

Prepositions are always followed by their objects – a noun or a pronoun, which can be at the same time the indirect object of a verb. Most of the time they are similar to the prepositions used in English, but sometimes they are not.

9.1.1 What happens to verbs after prepositions?

After prepositions, you need an object (usually in the form of a noun or pronoun), but not *verbs* and clauses. However, verbs also have their own 'noun form,' which is usually the *infinitive* in Persian (see Section 10.1.3).

If you have to use a full verb or a ‘noun clause’ after a preposition, there is usually a simple solution for that also. In English, you can say ‘in spite of his *laughter*’ (noun) or ‘in spite of his *laughing*’ (gerund = noun), but you cannot say ‘in spite of he *laughed*’ (a full verb) – you can, however, say, ‘in spite of *the fact that* he laughed . . .’: adding ‘the fact that’ does the trick here. In all such cases, Persian would add اینکه (or این که , *in-ke*, in more formal Persian که آنکه /آن , *ān-ke*). Here the demonstrative pronoun این (or آن) would assume the role of the object (‘the fact’) followed by که (‘that,’ introducing the noun clause that follows). In the following examples, the change from a *noun* like مرگ (*marg*, death) to the ‘noun form’ of the verb, i.e., infinitive in Persian: مردن (*mordan*, dying) – and finally to a full verb like مرده (است) (*morde [ast]*, has died) has been demonstrated:

از مرگ پدرش خبری نداشتم (*az marg-e pedar-ash khabari na-dāshtam*, I knew nothing / had not heard about his father’s death.)

از مردن پدرش خبری نداشتم (*az mordan-e pedar-ash khabari na-dāshtam*, I knew nothing / had not heard about his father’s dying.)

از اینکه پدرش مرده خبری نداشتم (*az in-ke pedar-ash morde khabari na-dāshtam*, I did not know / had not heard that his father had died.)

به مهربانی او اطمینان داشتم (*be mehrabāni-ye u etminān dāshtam*, I was sure of his kindness.)

به مهربان بودن او اطمینان داشتم (*be mehrabān budan-e u etminān dāshtam*, I was sure of his being kind.)

به اینکه او مهربان است اطمینان داشتم (*be in-ke u mehrabān ast etminān dāshtam*, I was sure that he was kind.) – this can also be expressed in a simpler way as اطمینان داشتم که او مهربان است (*etminān dāshtam ke u mehrabān ast*, same meaning.)

9.1.2 Can prepositions be used as conjunctions?

The simple answer is NO. Unlike English, where some prepositions (like ‘before’ or ‘after’) can be used as conjunctions too, Persian would not allow that. See above (Section 9.1.1) for one simple solution in this regard, and see Section 9.2 for more on conjunctions.

The only exception here is تا (*tā*), meaning ‘until / up to’ as preposition and meaning ‘so that / in order that / so long as’ as conjunction (with or without اینکه /آنکه; see Section 13.6 for examples).

For instance, برای (*barāye*, for) is a preposition, and برای اینکه / برای آنکه (*barāye in-ke / barāye ān-ke*, for the purpose that / so that) is a conjunction:

برای دیدنِ مادرش به تهران رفت (*barāye didan-e mādar-ash be tehrān raft*, She went to Tehran for [the purpose of] seeing her mother.)

برای اینکه مادرش را ببیند به تهران رفت (*barāye in-ke mādar-ash rā bebinad be tehrān raft*, She went to Tehran [in order] to see her mother.)

به تهران رفت برای اینکه مادرش را ببیند (*be tehrān raft barāye in-ke mādar-ash rā bebinad*, same meaning.)

9.2 Conjunctions

Persian has a few simple and a large number of compound conjunctions, most of which are groups of synonyms, with the difference being in their degree of currency or formality.

Conjunctions are coordinating, correlative or subordinating.

Subordinating conjunctions are used to join clauses, and for this reason, to avoid repetitions and too many cross-references, this group of conjunctions will be covered in Chapter 13 which deals with sentences. Coordinating and correlative conjunctions, however, can join words and phrases as well as clauses.

9.2.1 Coordinating conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions join words or groups of words that are of equal rank.

va. و (*va*) means 'and,' but it is pronounced *va* only at the beginning of sentences / clauses or after a pause. In other cases, it is usually suffixed (in pronunciation, not in writing) to the previous word and pronounced as *-o* (or, after vowels [except the vowel *-i*], as *-wo*). When used inside numbers, it is always suffixed to previous number and therefore never pronounced as *va*. Examples, with the suffixed pronunciation given (assuming that there is no pause):

و من عاشقش هستم (*va man āshegh-ash hastam*, And I love her.)

ساعتِ دو و ربع (*sā'at-e do-wo rob'*, at 2:15)

سی و هشت (*si-yo hasht*, thirty-eight)

شصت و نه (*shast-o noh*, sixty-nine)

اینجا و آنجا (*injā-wo ānjā*, here and there)

خانه و مدرسه (*khāne-wo madrese*, home and school)
 خسرو و شیرین (*khosrow-o shirin*, Khosrow and Shirin)
 مینو و پرویز (*minu-wo parviz*, Minu and Parviz)
 تو و همسرت (*to-wo hamsar-at*, you and your spouse)
 لیلی و مجنون (*leyli-yo majnun*, Leyli and Majnun)
 تهران و تبریز (*tehrān-o tabriz*, Tehran and Tabriz)
 می و می‌نوشان (*mey-o mey-nushān*, wine and wine-drinkers)

In colloquial Persian, you might see this conjunction used redundantly before other conjunctions, resulting in ‘and or’, ‘and but’ and other combinations that are not possible in English.

yā. یا (*yā*) means ‘or’; in colloquial Persian sometimes preceded by a redundant *va* (‘and’), which would not change the meaning. Examples:

چند تا سیب یا گلابی بخر (*chand-tā sib yā golābi bekhar*, Buy some apples or pears.)
 این شرایط را قبول کنم یا استعفا بدهم؟ (*in sharāyet rā ghabul konam yā este'fā bedaham*, Should I accept these conditions or resign?)

na. نه (*na*) means ‘no’; similar to *yā*, *na* can also be preceded by a redundant *va* (‘and’) in colloquial Persian. Examples:

آن را من نوشته بودم، نه مینا! (*ān rā man neveshte budam, na mina!*, I had written that, not Mina!)
 باید قبل از مرگش این جایزه را به او می‌دادند، نه حالا که مرده است (*bāyad ghabl az marg-ash in jāyeze rā be u mi-dādand, na hālā ke morde ast*, They should have given him this award before his death, not now when he is dead.)

vali / ammā. ولی (*vali*) and اما (*am.mā*) both mean ‘but’ or ‘however.’ Using the afore-mentioned redundant *va* before *vali* is not possible, and the combination *va-ammā* occurs only in the sense of ‘and as for . . .’ when resuming a narration, going back to a previous episode or a different character, etc. Examples:

ماجد را هم می‌دیدم ولی نه زیاد (*majid rā ham mi-didam vali na ziyād*, I used to see Majid also, but not very often.)
 سخت تلاش کردیم اما موفق نشدیم (*sakht talāsh kardim am.mā movaf.fagh nashodim*, We tried hard but did not succeed.)

9.2.2 Correlative conjunctions

Correlative (or *reciprocating*) conjunctions are conjunctions that work in pairs; they usually join words (or groups of words) that are of equal weight. If the sentence has only one main verb, it is more likely to be placed before the second part of these conjunctions; a comma may be used to separate the two parts, but it is considered optional. With these conjunctions also the second part may sometimes be preceded by a redundant *va* ('and'), especially in colloquial Persian, but that would not change the meaning. These are the correlative conjunctions commonly used:

- ... خواه ... خواه (*khāh ... khāh ...*) and ... چه ... چه (*che ... che ...*) both mean 'whether ... or ...':

چه تو بیائی چه نیائی من خواهم رفت، (*man khāham raft, che to biyā'i che na-yā'i*, I'll go, whether you come or you don't.)

فردا خواهم رفت، چه پیاده چه با اتوبوس (*fardā khāham raft, che piyāde che bā otobus*, I'll go tomorrow, whether on foot or by bus.)

باید آن را بخوانی، خواه خوست بیاید خواه نه (*bāyad ān rā bekhāni, khāh khosh-at biyāyad khāh na*, You must read it, whether you like it or not.)

Based on this '*khāh ... khāh ...*' conjunction (from the verb خواستن [*khāstan*, to want]), Persian has the very common adverbs خواه ناخواه (*khāh-nā-khāh*, willy-nilly, whether desired or not, no matter what) or خواهی نخواهی (*khāhi-nakhāhi*, same meaning):

خواهی نخواهی یک روز می فهمد، (*khāhi-nakhāhi yek ruz mi-fahmad*, Willy-nilly, one day he will find out.)

- ... یا ... یا (*yā ... yā ...*) means 'either ... or ...':

یا با پری می رویم یا با مریم (*yā bā pari mi-ravim yā bā maryam*, We'll go either with Pari or with Maryam.)

یا همین امروز و یا هرگز! (*yā hamin emruz va yā hargez!*, Either today / this same day, or never!)

- ... نه ... نه (*na ... na ...*) means 'neither ... nor ...':

نه به مادرش و نه به خواهرش، به هیچکس نامه نمی نویسد (*na be mādar-ash va na be khāhar-ash, be hich-kas nāme nemi-nevisad*, She doesn't write letters to anyone, neither to her mother nor to her sister.)

نه نامه ای نوشت، نه تلفنی زد (*na nāme'i nevesht, na telefoni zad*, He neither wrote a letter nor telephoned.)

Note that, if you have words like هیچ or هرگز (that normally require a negative verb) in sentences with ‘neither . . . nor . . .,’ you wouldn’t need a negative verb any more:

نه هیچوقت او را می‌بینم نه دوستش را (*na hich-vaght u rā mi-binam na dust-ash rā*, Neither do I ever see her nor her friend.)

- . . . هم . . . هم (*ham . . . ham . . .*) means ‘both . . . and . . .’:

هم در درس و هم در ورزش از بهترین‌هاست (*ham dar dars va ham dar var-zesh az behtarin-hā-st*, He is one of the best, both in [his] studies and in sport.)

هم ریش زد، هم دوش گرفتم (*ham rish zadam, ham dush gereftam*, I both shaved and took a shower.)

Note: You are more likely to see that redundant و (*va*, and) before the second part if the relation between the two parts is not that strong, as here:

هم مادرم مرد و هم در امتحان رد شدم (*ham mādar-am mord va ham dar emtehān rad shodam*, Both my mother died and I failed in the exam.)

- . . . هم . . . بلکه . . . تنها (*na tanhā . . . balke . . . ham . . .*) means ‘not only . . . but also . . .’; use of a redundant *va* not much common with this conjunction. Sometimes the word بلکه in this construction is omitted, sometimes the word هم, and it is also possible to say فقط (*na faghat*) instead of تنها:

نه تنها خودش را می‌شناسم، بلکه برادرش را هم (*na tanhā khodash rā mi-shenāsam balke barādarash rā ham*, I not only know him / himself but his brother too.)

نه فقط دیر آمد، (بلکه) زود هم رفت (*na faghat dir āmad [balke] zud ham raft*, She not only came late but also left early.)

9.3 Prefixes and suffixes

Most of the old Persian or early modern Persian prefixes and suffixes are no more productive and are hardly recognizable in the words that are still common in contemporary Persian. Some of them evolved into new forms with just a few words still in use as remnants of the old forms, in which the original prefixes or suffixes are no more recognizable.

Here only the more common of these affixes will be mentioned, and not too many of even these are productive today, although some linguists are trying to revive them to coin new words and resist the import of Western words that come with Western technology and culture. Some inflectional affixes are also included, because the main purpose here is helping learners of contemporary Persian in word recognition and in better distinguishing the main part of the word from the affixes.

9.3.1 Prefixes

Some of the following can be used independently as prepositions, adverbs or adjectives, but they are prefixes when used in compound verbs or used to make compound words of different categories.

Arranged alphabetically (Persian alphabet):

-بر (*abar-*): Originally a form of the preposition / prefix بر (*bar*, on, over, above), it has a function similar to *super-*: ابرقدرت (*abar-ghodrat*, superpower), ابرمرد (*abar-mard*, superman), ابرانسان (*abar-ensān*, superhuman).

-ب (*be-*):

- 1 Traditionally written together when used as prefix, although sometimes treated similar to the preposition به (*be*, to) in more recent times and written separately, this prefix has some attributive function, showing accompaniment, and is used to make adverbs or adjectives from nouns: بجا (*be-jā*, appropriate), بخرد (*bekhrad* [originally *be-kherad*], wise), بشکوه (*beskukh* [originally *be-shokuh*], magnificent), بهوش (*be-hush*, conscious), بنام (*be-nām*, famous), بسختی (*be-sakhti*, with difficulty), بآسانی (*be-āsāni*, easily), بموقع (*be-mowghe'*, timely).
- 2 As an inflectional prefix, it is used now in affirmative imperative and affirmative subjunctive; see Sections 12.10 and 12.11 for details.

-با (*bā-*): Similar to the preposition با (with), it shows accompaniment: باهوش (*bā-hush*, intelligent), باشکوه (*bā-shokuh*, magnificent), باشرف (*bā-sharaf*, honorable), باسواد (*bā-savād*, literate), باعلاقه (*bā alāghe*, with interest, interested), باادب (*bā-adab*, polite).

The prefix *bā-* can often be substituted by دارای (*dārā-ye*, having ['owner of']) or صاحب (*sāheb-e*, 'owner of'): باادب = دارای ادب.

-باز (*bāz-*): Used as verbal prefix to make compound verbs with implications of repetition (doing again), return or stopping. All of the nouns,

adjectives or adverbs using this prefix can be traced back to some such compound verb. Examples: بازدید (*bāz-did*, visit, re-visiting) and بازبینی (*bāz-bini*, control), both from the compound verb بازدیدن (*bāz-didan*) or بازرسی (*bāz-rasi*, inspection), بازداشت (*bāz-dāsht*, detention), بازپرس (*bāz-pors*, examining magistrate, interrogator), بازجو (*bāz-ju*, investigator), بازنشسته (*bāz-nes haste*, retired), بازدم (*bāz-dam*, expiration), بازگشت (*bāz-gasht*, return), بازخواست (*bāz-khāst*, calling to account, taking to task), بازپرداخت (*bāz-pardākht*, repayment), بازده (*bāz-deh*, output), بازتاب (*bāz-tāb*, reflection).

-بر (*bar-*): Related in meaning to the preposition بر (*bar*, on, above, against), it is used predominantly as a prefix in compound verbs with similar implications of rising, lifting, confronting: برخاستن (*bar-khāstan*, to rise), برداشتن (*bar-dāshtan*, to pick up), برانداختن (*bar-andākhtan*, to overthrow), برآشفتن (*bar-āshoftan*, to be agitated and disturbed), برجسته (*bar-jaste*, outstanding, relief), برخورد (*bar-khord*, encounter), برگشت (*bar-gasht*, return), برگردان (*bar-gardān*, refrain), برکنار (*bar-kenār*, discharged), برقرار (*bar-gharār*, established), برملا (*bar-malā*, revealed).

-بی (*bi-*): Similar to the preposition بی (*bi*, without) and often similar in function to the English suffix *-less*, showing lack of something. The more recent trend is writing it separately: بی‌پایان (*bi-pāyān*, endless), بی‌اعتنا (*bi-e'tenā*, heedless), بی‌ارزش (*bi-arzaesh*, worthless), بی‌رنگ (*bi-rang*, colorless), بی‌قرار (*bi-gharār*, impatient), بی‌اساس (*bi-asās*, unfounded), بی‌تجربه (*bi-tajrobe*, inexperienced), بی‌شرم (*bi-sharm*, shameless), بی‌درنگ (*bi-derang*, immediately), بی‌هوش (*bi-hush*, unconscious).

The prefix *bi-* can often be substituted by بدون (*bedun-e*, without) or فاقد (*faghd-e*, lacking): بی‌ارزش = فاقد ارزش.

-پر (*por-*): Originally an adjective meaning 'full,' it is used as prefix to show excess or abundance of some quality, and it can often be seen as the emphatic / exaggerated version of the suffix -دار (*-dār*): پرمانی (*por-ma'ni*, meaningful), پرحادثه (*por-hādese*, eventful), پربار (*por-bār*, fruitful, prolific), پرحرف (*por-harf*, talkative), پرخوری (*por-khori*, gluttony), پرشور (*por-shur*, passionate), پردرآمد (*por-darāmad*, high-income).

A common way of expressing the progression from the *absence* to *having lots of*:

bi- → *kam-* → *ba-* → *por-*.

Examples with the words حوصله (*howsele*, patience), فایده (*fāyede*, benefit, use), and ارزش (*arzaesh*, value) are listed in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1 From *bi-* to *por-*

بی حوصله impatient; bored	کم حوصله irritable; not very patient	با حوصله patient	پر حوصله very patient
بی فایده useless	کم فایده of little use	با فایده (= مُفید) useful	پر فایده very useful
بی ارزش worthless	کم ارزش of little value	با ارزش (= ارزشمند) valuable	پر ارزش highly valuable

-پسا- (*pas-* / *pasā-*): Sometimes written separately, it is used to imply *back*, *behind*, *after*; the version *پسا* used as equivalent of English *post-*: *پس گرفتن* (*pas-gereftan*, to take back), *پس زمینه* (*pas-zamine*, background), *پس انداز*, *پس ماند* (*pas-mānde*, leftover), *پسرفت* (*pas-raft*, retrogression), *پس انداز* (*pas-andāz*, saving), *پس فردا* (*pas-fardā*, the day after tomorrow), *پسگفتار* (*pas-goftār*, afterword), *پس لرزه* (*pas-larze*, aftershock), *پسامدرن* (*pasā-modern*, post-modern).

-پی- (*pey-*): Originally meaning ‘foot,’ ‘trace,’ ‘foundation,’ as a preposition (after adding *ezāfe*), it means ‘after,’ and it can also be used as prefix in compound verbs and their derivatives: *پیگیری* (*pey-giri*, following up), *پیآمد* (*pay-āmad*, consequence), *پیرو* (*pey-row*, follower), *پیوست* (*peyvast*,¹ attachment, appendix), *پی بردن* (*pey-bordan*, to find out).

-پیش- (*pish-*): When used as prefix, it means ‘fore-’ or ‘pre-’ (*temp.*) or refers to something before you / in front of you (locational): *پیش بینی* (*pish-bini*, foreseeing, forecast), *پیشگویی* (*pish-gu’i*, foretelling, prophesy), *پیشگفتار* (*pish-goftār*, foreword), *پیشرفت* (*pish-raft*, progress), *پیشنهاد* (*pish-nahād*, proposal), *پیشوا* (*pish-vā*, leader, ‘Führer’).

-تک- (*tak-*): Originally meaning ‘single’ and ‘unique,’ its function is similar to *mono-* or *uni-* and is usually written separately: *تک گوئی* (*tak-gu’i*, monologue), *تک همسری* (*tak-hamsari*, monogamy), *تکرو* (*tak-row*, a self-centered maverick), *تک شاخ* (*tak-shākh*, unicorn), *تک نواز* (*tak-navāz*, soloist), *تک یاخته* (*tak-yākhte*, unicellular).

-خر- (*khar-*): Apart from meaning ‘donkey’ (and being the *Stem I* of the verb *خریدن* [*kharidan*, to buy]), it has been used as a prefix to imply large size: *خرمگس* (*khar-magas*, a large fly, gadfly), *خرگوش* (*khar-gush*, rabbit or hare [‘large-eared’]), *خرچنگ* (*khar-chang*, crab or lobster [‘large-clawed’]), *خرسنگ* (*khar-sang*, large rock), *خربوزه* (*khar-boze*, large melon).

-در- (*dar-*): As a noun it means ‘door,’ as a preposition ‘in,’ and as a prefix it can imply either ‘in / inside’ or ‘out / outside.’ Examples: *درآمد* (*dasr-āmad*,

income; prelude), دریافتن (*dar-yāftan*, to find out), در رفتن (*dar-raftan*, to escape, run away), دررو (*dar-row*, outlet), درگذشتن (*dar-gozashtan*, to pass away), درماندن (*dar-māndan*, to be stuck / distressed), درخور (*dar-khor*, suitable).

-سر (*sar-*): It means 'head,' also the 'beginning' (sometimes either 'end') of something. Examples: سرآمد (*sar-āmad*, eminent), سربالا (*sar-bālā*, uphill), سراسر (*sar-rāst*, straightforward), سرمقاله (*sar-maghāle*, leading article / editorial), سردبیر (*sar-dabir*, editor-in-chief), سربلند (*sar-boland*, honored, proud), سرنوشت (*sar-nevesht*, fate), سرشماری (*sar-shomāri*, census ['headcount']).

-ضد (*zed.d-e*): An Arabic loan word usually functioning as the *anti-* prefix: ضد عفونی (*zed.d-e ofuni*, antiseptic, disinfection), ضد هوائی (*zed.d-e havā'i*, anti-aircraft), ضد آب (*zed.d-e āb*, waterproof), ضد انقلابی (*zed-de- enghelābi*, counter-revolutionary).

-غیر (*gheyr-e*): This Arabic loan word (with *gheyr* originally meaning 'other') is often used as a prefix to make antonyms, similar to the Persian ن (*nā-*, see below) which might often sound more formal. Examples:

ممکن (*momken*, possible) → غیر ممکن (*gheyr-e-momken*, impossible) – also ناممکن (*nā-momken*) in more *form.* / *lit.* language.

واقعی (*vāghe'i*, real) → غیر واقعی (*gheyr-e-vāghe'i*, unreal)

انسانی (*ensāni*, human, humane) → غیر انسانی (*gheyr-e-ensāni*, inhuman, inhumane)

مسئولانه (*mas'ulāne*, responsible, responsibly) → غیر مسئولانه (*gheyr-e-mas'ulāne*, irresponsible, irresponsibly)

-فرا (*far-* / *farā-* / *farāz-*): These can be used as prefixes with implications of elevation, perfection, completion: فرآورده (*far-āvarde*, product), فرآیند (*far-āyand*, process), فرارسیدن (*farā-residan*, to arrive, coming of time), فراهم (*farā-ham*, prepared, gathered together).

-فرو (*foru-* / *forud-*): These have the opposite meaning and are about descending and going down: فرود آمدن (*forud-āmadan*, landing, descending), فرودگاه (*forud-gāh*, airport), فرومایه (*foru-māye*, despicable, ignoble), فرو کردن (*foru-kardan*, to thrust), فروکش کردن (*foru-kesh-kardan*, to subside).

-کم (*kam-*): It means 'little' (in amount) and as prefix it is the opposite of پر (see above): کم حرف (*kam-harf*, reticent, reserved in talking), کم درآمد (*kam-darāmad*, low-income), etc.

-می (*mi-*), in poetical / archaic sometimes همی (*hami-*): Inflectional prefix for present tense and all progressive tenses.

-ن (*na-*):

- 1 Negation prefix, with a function similar to *un-* / *in-* / *im-* / *dis-* in English, or suffixes like *-less* and *-proof*: نپخته (*na-pokhte*, uncooked), نترس (*na-tars*, fearless), نفهم (*na-fahm*, stupid), نسوز (*na-suz*, fireproof).
- 2 Negation prefix for verbs in all tenses and moods (see Chapter 11 on verbs); negative imperative used to have *ma-* as the prefix, but it has been replaced now by *na-* (except in poetical language); the pronunciation changes to *ne-* only before the progressive *mi-* prefix. (See Section 11.1).

-نا (*nā-*): A more common version of the negation prefix *na-* for making compounds: نارس (*nā-ras*, unripe), نابجا (*nā-be-jā*, inopportune), نابینا (*nā-binā*, sightless, blind), ناگزیر (*nā-gozir*, inevitable), ناخوش (*nā-khosh*, unwell, sick), ناچیز (*nā-chiz*, insignificant, worthless), نامعلوم (*nā-ma'lum*, unclear, unknown).

-نو (*now-*): It means 'new' and as prefix can function like *neo-* or implies being *recent* and *modern*: نوسنگی (*now-sangi*, neolithic), نوافلاطونی (*now-aflātuni*, Neoplatonic), نوآموز (*now-āmuz*, apprentice ['beginner']), نوجوان (*now-javān*, adolescent, teenager), نوآوری (*now-āvari*, innovation).

-وا (*vā-*): A form of باز (see above) with all those implications of repetition, return or stopping, some compounds having both versions with slightly different meanings, like واریسی (*vā-rasi*, investigation, verification), which is almost the same as بازرسی (*bāz-rasi*, inspection) mentioned above under باز. Other examples: وابسته (*vā-baste*, dependent), واگیردار (*vā-gir-dār*, contagious), واداشتن (*vā-dāshtan*, to force or convince), واگذاشتن (*vā-gozāshstan*, to transfer or give away).

-واپس (*vā-pas-*): Combination of two prefixes with implications of a backward movement: واپسگرایی (*vā-pas-gerā'i*, backwardness, reaction), واپس کشیدن (*vā-pas-keshidan*, to draw / pull back), واپس نشستن (*vā-pas-neshastan*, to retreat), واپس خزیدن (*vā-pas-khazidan*, to crawl back).

-ور (*var-*): A form of بر (see above) with similar implications, usually more colloquial – ورداشتن (*var-dāshtan*), for instance, being the more colloquial version of برداشتن (*bar-dāshtan*, to pick up). Other examples: ورامدن (*var-āmadan*, to come off or flake), ورشکسته (*var-shekaste*, bankrupt), ورقلمبیده (*var-gholombide*, swollen, bulging).

-هم (*ham-*): It means 'also' and as prefix (very common and productive) implies togetherness and sharing: همآهنگ (*ham-āhang*, harmonious), همسایه (*ham-sāye*, neighbor), همزمان (*ham-zamān*, contemporaneous), همکار (*ham-kār*, co-worker, colleague), همسر (*ham-sar*, spouse).

9.3.2 Suffixes

Quite understandably, this list, while mentioning some inflectional or possessive suffixes (covered in more detail in their appropriate chapters), does not include verb stems used to make compound words – with the exception of only a few when felt necessary.

The list is arranged alphabetically (Persian alphabet); the ‘short’ vowels that may have preceded the suffix are not considered:

ل (-ā): May be the suffix used to make an active participle of potential (Section 10.2.2.3) or used in the vocative case (Section 3.6.2), less commonly in the optative mood (Section 12.12) or in compounds that need the *Stem I* of the verb آمدن (*āmadan*, to come) as in کارا (*kārā*, efficient) from the compound verb به کار آمدن (*be kār āmadan*, to be of use).

In certain words it is a remnant of obsolete and non-productive functions, like making nouns from adjectives (گرما [*garmā*, warmth], درازا [*derāzā*, length]) or to show wonder (خوشا [*khoshā*, how good!]) and large quantity (بسا [*basā*, many / much, many a time]).

آباد (-*ābād*): Suffix used for names of villages and towns, usually written separately: اسلام‌آباد (*eslām-ābād*, Islamabad).

ات (-*āt*): Arabic plural suffix (Section 3.3.4 / i); its use discouraged in Persian.

ار (-*ār*): A suffix added to *Stem II* of the verb to make nouns and adjectives (see Section 10.2.3.4), as in گرفتار (*gereftār*, busy, captive); in rare cases added to *Stem I* as in پرستار (*parastār*, a nurse or care-giver). It is also a shortened version of *Stem I* of the verb آوردن (*āvardan*, to bring).

آسا (-*ā*): Used to show similarity; usually written separately: برق‌آسا (*bargh-āsā*, like lightning, very fast).

اک (-*āk*): Attributive suffix added to *Stem I*; only a few in common use, like خوراک (*khorāk*, food) or پوشاک (*pushāk*, clothing).

آگین (-*āgin*): Attributive suffix, also meaning ‘being mixed / filled with;’ see the suffix گین (-*gin*), which comes later. More often written separately: زهرآگین (*zahr-āgin*, poisonous).

ال (-*āl*): Attributive suffix making nouns from adjectives or from other nouns: گودال (*gowdāl*, pit), چنگال (*changāl*, fork).

ان (-*ān*): Different functions as:

- plural suffix (see Section 3.3.2);
- added to *Stem I* to form the present participle (see Section 10.2.2.2);
- temporal suffix (forming adverbs / nouns), as in بهارن (*bahārān*, spring-time); and

- locational suffix for some geographical names, as in دیلمان (*deylamān*, Daylaman [a region and a city in Iran]) or گیلان (*gilān*, Gilan [Province]).

انه (-*āne*): A common and rather productive suffix, always written joined, added to nouns to make adjectives or to adjectives to make adverbs; for details and examples see Sections 6.11 and 7.4.

اور (-*āvar*): Attributive suffix (may be written joined or separately) as in جنگاور (*jang-āvar*, warlike, fighter) or دلاور (*delāvar*, valiant); it is also *Stem I* of the verb آوردن (*āvardan*, to bring), usually added to abstract nouns to make adjectives and is often written separately, as in خجالت‌آور (*khejālat-āvar*, embarrassing) or خواب‌آور (*khāb-āvar*, sedative).

انگیز (-*angiz*): *Stem I* of the verb انگیزختن (*angikhtan*, to stir, to provoke), it is added to abstract nouns to make adjectives, like حیرت‌انگیز (*heyrat-angiz*, astonishing – which can be said to be the agent participle of the compound verb حیرت انگیزختن) or بحث‌انگیز (*bahs-angiz*, controversial) or نفرت‌انگیز (*nefrat-angiz*, hateful, revolting).

بار (-*bār*): It has different meanings and functions:

- as a suffix for names related to or close to seashores and riverbanks: زنگبار (*zang-bār*, Zanzibar), جوببار (*juy-bār*, brook, stream);
- meaning ‘fruit’ or ‘a load of fruit,’ or some load / burden in general: سربار (*sar-bār*, burden, small load on top of a heavier one), تره بار (*tare-bār*, fresh fruit and vegetables);
- as *Stem I* of the verb باریدن (*bāridan*, to rain), it is added to abstract nouns to make adjectives, as in آتشبار (*ātash-bār*, fire-spewing, artillery), اشکبار (*ashk-bār*, shedding tears, tearful); or
- as a counting word (see Section 5.9), it can be added to numbers (also the version باره *bāre*) to make compounds, as in دوبار (*do-bār*, twice) or فنجان یکبار مصرف (*fenjān-e yek-bār masraf*, a disposable cup, a cup intended to be used once).

باره (-*bāre*): It shares with *-bār* its last function mentioned above, used with numbers, as in دوباره (*do-bāre*, again) or یکباره (*yek-bāre*, all at once, suddenly, all of a sudden); additionally, it is used as a negative suffix for someone who has great appetite or lust for something, as in شکمباره (*shekam-bāre*, a gobbler) or زنباره (*zan-bāre*, a womanizer).

باز (-*bāz*): If not simply the adjective باز (open) used in a compound (as in روباز [*ru-bāz*, uncovered, exposed]), then it is the *Stem I* of the verb باختن (*bākhtan*, to play a game, to gamble, to risk or lose) used to make

compounds, as in سرباز (*sar-bāz*, soldier, one who risks his head), شطرنج‌باز (*shatranj-bāz*, chess-player) or قمارباز (*ghomār-bāz*, gambler).

بان (-*bān*): A suffix used for guarding and protecting, as in باغبان (*bāgh-bān*, gardener), نگهبان (*negah-bān*, guard, watchman).

بیر (-*bar*): Stem I of the verb بردن (*bordan*, to take [away] or deliver), used as suffix, as in پیغامبر / پیامبر (*payām-bar / peyghāambar / peyghambar*, messenger, prophet), رنجبر (*ranj-bar*, toiler, laborer).

تا (-*tā*): A common counting word (see Section 5.9) used as suffix, as in یکتا (*yek-tā*, unique, single). Note that here the suffixed *-tā* takes the main stress, while as counting word it is unstressed.

جات (-*jāt*): A Perso-Arabic version of the Arabic plural suffix *-āt* (see Section 3.3.4 / i) used for certain words, as in سبزیجات (*sabzi-jāt*, vegetables).

چه (-*che*): Diminutive suffix (see Section 3.5.2).

چی (-*chi*): A Turkish suffix used for some professions or activities; no more productive. Examples: شکارچی (*shekār-chi*, hunter), تماشاچی (*tamāshā-chi*, onlooker, spectator), پستچی (*post-chi*, mailperson).

دار (-*dār*): Stem I of the verb داشتن (*dāshtan*, to have, to hold) used as suffix for both owning and holding / guarding, as in بچه‌دار (*bachche-dār*, having child / children), پولدار (*pul-dār*, rich), خانه‌دار (*khāne-dār*, housewife), دیندار (*din-dār*, believer).

دان (-*dān*): A suffix used for holders and containers, as in نم‌کدان (*namak-dān*, salt shaker) or قلم‌دان (*ghalam-dān*, pen holder or pen case); *-dān* is at the same time Stem I of the verb دانستن (*dānestan*, to know), which can be added to nouns to make compounds, as in ریاضیدان (*riyāzi-dān*, mathematician) or حقوق‌دان (*hoghugh-dān*, jurist).

دیس (-*dis*): A suffix used to show likeness, as in تندیس (*tan-dis*, a statue).

زار (-*zār*): A location suffix used to show some abundance there, as in گلزار (*gol-zār*, a rose garden).

سار (-*sār*): A variant of the location suffix *-zār*, as in کوه‌سار (*kuh-sār*, hilly or mountainous country) and چشمه‌سار (*cheshme-sār*, a spring) and is sometimes used to show possession of some quality, as in شرمسار (*sharm-sār*, ashamed).

سان (-*sān*): A suffix used to show similarity, as in گربه‌سان (*gorbe-sān*, feline, cat-like), برق‌سان (*bargh-sān*, fast, like lightning).

ستان (-*estān*): A location suffix which is written joined, showing abundance of certain features or used in geographical names for provinces and countries, in which case it is added to the name of some ethnic group. For examples with names of countries see Section 6.14. Examples for

other nouns: تابستان (*tābestān*, summer), گلستان (*golestān*, rose garden), گورستان (*gurestān*, graveyard), کودکستان (*kudakestān*, kindergarten).
ستان (-*setān*): Not to be confused with the -*estān* suffix mentioned above, though they might appear the same in writing, this is *Stem I* of the verb ستاندن (*setāndan*, to take), which can be added to nouns to make compounds; examples mostly in traditional poetry, like: دلستان (*del-setān*, heart-stealing, ravishing); example of a term common in judiciary system: دادستان (*dād-setān*, public prosecutor).

سرا (-*sarā*): A location suffix – with *sarā* originally meaning ‘house’ – as in the modern term دانشسرا (*dānesh-sarā*, teachers’ college [*lit.* ‘house of knowledge’]) or the centuries-old کاروانسرا (*kārevān-sarā*, caravanserai).

سیر (-*sir*): A location suffix, written joined, with only few examples: گرمسیر (*garm-sir*, tropical or warm region or climate), سردسیر (*sard-sir*, cold region or climate). Not to be confused with three independent words written in the same way (though two of them pronounced differently), all of which can be used as part of compounds:

- سیر (*sir*) meaning ‘full’ (= ‘not hungry’), as in چشم سیر (*chashm-sir*, not greedy); here not to mention two other meanings that use the same spelling and pronunciation: ‘garlic’ and ‘an old weight measure (75 gr.)’;
- سیر (*seyr*) meaning ‘traveling’ or ‘sightseeing,’ as in سبک سیر (*sabok-seyr*, fast-traveling [horse]);
- سیر (*siyar*), broken *pl.* of Arabic سیرت (*sirat*, originally سيرة, meaning ‘character,’ ‘conduct,’ ‘nature’); outdated, but can be seen in old compounds like نیکو سیرت / نیکو سیر (*neku-sirat / niku-siyar*, good-natured).

ش (-*ash*): Possessive or objective suffix (see Sections 6.7 and 5.2.3 respectively).

Note: In Tehrani, colloquial Persian-pronounced -*esh*, this suffix may be added to the 3Sg. of the verb ‘to be’ (past or present) or to the 3Sg. of the verbs ‘to come’ and ‘to go’ (only in the past) without any grammatical necessity or justification, as in نیستش (*nist-esh*, He / she / it is not there.) or رفتش (*raft-esh*, He / she / it left.).

یش (-*esh*): A suffix added to *Stem I* to make verbal nouns (see Section 10.2.2.4).
شناس (-*shenās*): *Stem I* of the verb شناختن (*shenākhtan*, to know, to recognize), which can be used to make compounds in the area of science (see Section 10.2.2.1) or other compounds, like وقت شناس (*vaght-shenās*, punctual).

فام (-fām): A suffix used to show similarity or color, found in poetical language, as in مشکفام (*moshk-fām*, of the color of musk, musk-like).

فش (-fash): Obsolete; see the more common version - وَش (-vash) below.

ک (-ak): A common and productive diminutive suffix; see Section 3.5.1 for more details and examples.

کار (-kār): While as an independent word *kār* means ‘work’ or ‘job,’ it can be:

- a suffix used for professions or kinds of behavior, as in درستکار (*dorost-kār*, honest), معدنکار (*ma'dan-kār*, miner, mine worker), شبکار (*shab-kār*, night shift worker), or
- *Stem I* of the verb کاشتن (*kāsh-tan*, to plant, to sow), which can be added to nouns to make compounds, as in برنجکار (*berenj-kār*, rice planter or rice-field worker).

کده (-kade): A location suffix often (though not always) used for locations of certain activities, as in دهکده (*deh-kade*, village), آتشکده (*ātash-kade*, a [Zoroastrian] fire-temple), میکده (*mey-kade*, a tavern), دانشکده (*dānesh-kade*, a faculty / college in a university).

کی (-aki): A suffix of manner used in colloquial Persian to make adjectives or adverbs, written joined, as in یواشکی (*yavāshaki*, stealthily, hush-hush), دزدکی (*dozdaki*, sneakily, secretly), دروغکی (*dorughaki*, falsely, by way of telling a lie), پس-پسکی (*pas-pasaki*, moving backwards).

گار (-gār): This suffix, which can be added to *Stem I* or *II* of verbs (not productive now), is often pronounced as – *egār* and is used to make active agents. Examples: آموزگار (*āmuz[e]gār*, primary school teacher) with *Stem I* or پروردگار (*parvard[e]gār*, God, the Creator) with *Stem II*. Also very common, using *Stem II*: خواستگار (*khāst[e]gār*, a suitor).

گان (-gān): An attributive suffix (no more productive), written joined when possible: گروگان (*gerow-gān*, hostage) or دهگان (*deh-gān*, peasant, farmer; now the Arabicized version دهقان [*deh-ghān*] is more common).

گاه (-gāh): A locational suffix: دانشگاه (*dānesh-gāh*, university), کمینگاه (*kamin-gāh*, ambush, lurking place).

گاهان / شامگاهان / گاهان (-gāh / -gāhān): Temporal suffixes (*poet.*): شامگاهان / شامگاهان (*sham-gāh / sham-gāhān*, eventide, at night-time), دیرگاه (*dir-gāh*, long time, [until] late).

گار (-gar): A suffix added to nouns to make active agents for professions or possessors of certain qualities: کارگر (*kār-gar*, worker), آهنگر (*āhan-gar*, ironsmith), دادگر (*dād-gar*, a just, righteous person), ستمگر (*setam-gar*, an oppressor).

گرا (-gerā): *Stem I* of the verb گرائیدن / گرودن (*geravidan / gerā'idan*, to incline), used in recent times to make new compounds for words

related to schools of thought or literary trends (see examples under Section 10.2.2.1).

گون / گون (-*gun* / -*gune*): Suffixes used to show similarity, making adjectives of quality and color: گلگون (*gol-gun*, rosy, rose-like), دُعاگونه (*do'ā-gune*, prayer-like).

گین (-*gin*): Similar to آگین (-*āgin*) mentioned earlier, this is an attributive suffix, also meaning 'being mixed / filled with;' usually written joined: غمگین (*gham-gin*, sad), شرمگین (*sharm-gin*, ashamed).

لا (-*lā*): A suffix with the effect of a counting word meaning 'fold' or 'layer' and usually written separately, like the independent word لایه (*lāye*, layer) which can also be used to make compounds. The initial *l* may be doubled (*tashdid*) with the numbers 2 and 3: دولا (*dollā*, two-ply, of double thickness, bent or folded), هزارلا (*hezār-lā*, manyplies or omasum, part of the stomach in ruminant animals).

لاخ (-*lākh*): A locational suffix, now obsolete but found in a few words, showing the abundance of certain things, as in سنگلاخ (*sang-lākh*, a stony terrain or path).

م (-*om*): The suffix used to make ordinal numbers; see Section 8.1.2 for details and examples.

مانند (-*mānand*): Although *mānand* can be used in different functions, it can be used as a productive suffix also to show similarity, making adjectives from nouns: اسبمانند (*asb-mānand*, horse-like), تپه‌مانند (*tappe-mānand*, hill-like). Originally the shortened form of ماننده, agent participle of the verb ماندن/مانستن (see Section 10.2.2.1).

مند (-*mand*): A suffix used to show possession and is usually written joined, as in ارزشمند (*arzesh-mand*, valuable), علاقمند / علاقهمند (*alāghe-mand*, interested), نیرومند (*niru-mand*, powerful), ثروتمند (*servat-mand*, wealthy).

مین (-*omin*): The suffix used to make ordinal numbers; see Section 8.1.2 for details and examples.

ناک (-*nāk*): A suffix used to make adjectives, showing possession, and is usually written joined, as in ترسناک (*tars-nāk*, frightening), دردناک (*dard-nāk*, painful), خطرناک (*khatar-nāk*, dangerous), شرمناک (*sharm-nāk*, ashamed).

نده (-*ande*): The suffix added to *Stem I* to obtain the *agent participle*; see Section 10.2.2.1.

و (-*u*): This suffix, always written joined, has several functions, none of them productive now:

- It has a diminutive function, especially in southern Iran; see Section 3.5.4 for more.

- It is used in less formal / colloquial Persian for exaggeration in some characteristic, as in ترسو (*tarsu*, timid, fearful), اخمو (*akhmu*, frowning, surly), جیغو (*jighu*, one who screams too often).
- It is a remnant of some obsolete feminine suffix in words like زائو (*zā'u*, parturient) and بانو (*bānu*, lady).
- It has an attributive function in a word like پتو (*patu*, blanket; from پت [*pat*, goat hair or wool]).

وار (-*vār*): A suffix usually added to nouns to make adjectives and adverbs showing similarity or possession, as in دیوانه‌وار (*divāne-vār*, madly, like crazy), بیگانه‌وار (*bigāne-vār*, like strangers), امیدوار (*omid-vār*, hopeful), سوگوار (*sug-vār*, grieving). In a few words like خروار (*khar-vār*, ass-load, ca. 300 kg.) -*vār* is a version of بار (-*bār*, load) mentioned earlier.

وان (-*vān*): A less common and now obsolete version of the suffix بان (-*bān*) mentioned earlier, used for guarding and protecting, as in کاروان (*kār[e]vān*, caravan).

ور (-*var*): A suffix added to nouns, making adjectives or nouns showing possession or profession, as in تاجور (*tāj-var*, crowned, a king) or هنرور (*honar-var*, skilled in arts).

ور (-*ur*): Written similarly but pronounced differently, this suffix can have the same functions as -*var* mentioned above; examples: رنجور (*ranjur*, ill, afflicted), مزدور (*mozdur*, hired worker, wage-earner).

وش (-*vash*): A suffix showing similarity, as in ماهوش / مهوش (*māh-vash / mah-vash*, moon-like).

ومند (-*umand*): A much less common variant of the -*mand* suffix mentioned above, as seen in words like تنومند (*tan-umand*, corpulent, big).

ون (-*un*): An Arabic plural suffix; see Section 18.2.

وند (-*vand*): A suffix showing relation and possession, as in خداوند (*khodā-vand*, Lord, God, possessor) or خویشاوند (*khish-ā-vand*, a relative).

ه (-*e*): A final -*e* suffix, orthographically shown by the 'silent *hē*' (letter ه) and always written joined, can have many different functions:

- Added to *Stem II* (or *short infinitive*), it produces the *past participle* of all Persian verbs (see Section 10.2.3.2).
- When added to *Stem I* of certain verbs, it forms abstract nouns, as in خنده (*khande*, laugh, laughter), گریه (*ger.ye*, weeping, tears), ناله (*nāle*, groan[ing], moaning).
- Added to *Stem I* of certain other verbs, it gives the names of some objects or tools, as in آویزه (*āvize*, a pendant), ماله (*māle*, a trowel), تابه / تابه / تابه (*tābe / tāve*, a frying pan).

- When added to certain nouns, it forms new nouns based on the similarity: گوشه (*gushe*, a corner), دهانه (*dahāne*, an opening, nozzle), دسته (*daste*, a handle), ریشه (*rishe*, root), دماغه (*damāghe*, cape [geog.]).
- For its use as a diminutive suffix, see Section 3.5.3.
- For its use in colloquial Tehrani (making both definite and diminutive), see Section 15.1.1 / I.
- For its use with quantities and time expressions, see its comparison with *-i* at the end of this list of suffixes (Section 9.3.3).

ی (-*i*): This is not about the *unstressed, indefinite -i* suffix (see Section 3.4.2.2), but rather about a stressed *-i*, very broadly and loosely referred to as *attributive -i*, but with so many different functions. Because of its importance, it will be covered separately at the end of this list (see Section 9.3.3).

یار (-*yār*): A suffix used to show possession of some quality, as in هوشیار (*hush-yār* or *hushiyār*, sober, vigilant) or بختیار (*bakht-yār* or *bakhtiyār*, lucky); the contemporary judicial term دادیار (*dād-yār*, assistant to the public prosecutor) was probably formed by having the independent word یار (*yār*) in mind, one meaning of which is ‘helper / assistant.’

یّت (-*iyyat*): A suffix with a function not unlike the English suffix *-ity*, added to both nouns and adjectives, always written joined, and is used to form abstract nouns, as in محبوبیت (*mahbubiyat*, popularity), واقعیت (*vaghe'iyyat*, reality), خریّت (*khariyyat*, stupidity).

ین (-*in* and *-eyn*): Two Arabic plural suffixes; see Section 18.2.

ی -ین / -ینه (-*i* / *-in* / *-ine*): Three forms of a Persian attributive suffix (not always interchangeable!) used to show relation or material, as in سیمین (*simin*, of silver), آهنی / آهنین (*āhani* / *āhanin*, of iron), چوبی / چوبین (*chubi* / *chubin*, wooden), دیرین / دیرینه (*dirin* / *dirine*, ancient, very old).

9.3.3 The stressed *-i* suffix; more on the *-e* suffix

Stressed *-i* is the most common and the most productive suffix in the Persian language; it is even used in some English borrowings from South Asia like *kbāki* (*kbāk* being the Persian word for ‘soil’ or ‘dust’ + *-i*) or the *-i* ending in words like Hindi, Pakistani and so on.

This suffix, usually referred to as *یاء نسبت* (*yā-'e nesbat*, ‘attributive یی’), is predominantly used to make:

- adjectives from nouns (compare with English ‘rain / rainy’ or ‘cloud / cloudy’),

- nouns from adjectives (compare with English ‘jealous / jealousy’ or ‘brown / brownie’), or
- associated nouns from other nouns (compare with English ‘goat / goatee’).

Examples:

- *Adjective* → *Noun*:

زشت (*zesht*, ugly) → زشتی (*zeshtí*, ugliness)
 جوان (*javān*, young) → جوانی (*javānī*, youth)
 خوب (*khub*, good) → خوبی (*khubí*, goodness)

- *Noun* → *Adjective*:

باران (*bārān*, rain) → بارانی (*bārānī*, rainy)
 ابر (*abr*, cloud) → ابری (*abrí*, cloudy)
 شهر (*shahr*, city) → شهری (*shahrí*, urban)

- *Noun* → *Noun*:

برادر (*barādar*, brother) → برادری (*barādarí*, brotherhood)
 زندان (*zendān*, prison) → زندانی (*zendānī*, prisoner)
 گوش (*gush*, ear) → گوشی (*gushí*, [a phone] receiver)

Note that the noun this suffix may be added to can be an infinitive to form some participle of (passive) potential; for more details with examples, see Section 10.2.1.

Two major differences between stressed and unstressed *-i*'s:

- Unlike the unstressed one, an *ezāfe* can be used with stressed *-i* when it needs to be connected to the next word. No need to write a second ی as glide in such cases, because one ی alone can have a double function and be pronounced as *-i-ye*:

زشتی خانه‌ها (*zeshti-ye khāne-hā*, the ugliness of the houses)
 یک روز ابری سرد (*yek ruz-e abri-ye sard*, a cold cloudy day)

- When adding it to words ending in *-e* (= silent *hé*), in most of the Persian words, the original latent *g* ending will reappear (similar to the plural *-ān* suffix; see Section 3.3.2):

بچه (*bach.che*, child), بچگی (*bach.che-gí*, childhood) (compare with *unstressed*, indefinite *-i* added to the same word: بچه‌ای [*bach.che-i*, ‘a child’])

The stressed *-e* (or *-i*) suffix with quantities and time expressions

For telling the age, one option is the adjectival use with the *-e* suffix, as mentioned under Section 8.3:

یک پسر دو ساله (*yek pesar-e do sāle*, a two-year-old boy)

This *-e* can be added to many *number + noun* combinations, especially those about time and age. (Another common word is دوباره [again, for the second time] made from دو بار [twice].)

Other examples:

یک بچّه ده روزه (*yek bach.che-ye dah-ruze*, a ten-day-old child)

یک سفر شش ماهه (*yek safar-e shesh-māhe*, a six-month travel)

یک هواپیمای دو موتوره (*yek havā-peymā-ye do-motore*, a two-engine plane / a twin-engine aircraft)

یک دوچرخه (*yek do-charkhe*, a bicycle)

یک مرد دو زنه (*yek mard-e do-zane*, a man with two wives)

If the word already ends in *-e*, then usually a stressed *-i* is added instead of another *-e* (written as ای with *alef*). Occasionally *-i* is added to some words ending in consonants and is written joined. This stressed *-i* should not be confused with the unstressed one (indefinite marker). Examples:

یک صحبت پنج دقیقه‌ای (*yek sohbat-e panj-daghighe'i*, a five-minute conversation)

یک سفر سه هفته‌ای (*yek safar-e se-hafte-i*, a three-week travel)

To say 'by ones' or 'by twos,' etc., say:

یکی یکی (*yeki-yeki*, by ones; one by one)

تک تک (*tak tak*, singly, one by one); more *form.*: یک به یک (*yek-be-yek*)

یک‌یک (*yekāyek*, each one, singly, every single one)

دوتا دوتا (*do-tā-do-tā*) or دو به دو (*do-be-do*, by twos, two by two)

دوتائی (*do-tā-i*, 'by twos'; also: 'the two of [us / you / them]')

سه تا سه تا (*se-tā-se-tā*) or سه به سه (*se-be-se*, by 'threes,' 'three by three')

سه تائی (*se-tā-i*, 'by threes'; also: 'the three of [us / you / them]')

Also compare the following:

یک بار / یکبار (*yek-bār*, once)

یکباره (*yek-bāre*, all at once, suddenly)

برای بارِ اوّل / برای اوّلین بار (*barāye bār-e avval / barāye avvalin bār*,
for the first time)

دو بار (*do bār*, twice)

دوباره (*do-bāre*, again)

برای بارِ دوّم / برای دوّمین بار (*barāye bār-e dovom / barāye dovomin
bār*, for the second time)

سه بار (*se bār*, three times)

سه باره (*se-bāre*, threefold, thrice)

برای بارِ سوّم / برای سوّمین بار (*barāye bār-e sevvom / barāye sevvomin
bār*, for the third time)

Note

1 From the verb پیوستن (*peyvastan*, to connect/attach) → originally پی+بستن.

Infinitives and their derivatives

Though far fewer in number and less productive than in English, Persian infinitives play a pivotal role in the language.

10.1 Infinitive in Persian: two major groups

All infinitives in Persian end either in *-dan* (like خوردن *khordan*, ‘to eat’) or in *-tan* (like گفتن *goftan*, ‘to say’) – which means that they all end in *-an*.

All of those ending in *-tan* (with one or two exceptions) are irregular; in contrast, most of those ending in *-dan* are regular. But when we say *irregular*, we are talking about *Stem I* or the *present stem*. The past stem, and consequently the past tense, in Persian are regular, as well as any other tense, mood and construction that needs the past stem, and this includes: simple past, past progressive, past participle, all perfect tenses and constructions (present or past perfect and their progressive forms, perfect [or past] subjunctive) – even future tense, which requires the past stem. No irregularity in any of these, even in notoriously irregular verbs: in بودن (*budan*, to be) and داشتن (*dāshtan*, to have), the past stems are بود (*bud*) and داشت (*dāsht*) respectively.

It is also good to know that irregular verbs are being increasingly replaced in Persian by regular and compound verbs – most of the simple, irregular verbs being used now predominantly in formal, literary Persian only. The present stem is needed only for present tense, imperative and (present) subjunctive – and, of course, some derivatives like present participles.

10.1.1 Past and present stems

The past stem (*Stem II*), also called a *short infinitive*, is regular and is always achieved by dropping the final *-an* of infinitive, as was shown above (*budan* → *bud*; *dāshtan* → *dāsht*).

The present stem, however, is what should usually be learned separately. Most of the verbs follow a more or less ‘regular’ and easily recognizable pattern for their present stem also.

Two major groups of ‘regular’ verbs are:

- 1 Infinitives ending in *-āndan*: In this group, *Stem I* (present) is achieved by dropping the final *-dan*. Example: ماندن (*māndan*, to stay), *Stem I* مان (*mān*) – while *Stem II*, regular for all verbs, would be ماند (*mānd*).
- 2 With only a few exceptions, all the infinitives ending in *-idan* are also regular and *Stem I* is what remains after *-idan* is dropped. Example: رسیدن (*residan*, ‘to arrive / to reach’), *Stem I* رس (*res*). All the regular variants of irregular verbs and all the verbs more recently made from nouns belong to this group.

The few exceptions are infinitives from which nothing is left except a single consonant if you drop the final *-idan*, like دیدن (*didan*, to see), *Stem I* بین (*bin*). (Add to these few exceptions the verbs گزیدن [*gozidan*, to select, *Stem I* گزین, *gozin*] and آفریدن [*āfaridan*, to create, *Stem I* آفرین, *āfarin*].)

In regular verbs, we are moving, in fact, from *present stem* to *past stem* (‘short infinitive’) and from that to *infinitive* (as shown in Table 10.1, from left to right).

In irregular verbs, the close relation between the infinitive and the past stem (the right two columns) is still there, but there are fewer similarities between the left two columns (the two stems), as shown in Table 10.2.

Table 10.1 Some examples of regular verbs

<i>Present stem</i>	<i>Past stem</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>
خور <i>khor</i>	خورد <i>kbord</i>	خوردن <i>khordan</i> , to eat
مان <i>mān</i>	ماند <i>mānd</i>	ماندن <i>māndan</i> , to stay
رس <i>res</i>	رسید <i>resid</i>	رسیدن <i>residan</i> , to reach / arrive
خند <i>khand</i>	خندید <i>khandid</i>	خندیدن <i>khandidan</i> , to laugh

Table 10.2 Some examples of irregular verbs

<i>Present stem</i>	<i>Past stem</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>
بر <i>bar</i>	برد <i>bord</i>	بردن <i>bordan</i> , to take (away)
گو <i>gu</i>	گفت <i>goft</i>	گفتن <i>goftan</i> , to say
دار <i>dār</i>	داشت <i>dāsht</i>	داشتن <i>dāshtan</i> , to have
نشین <i>neshin</i>	نشست <i>neshast</i>	نشستن <i>neshastan</i> , to sit

10.1.2**Negative and passive infinitive; no 'perfect' infinitive!**

For negative, simply add the prefix *na-* to the infinitive (written joined) to make it negative. Examples:

داشتن و نداشتن (*dāshtan va nadāshtan*, To have and have not.)
بودن یا نبودن؟ (*budan yā nabudan*, To be or not to be?)

To form a passive infinitive, the same general rules about passive in Persian apply: past participle of the verb (a transitive verb!) + infinitive of the verb شدن (*shodan*, to get / become). Examples:

پخته شدن (*pokhte shodan*, to be cooked)
دور انداخته شدن (*dur andākhte shodan*, to be thrown away)

A *perfect infinitive* – which should be expected to function like a passive version of English gerund – is not common in Persian, and if rare examples are found, the past participle can be said to have been used as adjective:

برای آنکه از بسته بودن در مطمئن شوم، آن را فشار دادم
(*barāye ān-ke az baste budan-e dar motma'en shavam, ān rā feshār dādam*, I pressed the door to make sure of its being closed.)

Here *baste* (closed, shut) is simply an adjective. 'My having done something' in English means that 'I have done something,' and Persian usually uses a perfect tense instead in such cases. A good translation for a sentence like *My having finished the assignment in time surprised everyone* would be:

همه تعجب کردند از اینکه من تکلیف را بموقع تمام کرده ام
(*hame ta'aj.job kardand az in-ke man taklif rā be-mwghe' tamām karde-am*, Everybody was surprised that I had finished the assignment on time.)

And the English perfect infinitive after modals or other verbs? See how the *perfect subjunctive* is used after some Persian modals (as shown in a table, see Section 11.11).

10.1.3**Uses of infinitive**

The uses of *infinitive* and *gerund* sometimes overlap in English – not so in Persian. What is more important: the Persian *infinitive* is more like the

English *gerund*, in that it is used and treated as a noun – it is used after prepositions as their object, or it is used as subject or object of verbs. Only when an English infinitive is used as a noun in noun phrases like *To err is human*, the Persian infinitive can be a good match in translation. Examples for different functions of infinitive in Persian:

Subject: رفتن به آنجا خیلی آسان است (*raftan be ānjā kheyli āsān ast*, Going there is very easy.)

Object of preposition: من از رفتن به آنجا می‌ترسم (*man az raftan be ānjā mi-tarsam*, I am afraid of going there.)

Direct object of verb: من نوشتن را دوست دارم (*man neveshtan rā dust dāram*, I like writing.)

10.1.4 **Infinitive of compound verbs and position of subject / object / complement of infinitive**

Since the Persian *infinitive* is used and treated as a noun (even more so than the English *gerund*) or as a compound noun in the case of compound verbs, it usually needs to be connected to its subject or object / complement – all of which follow the infinitive – through an *ezāfe*: خریدن خانه (*kharidan-e khāne*) comes closer to ‘the purchase of the house’ than to ‘buying the house.’

If it is an indirect object preceded by a preposition, the *ezāfe* is usually dropped, though sometimes kept.

Mentioning both the subject and the object of the infinitive (something like ‘my seeing him . . .’ in English) is not common in Persian and only one is usually mentioned, sometimes leaving room for confusion. More examples:

رفتن مینا من را غمگین می‌کند (*raftan-e minā man rā ghamgin mi-konad*, Mina’s leaving [*lit.* ‘the going / departure of Mina’] makes me sad.) – رفتن مینا is the subject of رفتن.

خوردن سیب خیلی خوب است (*khordan-e sib kheyli khub ast*, Eating apples is very good.) – سیب is the object of خوردن.

برای دیدن پدرش به آن شهر دور می‌رود (*barāye didan-e pedarash be ān shahr-e dur mi-ravad*, He goes to that faraway city to see [= ‘for seeing’] his father.)

نپرسیدن از استاد اشتباه است (*na-porsidan az ostād eshtebāh ast*, Not asking the professor is wrong / is a mistake.)

As mentioned above, even when the complement of the verb has a preposition, the *ezāfe* is sometimes kept, though more often dropped: رفتن به آنجا (going there) can be read / said with *ezāfe* (as *raftan-e be ānjā*) or without (*raftan be ānjā*). With this particular verb, sometimes the preposition به is dropped, but then the *ezāfe* has to be kept: *raftan-e ānjā*.

Always placed before the infinitive

- 1 The non-verbal part of the infinitive, if it is merely (or functions as) a prefix:

برگشتن از سفر (*bar-gashtan az safar*, to return from the trip)
درآوردن لباس (*dar āvardan-e lebās*, to take off the clothes)

- 2 Adjectives and adverbs are always placed before the infinitive and never after it, whether they can be considered as the non-verbal part of a compound infinitive or not:

دیر رسیدن بهتر از هرگز نرسیدن است (*dir residan behtar az hargez na-residan ast*, Better to arrive late than never.)

خوشحال کردن بچه‌ها کار سختی نبود (*khosh-hāl kardan-e bach-che-hā kār-e sakhti na-bud*, Making the children happy was not difficult / a difficult task.)

برای منصفانه نظر دادن باید فراموش کنی که او معلم بوده است (*barāye monsefāne nazar dādan, bāyad farāmush koni ke u mo'al.lem-at bude ast*, To be fair in judgment, you have to forget that she was your teacher.)

- 3 The complement of linking verbs like بودن (*budan*, to be), شدن (*shodan*, to get / become), نمودن (*nomudan*, to appear) or به نظر رسیدن (*be nazar residan*, to seem), when they are used in this function, is placed before the infinitive:

پزشک بودن کار آسانی نیست (*pezeshk budan kār-e āsāni nist*, To be a doctor is not easy.)

برای پیغمبر شدن باید یک معجزه داشت (*barāye peyghambar shodan bāyad yek mo'jeze dāsht*, To become a prophet you need a miracle.)

برای طبیعی به نظر رسیدن، گفت که اشتها ندارد (*barāye tabi'i be nazar residan, goft ke eshtehā na-dārad*, To appear natural / normal, he said he was not hungry / had no appetite.)

Here note, for instance, that معلم بودن (*mo'al.lem budan*) means 'to be a teacher' – *budan* being a linking verb here – whereas بودن معلم (*budan-e mo'al.lem*) means 'the presence of the teacher.'

- 4 In compounds with کردن (*kardan*), the non-verbal part is much less likely to be post-positioned, although with certain compounds this position might be an acceptable but less favored option. (If the non-verbal part is a noun, very often کردن *can* be dropped, though not always.) Examples:

تنظیم کردن آن برنامه / تنظیم آن برنامه خیلی طول کشید
(*tanzim kardan-e ān barnāme / tanzim-e ān barnāme kheyli tul keshid*, Arranging / organizing that program took a long time.)

برای عوض کردن چرخ ماشین یک مکانیک خبر کردیم
(*barāye avaz kardan-e charkh-e māshin yek mekānik khabar kardim*, We called a mechanic to change / replace the car tire.) – Here کردن cannot be dropped, but if you use the verb تعویض کردن (*ta'viz kardan*) instead of عوض کردن (*avaz kardan*), a synonym which means 'to change,' you would certainly prefer to drop *kardan* and just say *ta'viz-e*.

On the whole, when nouns can be used either before or after the infinitive (the latter case requiring *ezāfe*), the pre-positioned option gives them more the appearance of the non-verbal part of a compound infinitive, while when post-positioned they look more like an infinitive + its complement, in which case the complement can even be plural or be modified by some adjective, etc. Compare:

خوردن غذا / غذاها / غذای خورده (*ghazā khordan*, to eat / eating) versus
سالم (*khordan-e ghazā / ghazā-hā / ghazā-ye sālem*, to eat / eating the food / foods / healthy food)

نوشتن نامه / نامه‌ها (*nāme neveshtan*, letter-writing) versus
نامه نوشتن (*neveshtan-e nāme / nāme-hā*, writing the letter / letters)

پوشیدن چشم / چشمها (*chashm pushidan*, to forsake) versus
چشم پوشیدن (*pushidan-e chashm / chashm-hā*, to cover the eye / eyes)

10.1.5 Infinitives and the DDO-marker (*rā*)

If needed, the DDO-marker (*rā*, see Section 3.4.3), together with the object to which it belongs, can be placed before the infinitive, but more often these are placed after the infinitive. Compare:

آن نامه را نوشت (*ān nāme rā nevesht*, He wrote that letter.)

نوشتن آن نامه را عقب انداخت (*neveshtan-e ān nāme rā aghab andākht*, He postponed writing that letter.)

آن نامه را نوشتن همان و اخراجش همان
(*ān nāme rā neveshtan hamān va ekbrāj-ash hamān*, Writing that letter led to his immediate dismissal.)

10.1.6 Short infinitives

The past stem or *Stem II* of the verb is also called the *short infinitive* and can function as an abstract noun; see below under derivatives from *Stem II* (Section 10.2.3.1) for more.

10.2 Derivatives

Here the most common ways of making nouns and adjectives from verbs (usually by adding certain suffixes) will be shown. It must be known, however, that such words must be common in the language and one cannot usually create new words just by knowing the rule.

10.2.1 Infinitive + stressed -i

That the (stressed) suffix *-i* can be used to make nouns or adjectives was mentioned in Chapter 9 (see Section 9.3.3). When added to infinitives, this suffix usually works similar to the English *-able / -ible* suffix: it is about some (usually passive) potential and means ‘worthy of’ or ‘fit for’ or occasionally (with intransitive verbs) something bound to happen.

Examples of participle of potential (passive): infinitive + stressed -i

- پذیرفتنی (*paziroftani*, acceptable)
- خواستنی (*khāstani*, desirable)
- دوست داشتنی (*dust-dāshṭani*, amiable)
- سُتودنی (*sotudani*, admirable)
- شدنی (*shodani*, doable; possible)
- خواندنی (*khāndani*, readable; worth reading)
- خوردنی (*khordani*, edible; fit to eat; food)
- مردنی (*mordani*, feeble; about to die)
- ماندنی (*māndani*, lasting)
- دیدنی (*didani*, worth seeing)
- گفتنی (*goftani*, worth saying)
- شنیدنی (*shenidani*, worth listening)
- بافتنی (*bāftani*, product of hand-knitting)
- نوشیدنی (*nushidani*, drink)
- آب آشامیدنی (*āb-e āshāmidani*, drinking water)
- به یاد ماندنی (*be yād māndani*, memorable)

Note 1: There are certain words that have this meaning of potentiality or fitness and can be placed before an infinitive instead of adding this *-i*. Often interchangeable, all of them mean ‘worthy of’ or ‘fit for,’ and all would need *ezāfe*. The most common one is قابل (*ghābel-e*), and the more formal ones include درخور (*darkhor-e*), سزاوار (*sezāvār-e*), شایسته (*shāyeste-ye*) and شایان (*shāyān-e*). Examples:

خوردنی (*khordani*) = قابل خوردن (*ghābel-e khordan*, fit to eat)
 به یاد ماندنی (*be yād māndani*) = شایسته به یاد ماندن (*shāyeste-ye be yād māndan*, worth remembering)
 ستودنی (*sotudani*) = شایان ستودن or ستایش (*shāyān-e sotudan / shāyān-e setāyesh*, admirable, praiseworthy)
 گفتنی (*goftani*) = درخور گفتن (*darkhor-e goftan*, worth mentioning)
 دیدنی (*didani*) = سزاوار دیدن (*sezāvār-e didan*, worth seeing)

For negative (= ‘un + able’), ن / نا (*na- / nā-*) is added to the infinitive + *-i*, or قابل (*ghābel-e*) is changed to غیرقابل (*gheyr-e-ghābel-e*):

باورکردنی (*bāvar-kardani*, believable) → باورنکردنی (*bāvar-na-kardani*, unbelievable); or consider از یاد نرفتنی (*az yād na-raftani*, unforgettable)
 قابل گفتن (*ghābel-e-goftan*, speakable, sayable) → غیرقابل گفتن (*gheyr-e-ghābel-e-goftan*, unspeakable)

(Sometimes پذیر [-*pazir*] [from the verb پذیرفتن] and its negative ناپذیر [-*nā-pazir*] are added to nouns to give a similar meaning, like چاره پذیر [*chāre-pazir*, remediable] or شکست ناپذیر [*shekast-nā-pazir*, invincible], but these can be said to be ‘agent participles’ of compound verbs, to be covered below, see Section 10.2.2.1.)

Note 2: With the verbs رفتن, آمدن, برگشتن, this added *-i* in colloquial Persian can also – and additionally – give the meaning of ‘while on the way to some place,’ as in the following examples, and the subject of the main verb would be understood as the subject of these participial forms as well:

برخوردنی نان هم بخور (*bar-gashtani, kami nān ham be-khar*, On your way back, buy some bread also.)
 آمدنی علی را توی راه دیدم (*āmadani, ali rā tu-ye rāh didam*, While coming, I saw Ali on the way.)
 رفتنی، توفقی هم در شیراز کردند (*raftani, tavagh.ghofi ham dar shiraz kardand*, On their way [going], they made a stop in Shirāz also.)

10.2.2 Derivatives made from Stem I

(If you are not sure what the *Stem I* of a certain verb is, refer to the complete list of verbs, Section 11.13.)

10.2.2.1 Present stem + -ande = the agent participle

This usually gives the *agent*, similar to the English *-er / -or* suffix:

خواندن (*khāndan*) → خوان (*khān*) → خواننده (*khānande*)
= to sing → sing → singer

This is especially common for professions and tools. With compound verbs, however, the present stem alone often assumes this meaning without adding *-ande*. This participle can be a noun, an adjective or both. Examples:

خواندن (*khāndan*, to read, to sing) → خواننده (*khānande*, reader, singer)

But: کتابخوان (*ketāb-khān*, a book worm, one who loves reading) –
and not "کتاب خواننده"!

گرفتن (*gereftan*, to take, to receive) → گیرنده (*girande*, receiver)

But: سختگیر (*sakht-gir*, unyielding, inflexible, serious)

تراشیدن (*tarāshidan*, to carve, to whittle) → تراشنده (*tarāshande*, carver)

But: مداد تراش (*medād-tarāsh*, pencil-sharpener)

کشتن (*koshan*, to kill) → کشنده (*koshande*, fatal, lethal)

But: آدمکش (*ādam-kosh*, murderer)

فروختن (*forukhtan*, to sell) → فروشنده (*forushande*, seller)

But: وطن فروش (*vatan-forush*, traitor [to one's country])

شکستن (*shekastan*, to break) → شکننده (*shekanande*, fragile)

But: عهد شکن (*ahd-shekan*, promise breaker; disloyal)

راندن (*rāndan*, to drive) → راننده (*rānande*, driver)

پريدن (*paridan*, to fly) → پرنده (*parande*, bird; 'flyer')

بُردن (*bordan*, to take [away]; to win) → برنده (*barande*, winner)

باختن (*bākhtan*, to lose; to play or gamble) → بازنده (*bāzande*, loser)

بازی کردن (*bāzi-kardan*, to play) → بازیکن (*bāzi-kon*, player [in sports])

خسته کردن (*khaste kardan*, to tire, to bore) → خسته کننده (*khaste-konande*, boring, tiring)
سرگرم کردن (*sargarm-kardan*, to amuse) → سرگرم کننده (*sargarm-konande*, amusing)

Notes

- As the last two examples show, even with compound verbs sometimes the *-ande* suffix is used (especially with کردن).
- If needed, the glide *-y-* should be added before *-ande*, as in گوینده (*guyande*, speaker; from گفتن, *goftan*, to speak, present stem گو, *gu*) and آینده (*āyande*, coming; future; from آمدن, *āmadan*, to come, present stem آ, *ā*).
- The stressed *-i* suffix can be added to these words to make abstract nouns (not very common with compounds ending in کننده, though); if it is the form ending in *-ande*, then the glide *-g-* (گ) would be required and the *silent hé* (ه) is dropped:

راننده (*rānande*, driver) → رانندگی (*rānandegi*, driving)

And very often new compound verbs are formed with these:

رانندگی کردن / راننده → رانندگی (*rānandegi kardan*, to drive)

سخت گرفتن (*sakht gereftan*, to be tough) → سختگیر (*sakht-gir*, tough, inflexible) → سختگیری (*sakht-giri*, toughness) → سختگیری کردن (*sakht-giri kardan*, to be tough, to show no flexibility)

کتاب فروختن (*ketāb forukhtan*, to sell books) → کتابفروش (*ketāb-forush*, book seller) → کتابفروشی (*ketāb-forushi*, 'bookstore' or 'selling books') → کتابفروشی کردن (*ketāb-forushi kardan*, to sell books)

- In translating Western scientific or political terms into Persian, the verbs شناختن (*shenākhtan*, to know, to discern) and گرایدن / گراییدن (*geravidan / gerā'idan*, to incline) have proven to be very helpful, the former for sciences and the latter for schools of thought or literary trends. Examples:

زمین شناس (*zamin-shenās*, geologist), زمین شناسی (*zamin-shenāsi*, geology)
جامعه شناس (*jāme'e-shenās*, sociologist), جامعه شناسی (*jāme'e -shenāsi*, sociology)

واقعگرا (*vāghe'-gerā*, realist), واقعگرایی (*vāghe'-gerā'i*, realism)

عقل گرا (*aghl-gerā*, rationalist), عقل گرایی (*aghl-gerā'i*, rationalism)

10.2.2.2 Present stem + *-ān* = the present participle

This is very close to the English *present participle* and is used as verbal adjective or an adverb / adjective of manner, but sometimes as a noun also. Those made from compound verbs are usually used adverbially only.

- خندیدن (*khandidan*, to laugh) → خندان (*khandān*, laughing; cheerful)
(*adj. / adv.*)
- کندن خنده (*khande kardan*, to laugh) → کنان خنده (*khande-konān*,
[while] laughing) (*adv.*)
- گریستن (*geristan*, to cry, to weep) → گریان (*geryān*, crying, weeping)
(*adj. / adv.*)
- گریه کردن (*gerye kardan*, to cry, to weep) → گریه کنان (*gerye konān*, cry-
ing, weeping) (*adv.*)
- رقصیدن (*raghsidan*, to dance) → رقصان (*raghsān*, dancing)
- رفتن (*raftan*, to go) → روان (*ravān*, going; flowing; running; fluent; soul)
- نگریستن (*negaristan*, to look) → نگران (*negarān*, concerned; anxious;
worried)
- سوختن (*sukhtan*, to burn) → سوزان (*suzān*, ablaze; burning; hot;
scorching)
- ارزیدن (*arzidan*, to be worth; to cost) → ارزان (*arzān*, cheap [‘worth the
price’])
- نمودن (*nomudan*, to show; to represent; to appear) → نمایان (*nomāyān*,
apparent; appearing)
- پائیدن (*pā'idan*, to last; to watch or guard) → پایان (*pāyān*, end [*n.*])

10.2.2.3 Present stem + -ā = the participle of potential (active)

This participle is similar to *infinitive + -i* (Section 10.2.1 above) in that it is about some potential, but this time it is usually an *active* potential, not *passive*. And it differs from the *-ande* participle (Section 10.2.2.1 above) in that it is often about the *state* of having this potential rather than the *act* of putting it to use. شنیدنی (*shenidani*) is what is worth hearing, شنونده (*shenavande*) is a listener, and شنوا (*shenavā*) is a person capable of hearing. More examples:

- توانستن (*tavānestan*, to be able) → توانا (*tavānā*, capable; mighty)
- دانستن (*dānestan*, to know) → دانا (*dānā*, wise)
- دیدن (*didan*, to see) → بینا (*binā*, capable of seeing; not blind)
- داشتن (*dāshstan*, to have) → دارا (*dārā*, wealthy)
- خواندن (*khāndan*, to read) → خوانا (*khānā*, legible)
- زیبیدن (*zibidan*, to befit, to become) → زیبا (*zibā*, beautiful)
- فریفتن (*fariftan*, to charm) → فریبا (*faribā*, charming)
- گرفتن (*gereftan*, to take, to catch) → گیرا (*girā*, attractive; catching)
- رسیدن (*residan*, to reach) → رسا (*resā / rasā*, far reaching and loud)
- گذشتن (*gozashstan*, to pass) → گذرا (*gozarā*, fleeting; transient)
- رهیدن or رستن (*rastan / rahidan*, to escape; to become free) → رها (*rahā*, free)

10.2.2.4 Present stem + -esh = verbal noun

Present stem + *-esh* will give an active and abstract verbal noun and is very common. When you need the noun form of a verb (as after prepositions), you can often use this form instead of the Persian infinitive (provided that it does exist and has the same meaning!).

It is also very common to make compound verbs with these verbal nouns – which are increasingly replacing the simple verbs.

گشتن (*gashtan*, to turn, to stroll)

→ گردش (*gardesh*, stroll)

→ گردش کردن (*gardesh kardan*, to stroll)

سُتودن (*sotudan*, to admire, to praise)

→ ستایش (*setāyesh*, admiration, praise)

→ ستایش کردن (*setāyesh kardan*, to admire, to praise)

نکوهیدن (*nekuhidan*, to blame, to reproach)

→ نکوهش (*nekuhesh*, blame, reproach)

→ نکوهش کردن (*nekuhesh kardan*, to blame or reproach)

خواستن (*khāstan*, to want)

→ خواهش (*khāhesh*, request)

→ خواهش کردن (*khāhesh kardan*, to request)

نُمودن (*nomudan*, to show, to appear)

→ نمایش (*namāyesh*, a play; showing)

→ نمایش دادن (*namāyesh dādan*, to show, to present)

افزودن (*afzudan*, to increase)

→ افزایش (*afzāyesh*, increase)

→ افزایش دادن / یافتن (*afzāyesh dādan / yāftan*, to increase [*tr. / intr.*])

کاستن (*kāstan*, to decrease)

→ کاهش (*kāhesh*, decrease)

→ کاهش دادن / یافتن (*kāhesh dādan / yāftan*, to decrease [*tr. / intr.*])

گرائیدن / گرویدن (*geravidan / gerā'idan*, to incline)

→ گرایش (*gerāyesh*, inclination)

→ گرایش داشتن / یافتن (*gerāyesh dāshtan / yāftan*, to be inclined)

This suffix is usually not added to compound verbs, which would just add *-i* to the ‘agent participle’ instead (and the agent participle, as we saw earlier, uses the present stem alone when it comes to compound verbs; see Section 10.2.2.1):

دیدن (*didan*, to see) → بینش (*binesh*, insight)

But: خوش‌بینی (*khosh-bini*, optimism) or پیش‌بینی (*pish-bini*, foresight)

گزیدن (*gozidan*, to select) → گزینش (*gozinesh*, selection)

But: کارگزینی (*kār-gozini*, recruitment office) or همسرگزینی (*hamsar-gozini*, spouse selection)

رفتن (*raftan*, to go) → روش (*ravesh*, method, way)

But: پیش‌روی (*pish-ravi*, moving forward, advancing) or کج‌روی (*kaj-ravi*, deviation, aberration)

سوختن (*sukhtan*, to burn) → سوزش (*suzesh*, burning sensation or twinge)

But: آتش‌سوزی (*ādash-suzi*, fire accident or incineration) or دلسوزی (*del-suzi*, pity)

One rare example of adding *-esh* to a compound is سرزنش (*sar-zanesh*, blaming), from the compound بر سر زدن (*bar sar zadan*, to slap on the head with the hand) – while we say سینه‌زنی (*sine-zani*, chest-beating, a Shiite ritual) or پاروزنی (*pāru-zani*, rowing).

10.2.2.5 Reduplication of the imperative or Stem I

Under adverbs reduplication was mentioned as one form of making adverbs (Section 7.6). By repeating the imperative or the present stem (of the same verb or of two different verbs) usually nouns are obtained, which can then be used as adjectives also; sometimes the conjunction *va* is used to connect them. Examples:

بزن - بزن (*bezan-bezan* [from زدن, a brawl]; یک فیلم بزن - بزن (*yek film-e bezan-bezan*, action film with physical fights or martial arts)

بخور - بخور (*bekhor-bekhor* [from خوردن, a gluttony feast, figuratively used for big scandals of embezzlement)

جو پرس (*pors-o-ju*, from the two verbs پرسیدن *porsidan*, to ask, and جستن *jostan*, to seek) – it means ‘inquiry,’ and there is the compound verb پرس و جو کردن also (‘to make a search or inquiry’) خیز و افت (*oft-o-khiz* [from the two verbs افتادن and خاستن], fall and rise)

Also compare with Section 10.2.3.3 (reduplication of past stems).

10.2.3 Derivatives made from Stem II

Stem II of the verbs is always regular and is obtained by dropping the final *-an* from the infinitive.

10.2.3.1 Short infinitive (past stem) as noun

Some of the most common *nouns* in Persian are in fact *short infinitives*, like خرید (*kharid*, shopping) and شکست (*shekast*, defeat), past stems of خریدن (‘to buy’) and شکستن (‘to break’) respectively.

In the following sentences, short infinitives have been used as nouns, with the full infinitive mentioned for reference.

برگشت بخريد (yek belit-e raft-o-bargasht bekharid, Buy a return ticket.) → برگشتن and رفتن
 بعد از بازگشت دخترش حالش بهتر شد (*ba'd-az bāz-gasht-e dokhtar-ash hāl-ash behtar shod*, After the return of her daughter, her health improved.) → بازگشتن
 از دید این فیلسوف انسان هیچ مسئولیتی ندارد (*az did-e in filsuf, ensān hich mas'uliyati na-dārad*, In the view of this philosopher, man has no responsibility.) → دیدن
 شناخت این مسائل آسان نیست (*shenākht-e in mas'el āsān nist*, Understanding these problems is not easy.) → شناختن
 پرداخت کرایه را فراموش نکنید (*pardākht-e kerāye rā farāmush na-konid*, Don't forget the payment of rent.) → پرداختن
 نشست بعدی سه هفته بعد خواهد بود (*nes hast-e ba'di se hafte ba'd khāhad bud*, Next session will be in three weeks.) → نشستن
 پیشرفت او در ریاضی خیلی خوب بود (*pish-raft-e u dar riyāzi kheyli khub bud*, His progress in math was very good.) → پیش رفتن = to advance

Sometimes you have a compound verb, a second compound with a short infinitive and a third one made from the agent participle, with the same or slightly different meanings. Compare:

پیش رفتن (*pish-raftan*) = to go forward, to advance

پیشرفت کردن (*pish-raft kardan*) = to make progress (as in studies)

پیشروی کردن (*pish-ravi kardan*) = to advance (as armies in warfare) –

Here پیشروی is made from the agent participle پیشرو (*pish-row*, fore-runner, pioneer, progressive).

10.2.3.2 Past participles

The most common of the nouns / adjectives made from the past stem is the *past participle* (= past stem + *-e* or *silent hé*), sometimes hardly recognizable as past participles, like the common adjective خسته (*khaste*, tired) made from the now archaic verb خستن (*khastan*, to wound); even a noun like بسته (*baste*, package) doesn't always remind one of the equally common verb بستن (*bastan*, to tie, to close).

10.2.3.3 Past and present stems together

Occasionally you might see a past stem followed by the present stem of either the same verb or another verb. The two stems (connected through *و*, here pronounced *o*) make a new word or concept; they are sometimes written together as one word and *و* is dropped in writing (not in pronunciation). Some examples:

گفتگو or گفت و گو (*goft-o-gu*, from گفتن *goftan*, to say) – meaning ‘conversation,’ and there is the compound verb گفتگو کردن also (meaning ‘to engage in conversation’).

جستجو or جست و جو (*jost-o-ju*, from جستن *jostan*, to seek / find) – meaning ‘searching,’ and there is the compound verb جستجو کردن also (meaning ‘to search or look for’).

شستشو or شست و شو (*shost-o-shu*, from شستن *shostan*, to wash) – meaning ‘washing’ and can be used to make other compound verbs.

خورد و خواب (*khord-o-khāb*, from the two verbs خوردن *khordan*, to eat, and خوابیدن *khābidan*, to sleep) – meaning ‘food and lodging.’

بندوبست (*band-o-bast*, the two stems of بستن = ‘collusion’ or a secret deal), however, the present stem precedes the past one.

10.2.3.4 Past stem + -ār

The nouns using this suffix sometimes are similar to those using the *-ande* suffix (the ‘agent’ – see Section 10.2.2.1) and sometimes are little different from the infinitive used as noun, but can make words with different meanings also. Examples of these with some related words:

- خریدار (*kharidār*, from خریدن): purchaser – for this concept there is no خرنده with *-ande* ending!
 خریداری (*kharidāri*, purchase)
 خواستار (*khāstār*, from خواستن): one who wants; desirous (similar in meaning to the present participle خواهان *khāhān* used as noun)
 گرفتار (*gereftār*, from گرفتن): captive, occupied, busy
 گرفتار کردن (*gereftār kardan*, to catch or arrest, to entangle, to preoccupy)
 گرفتاری (*gereftāri*, captivity, entanglement, trouble)
 رفتار (*raftār*, from رفتن): behavior
 رفتار کردن (*raftār kardan*, to behave or act)
 گشتار (*koshtār*, from کشتن): butchery, slaughter, massacre
 مُردار (*mordār*, from مُردن): cadaver, corpse
 گُفتار (*goftār*, from گفتن): saying, speech
 دیدار (*didār*, from دیدن): visit
 دیدار کردن (*didār kardan*, to visit)

The suffix *-ār* was mentioned here in some detail, but more examples of such suffixes are mentioned under suffixes in Chapter 9 (see Section 9.3.2).

Persian verbs

When we think of *verbs* we are reminded first and foremost of *infinitives*, which were covered in the previous chapter. And some other aspects of what comes under the general concept of verbs will remain for the next chapter: *tenses, aspects, moods* and *voices*.

11.1 Affirmative and negative

No auxiliary verb is required in Persian for negation. The prefix *na-* is used to make verbs negative. It is always written joined. If the verb stem begins with the vowels *a / ā / o*, the glide *-y-* would be needed, without affecting the pronunciation of *na-*:

رفت (*raft*, He / she / it went.) → نرفت (*naraft*, He / she / it did not go.)
آمد (*āmad*, He / she / it came.) → نیامد (*nayāmad*, He / she / it did not come.) – Note the glide *-y-* here.

In progressive tenses that use the prefix *mi-*, in contemporary Persian *na-* is added to *mi-*¹ and the pronunciation is changed to *ne-*, both making together the prefix *nemi-*:

می‌آید (*mi-āyad*, He / she / it comes / is coming.) → نمی‌آید (*nemi-āyad*, He / she / it does not come / is not coming.)

Na- is always added to the verbal part of compound verbs, coming between the non-verbal and verbal parts:

برگشت (*bar-gasht*, He / she / it returned.) → نبرگشت (*bar-nagasht*, He / she / it did not return.)

Where an auxiliary verb is used (as in perfect tenses), the *na*-prefix is added to the main verb, with the exception of future tense (added to the auxiliary *khāstan*) and passive voice (added to the auxiliary *shodan*):

رفته بودم (*rafte budam*, I had gone.) → نرفته بودم (*na-rafte budam*, I had not gone.)
 خریده شد (*kharide shod*, It was purchased.) → خریده نشد (*kharide na-shod*, It was not purchased.)
 خواهی دید (*khāhi did*, You will see.) → نخواهی دید (*na-khāhi did*, You will not see.)

For negative imperative only, early modern Persian used to use the prefix *ma*- instead of *na*-, but this also has changed to *na*- and the older version is hardly used anymore, except occasionally in poetry and in literary language.

11.2 Interrogative

No auxiliary verb or inversion required. There is the universal word آیا (*āyā*) that *can* be used for all questions (usually, but not necessarily, at the beginning of the sentence), whether a question word is present or not, but this *āyā* can also be, and usually is, dropped, in which case only the intonation will show that the sentence is a question (especially in absence of a question word), and this will be achieved by rising the voice where the last stressed syllable in the sentence is.

11.2.1 Words needed for response: چرا and نه بله

Persian is a language with many layers for different degrees of formalities. Table 11.1 shows how formality changes when it comes to *yes* and *no* (note the change of stress also).

Table 11.1 'Yes' and 'No' in Persian

	Yes	No
<i>poet.</i>	آری (<i>āri</i>)	نه (<i>na</i>)
<i>col.</i> / casual	آره (<i>āré</i>)	نه (<i>na</i>)
respectful <i>col.</i> ; also <i>wrt.</i>	بله (<i>bāle</i>)	نخیر (<i>nakhéyr</i>)
<i>form.</i> / <i>wrt.</i> only	بلی (<i>bāli</i>)	خیر (<i>khéyr</i>)

If you want, however, to give an affirmative answer to a negative question, you should use چرا (*chérā*, similar to the French *si* or German *doch*):

شما شیرازی نیستید؟ (*shomā shirāzi nistid?*, Aren't you from Shirāz?)

نه، نیستم (*na, nistam*, No, I'm not.)

چرا، هستم (*cherā, hastam*, Yes, I am.)

پدرت خانه است؟ (*pedarat khāne ast?*, Is your father home?)

بله، هست (*bale, hast*, Yes, he is.)

نه، نیست (*na, nist*, No, he isn't.)

11.2.2 Question tags and short answers?

As question tag, colloquial Persian would only use an interrogative ؟نه (*na?*, no?), مگر نه؟ (*magar na?*, [same]), or, less commonly, ؟آره (*āre?*, yes?) at the end of statement, all of them regardless of affirmative / negative (maybe it is more about the kind of answer you expect to hear). And instead of short answers as common in English, Persian would repeat the whole verb, sometimes even with adverbial complements. In the case of compound verbs formed with nouns or adjectives, only the verbal part *may* be repeated, although even there it is more common to repeat the whole verb.

باز هم دیر رسیدند، نه؟ (*bāz ham dir residand, na?*, They were late again, no? [= weren't they?])

بله، دیر رسیدند (*bale, dir residand*, Yes, they were late.)

نه، دیر نرسیدند (*na, dir na-residand*, No, they were not late.)

In the above example you can't even drop the adverb *dir*.

For *magar na?* see also Section 13.2.4.1 / B.

11.3 Transitive and intransitive verbs, objects and complements

Persian has of course transitive and intransitive verbs, as well as some linking verbs. Sometimes a verb can be both, as it happens in English too. This is something that should be learned with each verb.

A *transitive* verb always needs at least one object, although sometimes there can be two; it can have a direct or an indirect object or both.

An indirect object is very easy to recognize in Persian: it is always preceded by a preposition. In English you can say ‘I gave him the book’ or ‘I gave the book to him’; in Persian it is always ‘to him,’ and the first option does not exist:

کتاب را به او دادم (*ketāb rā be u dādam*)

A verb cannot have more than one direct object – not to be confused with the case where you might have two or more words mentioned as a series: *I gave him the book AND this AND that*. Certain usages of the DDO-marker را – remnants of its old dative functions – may sometimes cause confusion. Compare:

پول را به گدا دادم (*pul rā be gedā dādam*, I gave the money to the beggar.)
گدا را پول دادم (*gedā rā pul dādam*, I gave the beggar money.) In spite of the *rā* placed here after *gedā* (beggar), the direct object is still *pul* (money), and the sentence should actually, in better standard Persian of today, be written as *به گدا پول دادم* (*be gedā pul dādam*).

There are verbs that now treat a person as indirect object but in earlier times used to treat a person also as direct object and use no preposition. (This is also about a development in treating dative / accusative objects, which we do not need to discuss here.) For instance, the verb گفتن would normally use the preposition به as in *به او گفتم* (‘I said to him.’ / ‘I told him.’). In early modern Persian, however, this verb often used a direct object, i.e., *او را گفتم* – a form still used in poetical language. Examples from some other verbs:

پروین را نگاه کرد (*parvin negāh kard*) or *به پروین نگاه کرد* (*be parvin negāh kard*), both meaning ‘He looked at Parvin.’
آن را گوش کردم (*ān rā gush kardam*) or *به آن گوش کردم* (*be ān gush kardam*), both meaning ‘I listened to it.’
آن را ادامه دادیم (*ān rā edāme dādīm*) or *به آن ادامه دادیم* (*be ān edāme dādīm*), both meaning ‘We continued it.’

Two indirect objects for a single verb are sometimes possible, as they are in English also:

دربارهٔ شما هم با من صحبت کرد (*darbāre-ye shomā ham bā man sohbat kard*, He / she talked to me about you also.)

Trying to distinguish indirect objects from different kinds of complements that are preceded by prepositions is another of those rewardless jobs that this book is not going to undertake.

11.4 Verbal agreement

Singular subject, singular verb; plural subject, plural verb. Fair enough and usually correct. If the subject is inanimate, however, Persian tends to use a singular verb even for plural subjects, although a plural verb is not wrong either. A plural verb (for inanimates) could even be preferred when the subject is seen as individuals rather than a mass of things or when the subject needs emphasis or is personified in some way. For a sentence like دیوارهای قصر بلند است (*divār-hā-ye ghasr boland ast*, The walls of the palace are [Persian: *is*] high), Persian would prefer a singular verb, although plural is not wrong or uncommon, but in a sentence like این دیوارها با من حرف می‌زنند (*in divār-hā bā man harf mi-zanand*, These walls talk to me), the verb has to be plural.

See Section 5.2.4 for more details on plural pronouns used instead of singular to show respect, in which case the verb is also expected to be plural, though sometimes it isn't (for relations halfway between distanced and intimate).

For collective nouns, see Section 3.3.7.

11.5 Simple and compound

Persian has a few dozen simple verbs that are common at all levels of language, about 100 or more that are used in literary / written language only and then maybe about 2,000 more that are obsolete / archaic, examples for which can only be found in texts of early modern Persian.

There is, however, no scarcity of *compound verbs* in Persian. In fact, it is with the rise and popularity of compound verbs that simple verbs are losing their currency. And they are formed in three ways:

- 1 A prefix + infinitive. Some prefixes have functions as prepositions also, as in برگشتن (*bar-gashtan*, to return, from گشتن *gashtan*, to turn), and some have changed their original form and merged with the infinitive to the extent that the whole prefix + infinitive is now seen and treated as a simple verb (which can be changed into a compound by adding another prefix!), as in آوردن (*āvordan* or *āvardan*, to bring, originally from بردن *bordan*, to take), which allows forming new compounds like درآوردن (*dar-āvardan*, to take out / off).
- 2 An adjective + infinitive

3 A noun + infinitive

Prefixes (group 1) are no more very productive, but compounds with adjectives (2) and nouns (3) are very common and productive, very easy to form by using verbs like بودن (*budan*, to be); کردن (*kardan*, to do / make); شدن (*shodan*, to get / become); and so on. The line between a real compound verb and one of above-mentioned verbs + an adjective or noun can sometimes be blurry, unless the combination shows some difference from the simple addition of the words, as in آب کردن (*āb kardan*, to melt) when used in the sense of ‘to sell off / to trade off,’ a meaning which is absent in *āb* (water) alone.

11.5.1 Separability of compound verbs

The verbal part of compound verbs can often be separated from non-verbal part(s) in different ways, which are listed below, although only the last case (when the non-verbal part is a noun) shows what can be called a true separation:

- Certain prefixes (the negative *na-*, the imperative / subjunctive *be-*, the progressive *mi-*) are always added to the verbal part of a compound verb.
- An objective suffix can also be placed between the two parts of a compound verb (see Section 5.2.3):

آن را برداشتم (*ān rā bar-dshtam*, I picked it up.) → برش داشتم (*bar-ash dāshtam*)

ما را نگه داشتند (*mā rā negah-dāshtand*, They kept us.) → نگهدارمان داشتند (*negah-emān dāshtand*)

آنها را برگرداندیم (*ānhā rā bar-gardāndim*, We returned them.) → برشان گرداندیم (*bar-eshān gardāndim*)

- If the first part is an adjective (as in تمیز کردن), some modifiers / intensifiers can also be added to the adjective or sometimes comparative suffixes.

خانه را تمیز کردیم (*khāne rā tamiz kardim*, We cleaned the house. / We made the house clean.)

خانه را تمیزتر کردیم (= خانه را بیشتر تمیز کردیم) [*khāne rā bishtar tamiz kardim*], We made the house cleaner.

خانه را تمیزتر از همیشه کردیم (= خانه را بیشتر از همیشه تمیز کردیم) [*khāne rā bishtar az hamishe kardim*], We made the house cleaner than ever.)

- If the first part is a noun (as in صحبت کردن), the two parts can be separated by different words, even by whole adverbial or relative clauses.

صحبت کردیم (*sohbat kardim*, We talked.)

صحبت هائی کردیم (*sohbat-hā'i kardim*, We did some talking.)

صحبت های خیلی جالب و مفیدی کردیم (*sohbat-hā-ye kheyli jāleb va mofidi kardim*, We had very interesting and useful talks.)

صحبت هائی که با رئیس جدیدمان کردیم خیلی مفید بودند (*sohbat-hā'i ke bā ra'is-e jadid-emān kardim kheyli mofid budand*, The talks we had with our new boss were very useful.)

صحبت هائی که قبل از آنکه شما بیائید با رئیس جدیدمان کردیم خیلی مفید بودند (*sohbat-hā'i ke ghabl az ān-ke shomā biyā'id bā ra'is-e jadid-emān kardim kheyli mofid budand*, The talks we had with our new boss before you came were very useful.)

11.6 Forming causative verbs

This is a very common form used to make causative / transitive verbs from intransitive verbs (or occasionally to give a causative sense to an already transitive verb).

The formation is quite regular: the suffix *اندن* (-*āndan*) is added to the *Stem I*; sometimes these verbs have a more *form. / lit.* version also with the suffix *اندن* [-*ānidan*]). The resulting verb, too, is always regular: to get the present stem or *Stem I*, simply *-dan* (or *-idan*) is dropped from the end of the new infinitive.

Table 11.2 How causative verbs are formed: some examples (left to right)

Simple infinitive (often intransitive)		→	Causative infinitive (always transitive)	
Infinitive	Stem I	+ -āndan (-ānidan)	Infinitive	Stem I
خوردن <i>kbordan</i> , to eat	خور <i>kbhor</i>		خوراندن (خورانیدن) <i>khorāndan (khorānidan)</i> , to feed; to cause to eat	خوران <i>kbhorān</i>
خوابیدن <i>kbābidan</i> , to sleep	خواب <i>kbāb</i>		خواباندن (خوابانیدن) <i>khābāndan (khābānidan)</i> , to put to bed; to cause to sleep	خوابان <i>kbābān</i>

(Continued)

Table 11.2 (Continued)

Simple infinitive (often intransitive)		→	Causative infinitive (always transitive)	
Infinitive	Stem I	+ -āndan (-ānidan)	Infinitive	Stem I
رسیدن <i>residan</i> , to reach	رس <i>res</i>		رساندن (رسانیدن) <i>resāndan (resānidan)</i> , to cause to reach; to deliver	رسان <i>resān</i>
برگشتن <i>bar-gashtan</i> , to return (<i>intr.</i>)	برگرد <i>bargard</i>		برگرداندن <i>bargardāndan</i> , to (cause to) return (<i>tr.</i>)	برگردان <i>bargardān</i>
ایستادن <i>istādan</i> , to stand	ایست <i>ist</i>		ایستاندن <i>istāndan</i> , to cause to stand	ایستان <i>istān</i>
دویدن <i>davidan</i> , to run	دو <i>dow / dav</i>		دواندن <i>davāndan</i> , to cause to run	دوان <i>davān</i>
پریدن <i>paridan</i> , to fly	پر <i>par</i>		پراندن <i>parāndan</i> , to cause to fly	پران <i>parān</i>
پوشیدن <i>pushidan</i> , to wear	پوش <i>push</i>		پوشاندن <i>pushāndan</i> , to cause to wear; to cover	پوشان <i>pushān</i>
ترسیدن <i>tarsidan</i> , to fear	ترس <i>tars</i>		ترساندن <i>tarsāndan</i> , to scare	ترسان <i>tarsān</i>

Note 1: Not all the verbs have this causative form.

Note 2: Not all the infinitives ending in *-āndan* are the causative form of another infinitive – which means that some can even be intransitive (like ماندن [*māndan*], to stay²). But the great majority of them are.

Note 3: The verb نشستن (*neshastan*, to sit, *pres. stem neshin*) uses the shortened causative form نشاندن (*neshāndan*, to cause to sit). Also, in colloquial Persian, you hear the causative / transitive form شکاندن (*shekāndan*) for the verb شکستن (*shekastan*, to break, both *tr.* and *intr.*).

Examples:

دیده‌تان برسانید (salām-e man rā be khānevāde-etān beresānid, Say hello from me. / Give my greetings to your family.)

دیروز برگشت ولی کتابم را برنگرداند (diruz bar-gasht vali ketāb-am rā bar-nagardānd, He returned yesterday but did not return my book.)

می‌توانی این غذا را به بچه بخورانی؟ (mi-tavāni in ghazā rā be bach.che bekhorāni?, Can you feed this food to the child?)

11.7 Regular verbs replacing the irregulars

In the course of its simplification, Modern Persian has been moving away from simple, irregular verbs. The two main strategies have been:

- (a) using compound verbs formed by only a few verbs – mainly کردن (*kardan*, to do) and شدن (*shodan*, to become) and
- (b) making regular verbs out of the irregular ones.

The latter strategy, a process which has also been called *back-formation* of the infinitive, needs adding *-idan* to the present stem of the verb. The irregular verb is then usually used in written / literary language only, and the present stem for both versions of the verb would be the same.

Examples for (a):

آلودن (*āludan*, to pollute, to dirty) → آلوده کردن / شدن (*ālude kardan / shodan*, to make or get dirty and polluted)
 خستن (*khastan*, to wound [obsolete]) → خسته کردن / شدن (*khaste kardan / shodan*, to make or get tired)

One interesting example is the verb گزیدن (*gazidan*, to bite / sting), a simple verb which is even quite ‘regular’ and did not need to be further simplified, but is now used in written / literary language only and has been mostly replaced by two different compound verbs: گاز گرفتن (*gāz gereftan*, to bite) and نیش زدن (*nish zadan*, to sting).

Examples for (b):

خفتن (*khofthan*, to sleep) → خوابیدن (*khābidan*, to sleep)
 کوفتن (*kuftan*, to pound, to hammer) → کوبیدن (*kubidan*, to pound, to mash)
 رستن (*rostan*, to grow) → روئیدن (*ru'idan*, to grow)
 رستن (*rastan*, to escape or be saved) → رهیدن (*rahidan*, same meaning)
 → رها شدن (*rahā shodan*, same meaning)

In the case of *kuftan / kubidan*, their past participles give the names of two famous Persian dishes: کوفته (*kufte*, ball of ground meat mixed with other ingredients, in other countries known as *kufta*, *kofta* or *köfte*) and کوبیده (*kubide*, skewer of ground meat kebab).

Most of the verbs formed in Persian from nouns (and all of the verbs made from Arabic loan words) add *-idan* to the noun:

- جنگیدن (*jangidan*, to fight) from جنگ (*jang*, fight, war)
 سنجیدن (*sanjidan*, to measure) from سنگ (*stone*, stone)
 دزدیدن (*dozdidan*, to steal) from دزد (*dozd*, thief)
 فهمیدن (*fahmidan*, to understand) from the Arabic loan words فهم (*fahm*, understanding)
 طلبیدن (*talabidan*, to desire) from the Arabic loan words طلب (*talab*, desire)
 رقصیدن (*raghsidan*, to dance) from the Arabic loan words رقص (*raghs*, dance)

11.8 'To be'

The infinitive is بودن (*budan*, to be), past stem (*Stem II*) بود (*bud*), past participle is بوده (*bude*) – and this makes the verb 'to be' in Persian quite as regular as any other verb when it is about past tense or every structure that needs the past stem (like perfect tenses, even future tense). But it is irregular in present tense, as Table 11.3 will illustrate. بودن has two different present forms: a shorter, suffixed form and a longer version, which is basically هست (*hast*) + the shorter version – and it is only the longer version that can be used

Table 11.3 Present tense of the verb بودن (*budan*, to be)

The verb 'to be'	Used as suffix	Used independently	Negative of both types
1st person singular: (I) am	م - (-am)	هستم (<i>hastam</i>)	نیستم (<i>nistam</i>)
2nd person singular: (you) are / (thou) art	ی - (-i)	هستی (<i>hasti</i>)	نیستی (<i>nisti</i>)
3rd person singular: (he / she / it) is	ست / است - (<i>ast / -ast</i>)	هست (<i>hast</i>)	نیست (<i>nist</i>)
1st person plural: (we) are	یم - (-im)	هستیم (<i>hastim</i>)	نیستیم (<i>nistim</i>)
2nd person plural: (you) are	ید - (-id)	هستید (<i>hastid</i>)	نیستید (<i>nistid</i>)
3rd person plural: (they) are	ند / اند - (-and)	هستند (<i>hastand</i>)	نیستند (<i>nistand</i>)

as an independent verb. In negative, both types use the same form, and one wouldn't need to learn two different negative forms.

11.8.1 Notes about writing the suffixed version

The shorter or suffixed version (also called 'copula') is usually written joined if the preceding word ends in a consonant – with the exception of 3Sg. (and, occasionally, 3Pl. also):

من کوچکم (*man kuchekam*, I'm small.)
 تو بزرگی (*to bzorgi*, You're big.)
 او زن است (*u zan ast*, She's a woman.)
 ما در اتاقیم (*mā dar otāghim*, We are in the room.)
 شما در کلاسید (*shomā dar kelāsid*, You are in the classroom.)
 آنها نزدیکند or آنها نزدیک‌اند (*ānhā nazdik-and*, They're near.)

The special case of 3rd person

- The 3rd person singular است is usually written separately, although, as a remnant of the past style, you might sometimes see it written joined, in which case the initial *alef* is dropped in writing. Thus, the contemporary standard is writing این خوب است (*in khub ast*, This is good.), but sometimes you might see this written joined as: این خوبست (same pronunciation and meaning).
- If the previous word is a shorter word ending in vowels *-ā*, *-u* or *-i*, you are more likely to see *ast* written joined, in which case *ast* is usually shortened in pronunciation as *-st*: این کتاب شماست (*in ketāb-e shomā-st*, This is your book.), این کتاب اوست (*in ketāb-e u-st*, This is his / her book.), عالیست (*āli-st*, [It] is excellent.).
- In recent times, there is a growing tendency to write the plural *-and* also separately (by adding an *alef*), especially when it makes reading easier: آنها بزرگند or آنها بزرگ‌اند (*ānhā bozorg-and*, They're big.), but usually آنها در ایران‌اند (and not ایرانند) (*ānhā dar irān-and*, They're in Iran.).

Writing the suffixed version of 'to be' after words ending in vowels

If the preceding word ends in a vowel, a glide would normally be needed. The case of است was mentioned above.

Words ending in *-a* and *-e* (i.e., ending in silent *o*) are always written separately, and then an *alef* is added as glide in writing. The same is true of words ending in *-i*, although in the case of *-i* occasionally you might see it written

joined with the glide /بـ/ added. (In careless writing the glide is sometimes dropped altogether.)

Examples with words ending in vowels:

With *-a / -e* (always written separately + *alef*): من خانه‌ام (*man khāne-am*, I'm home.); تو بچه‌ای (*to bachche-i*, You are a child.)

With *-ā / -u*: من اینجا‌یم (*man injā-y-am*, I'm here.); آنها اینجا‌یند (*ānhā injā-y-and*, They are here.); but when the suffix starts with *i*: ما اینجا‌ئیم (*mā injā-'im*, We are here.); تو اینجا‌ئی (*to injā-'i*, You (singular) are here.); شما اینجا‌ئید (*shomā injā-'id*, You (plural) are here.). Same with *-u*: من دانشجو‌یم (*man dāneshju-y-am*, I'm a (college) student.), etc.

With *-o*: من پدر تو‌ام (*man pedar-e to-am*, I'm your father.); تو نزدیک رادیوئی (or رادیویی) (*to nazdik-e rādio-'i*, You (Sg.) are near the radio.)

With *-i*: من دوّمی‌ام (*man dovvomi-am*, I'm the second one.); تو تهرانی‌ای (*to tehrāni-'i*, You (singular) are from Tehran.)

11.8.2 Where to use each 'to be' version?

The shorter, suffixed version is by far the more common version. And in present perfect tense, where 'to be' is required as auxiliary, only the shorter version can be used.

Although in many cases the two forms seem to be interchangeable (specially in colloquial Persian), it is recommended that the longer version be used only when:

- There is need for emphasis (as in 'I am your friend, but [I cannot agree with that],' . . . [dust-e to hastam, vali . . .]);
- An independent verb is needed with no predicate (as in short answers: 'Yes, I am,' "بله، هستم" [*bale, hastam*]); or
- When it is about the 'existence' of something, like 'there is / there are' (only for 3Sg.). Compare these examples that use *moshkel* as adjective first and then as noun:

تاریخ مشکل است (*tārikh moshkel ast*, History is difficult.)

شما دانشجوی خوبی هستید، ولی اینجا یک مشکل هست (*shomā dāneshju-yekhubi hastid, vali injā yek moshkel hast*, You are a good student, but there is a problem here.) If you use است in this example, it would be like saying 'a problem is here,' which wouldn't make much sense.

In spoken Persian, sometimes the longer (هست) version is preferred when it helps ease the pronunciation and avoid cacophony, as it is the case with words ending in *-i*. For instance, to say ‘You are Iranian,’ the version تو ایرانی هستی (*to irāni hasti*) is preferred to تو ایرانی‌ای (*to irāni'i*), although the shorter version is also used.

11.8.3 Imperative and subjunctive; tenses with Stem II

(To see how they function, check the relevant parts of the next chapter about tenses, aspects, etc.)

Unlike most of the other verbs, the verb بودن does not use the verb داشتن (*dāshtan*) as auxiliary to form progressive tenses.

Unlike almost all of the other verbs, the verb بودن does not use even the progressive prefix *-می* (*mi-*) for any of the tenses that use this prefix; however, in irrealis / counterfactual conditionals and wishes, this prefix sometimes is used with past progressive:

کاش تو الآن با من می‌بودی (*kāsh to al'ān bā man mi-budi*, I wish you could have been with me now.)

For the imperative and simple (present) subjunctive, باش (*bāsh*) is used as *Stem I*, with no prefix *be-* additionally added:

Imperative: باش! (*bāsh*, Be! [sg.]), باشید! (*bāshid*, Be! [pl.]).

Simple (present) subjunctive: باشم (*bāsham*, 1Sg.), باشی (*bāshi*, 2Sg.), باشد (*bāshad*, 3Sg.), باشیم (*bāshim*, 1Pl.), باشید (*bāshid*, 2Pl.), باشند (*bāshand*, 3Pl.).

The negative simply adds the *na-*prefix in all these cases: نباش! (*na-bāsh*, Don't be! [sg.]) and so on.

Where *Stem II* is needed, بود (*bud*) is used:

Perfect (past) subjunctive: بوده باشم (*bude bāsham*, 1Sg.), بوده باشی (*bude bāshi*, 2Sg.), بوده باشد (*bude bāshad*, 3Sg.), بوده باشیم (*bude bāshim*, 1Pl.), بوده باشید (*bude bāshid*, 2Pl.), بوده باشند (*bude bāshand*, 3Pl.).

Simple past tense: بودم (*budam*, I was), بودی (*budi*, you [sg.] were), بود (*bud*, he / she / it was), بودیم (*budim*, we were), بودید (*budid*, you were), بودند (*budand*, they were).

Present perfect tense: بوده‌ام (*bude-'am*, I have been), بوده‌ای (*bude-'i*, you [sg.] have been), بوده است (*bude ast*, he / she / it has been), بوده‌ایم (*bude-'im*, we have been), بوده‌اید (*bude-'id*, you have been), بوده‌اند (*bude-'and*, they have been).

For *present perfect progressive tense*, simply add the prefix می- (*mi-*) to the above, but this tense is not very common for the verb 'to be.'

Past perfect tense of the verb 'to be' is even less common, but possible if necessary: past participle of 'to be' + past tense of 'to be': بوده بودم (*bude budam*, for 'I had been'), etc., sounds awkward in Persian. Even more so its progressive form: می‌بوده بودم almost does not exist.

Future tense: خواهیم بود (*khāham bud*, I will be), خواهی بود (*khāhi bud*, you [sg.] will be), خواهد بود (*khāhad bud*, he / she / it will be), خواهیم بود (*khāhim bud*, we will be), خواهید بود (*khāhid bud*, you will be), خواهند بود (*khāhand bud*, they will be).

11.8.4 Other versions

If we put together all the different usages of the verb 'to be' from early Modern Persian (evident in classical poetry and prose) until now, we may have to conclude that this verb had four different infinitives: استن (*astan*, the suffixed '-am, -i, ast . . .' version); هستن (*hastan*, the independent 'hastam, hasti, hast . . .' version); بودن (*budan*, present / subjunctive 'bovam, bovi, bovad . . .'); and باشیدن (*bāshidan*, 'bāsham, bāshi, bāshad . . .').

Before the Islamic revolution, the motto of Iran's Ministry of Education, published on the front cover as well as the first page of all school books, used to be this line by the poet Ferdowsi:

توانا بُود هرکه دانا بُود (*tavānā bovad har-ke dānā bovad*, 'whoever is wise is strong' or 'knowledge is power')

Here *bovad* is the 3Sg. of the verb بودن, and it is mostly this 3Sg. which can be seen in classical texts of prose and verse. It is as the past tense of استن / هستن that بودن is needed and is indispensable.

باشیدن also has no function in the past and, as it was earlier shown, it is needed for imperative / subjunctive. It should be noted, however, that in 'bad Persian' (written administrative / 'journalistic' language, never in spoken / colloquial) باشیدن is conjugated for present tense as a normal verb (*mi-bāsham, mi-bāshi, mi-bāshad, mi-bāshim, mi-bāshid, mi-bāshand*), as an

alternative ‘to be,’ a practice disliked and discouraged by those who care for ‘good Persian’ and better style.

For negative also, the shorter or ‘*astan*’ version had its own shorter negative, which can only be found in classical texts:

نیستم (*ni-am* = نیستم)
 نیستی (*ne-'i* = نیستی)
 نیست (*nist* = نیست)
 نیستیم (*ne-'im* = نیستیم)
 نیستید (*ne-'id* = نیستید)
 نیستند (*ni-yand* = نیستند)

11.9 ‘To have’

Similar to all other verbs, there is nothing irregular about *Stem II* and things related to the past; in other respects, however, داشتن (*dāshtan*, to have) could be said to be just a little more irregular than normal irregular verbs. It’s not just having an irregular *Stem I*:

- In its simple form, unlike all other verbs (forget ‘to be’ for a moment), داشتن does not use the prefix *mi-* in simple present tense: دارم (*dāram*, I have) and not می‌دارم (*mi-dāram*), داری (*dāri*, you [sg.] have) and so on.
- In its simple form, it does not have any progressive form, either using the auxiliary داشتن (which would be itself) or using the progressive prefix *-می-* (*mi-*); similar to ‘to be,’ however, it can use *mi-* sometimes in irrealis / counterfactual conditionals and wishes: . . . اگر بیشتر پول می‌داشتم (*agar bishtar pul mi-dāshtam* . . ., Had I had more money . . .).
- In its simple form, it uses *perfect* (or *past*) *subjunctive* for imperative or wherever normally *simple* (or *present*) *subjunctive* is needed:

این پول را داشته باش! (*in pul rā dāshte bāsh*, Have / keep this money!)
 باید هنوز کمی داشته باشم (*bāyad hanuz kami dāshte bāsham*, I must still have some.)

But where other verbs normally need *perfect subjunctive*, داشتن in its simple form would take one step further back, using a double-perfect form (or *perfect subjunctive II*, see Section 12.11.2), which rarely happens and is not a common form in Persian: باید هنوز کمی داشته بوده باشد (*bāyad hanuz kami dāshte bude bāshad*, He / she must still have had some.)

Compound verbs that use داشتن are of two kinds:

- (a) The *more irregular* ones: These are the compounds that retain in some way the base meaning ('to have'), and they are exactly similar to the 'simple form' of داشتن mentioned above, with the same deviations from general rules of tenses, etc. A major test for recognizing this group is to see whether they use the prefix *mi-* for simple present tense or not: you say انتظار دارم (*entezār dāram*, I expect / have the expectation), not *entezār mi-dāram*, so it belongs to the more irregular group, and everything mentioned above for the 'simple form' applies to this compound also, like: باید انتظار داشته باشم (*bāyad entezār dāshte bāsham*, I must expect.), etc.
- (b) The *less irregular* ones: These are the compounds that are not so closely associated with the base meaning ('to have'), and these are 'irregular' just in the sense that *Stem I* of the verb داشتن is irregular. These use the prefix *mi-* for present tense and all progressive tenses and follow the same patterns as all other (irregular) verbs. Compounds like برداشتن (*bar-dāshtan*, to pick up / take) and نگه داشتن (*negah-dāshtan*, to keep) belong to this group: او کتابش را بر می‌دارد (*u ketāb-ash rā bar-mi-dārad*, He / she picks up his / her book.), باید آن را نگه دارد (*bāyad ān rā negah dārad*, He must keep it.) and so on.

The negative simply adds the *na-*prefix in all of the above examples:

هیچ پولی ندارم (*hich puli na-dāram*, I have no money.)
 آن را بر ندار! (*ān rā bar-na-dār!*, Don't take that!)
 از من هیچ انتظاری نداشته باش!
 Don't have any expectations of me!

11.10 Modal verbs

Persian does not have a wide range of modal verbs, and the few that can be mentioned often have a double life – used more like normal verbs than modals, except for certain functions.

11.10.1 بایستن (*bāyestan*, to have to, must)

This is a true defective modal verb, not capable of being conjugated for different persons and reduced almost entirely to باید (*bāyad*) and – much less

Table 11.4 *Bāyad*

باید	Used with	Is equal to	Example
<i>bāyad</i>	Stem II (short infinitive)	(impersonal) one must	باید رفت (<i>bāyad raft</i>) One must go.
<i>bāyad</i>	Simple subjunctive	must or have to	باید برود (<i>bāyad beravad</i>) He must go.
<i>bāyad</i>	Perfect subjunctive	must have	باید رفته باشد (<i>bāyad rafte bāshad</i>) He must have gone.
	Past participle + perfect subjunctive of 'to be'		باید رفته بوده باشد (<i>bāyad rafte bude bāshad</i>) He must have (been) gone.
<i>bāyad</i>	Past progressive	should have	باید می‌رفت (<i>bāyad mi-raft</i>) He should have gone.
		had to	باید می‌رفت (<i>bāyad mi-raft</i>) He had to go.

common now – بایست (*bāyest*). Both forms can be preceded by the prefix *mi-*, and as a remnant of older usage, بایست can add the unstressed suffix *-i*. Regardless of their distinct usage and function in early modern Persian, in contemporary Persian, all of them (*bāyad*, *mi-bāyad*, *bāyest*, *mi-bāyest*, *bāyesti*, *mi-bāyesti*) are treated as synonyms, with *bāyad* becoming increasingly more common at the cost of the other forms.

Table 11.4. lists all the constructions possible with *bāyad* (from left to right).

11.10.2 توانستن (*tavānestan*, to be able to, can)

This verb is about ability and possibility; it is usually conjugated like a normal verb and is followed by a verb (often in the subjunctive form) that represents the action that can be performed. What makes it a modal verb is its use in an impersonal construction, where only the Stem I (توان, *tavān*) is used and the next verb uses the short infinitive (Stem II) form.

In this construction, *tavān* is used without any conjugational suffixes added, but usually with the prefix *mi-*, or if needed *be-*, adding also the negative prefix wherever needed: *mi-tavān*, *ne-mi-tavān*, *be-tavān*, *na-tavān*.

This impersonal construction ('one can . . .') does not have any 'past' form in contemporary Persian, and for the past, one has to resort to شدن (*shodan*). (See below for *shodan*.)

Examples for *tavānestan* as a normal (non-modal) verb:

می‌توانند یک روز دیرتر بیایند (*mi-tavānand yek ruz dir-tar biyāyand*, They can come one day later.)

نمی‌توانم در تاریکی ببینم (*nemi-tavānam dar tāriki bebinam*, I can't see in the dark.)

شاید بتوانم با او حرف بزنم (*shāyad betavānam bā u harf bezanam*, I may be able to talk to him.)

توانستی کتاب را پیدا کنی؟ (*tavānesti ketāb rā peydā koni?*, Could you / were you able to find the book?)

Examples for *tavānestan* as a modal verb:

می‌توان پیشنهاد شما را پذیرفت (*mi-tavān pishnahād-e shomā rā paziroft*, One can accept your proposal.)

نمی‌توان در این ساعت به آنجا رفت (*nemi-tavān dar in sā'at be ānjā raft*, One cannot go there at this hour.)

شاید بتوان مادرش را دید (*shāyad be-tavān mādar-ash rā did*, One may be able to see his mother.)

شاید نتوان این را ثابت کرد (*shāyad na-tavān in rā sābet kard*, One may not be able to prove this.)

11.10.3 شایستن (*shāyestan*, to benefit)

This can be a normal verb, meaning 'to benefit / to merit / to be worthy of.' The word شاید (*shāyad*, 3Sg.), however, has come to have some independent life for itself:

- (1) *Shāyad* can be used as adverb, meaning 'maybe / perhaps.' Nothing special about it; you don't even need to use the subjunctive after it:

شاید او نمی‌داند (*shāyad u nemi-dānad*, Maybe he does not know.)

شاید او نمی‌دانست (*shāyad u nemi-dānest*, Maybe he did not know.)

- (2) It can be used as a quasi-impersonal verb with a meaning similar to 'may / might,' followed by subjunctive (simple or perfect):

شاید او نداند (*shāyad u na-dānad*, He may not know.)

شاید او نرفته باشد (*shāyad u na-rafte bāshad*, He may not have gone.)

- (3) Now rather archaic-sounding and only in poetry, and mostly in the form of the negative impersonal نشاید (*na-shāyad*) followed by *short infinitive* of the next verb, it is used in the sense of (in-)appropriateness or (im-)possibility. The example given below sounds poetic / archaic:

این طفل را نباید در بیابان رها کرد
(*in teftl rā na-shāyad dar biyābān rahā kard*, One cannot abandon this child in the desert.)

Note that since شاید can function as both an adverb (maybe / perhaps) and a modal (may / might), using subjunctive after it is optional. Present tense would be almost the same as the subjunctive, and perfect subjunctive would be pretty much the same as present perfect tense; in both cases, however, using the subjunctive would slightly increase the uncertainty. Compare:

شاید نمی فهمد (*shāyad nemi-fahmad*, Maybe she doesn't understand.)
شاید نفهمد (*shāyad na-fahmad*, She may not understand / find out.)
شاید نوشته است (*shāyad neveshte ast*, Maybe she has written.)
شاید نوشته باشد (*shāyad neveshte bāshad*, She may have written.)

11.10.4 شدن (*shodan*, to get / become)

Shodan can be:

- (a) a very normal verb, meaning 'to get / to become,' and it is one of the two most common verbs (the other one being کردن, *kardan*) used to form compound verbs;
- (b) an auxiliary verb used to form the passive voice in Persian;
- (c) a modal verb used to show possibility (can / could / may / might), used also in impersonal constructions.

This last case (c), which is a rather recent development in the language, is what concerns us here.

The 3Sg. of *shodan* (present tense or past progressive) can be used either (1) in a quasi-impersonal form followed by a verb in the subjunctive (and that verb can be conjugated for all persons) or (2) in a totally impersonal form, using only the *Stem II* (Short Infinitive) of the next verb.

Similar to می شود, if می توان is preceded by something that requires *subj.*, it changes to بشود (*be-shavad*), but this wouldn't affect the short infinitive that follows.

By using past progressive tense of *shodan* (3Sg.), an impersonal past statement can be made.

Examples for quasi-impersonal usage, present and past:

می شود فردا با من بیائی؟ (*mi-shavad fardā bā man biyā'i?*, Can you come with me tomorrow?)

چرا نمی شود این را هر روز بخورم؟ (*cherā nemi-shavad in rā har-ruz be-khoram?*, Why isn't it possible [for me] to eat this every day?)

باید بشود این را از مینا بپرسیم (*bāyad beshavad in rā az mina beporsim*, We must be able to ask this from Mina.)

اگر شد، خواهرت را هم بیاور! (*agar shod, khāhar-at rā ham biyāvar!*, If possible, bring your sister also.)

نمی شد کمی زودتر بیایند؟ (*nemi-shod kami zud-tar biyāyand?*, Couldn't they come a little earlier?)

Examples for totally impersonal usage, present and past:

فردا می شود شنا رفت (*fardā mi-shavad shenā raft*, Tomorrow one can go swimming.)

بدون اجازه دکترا نمی شود این دوا را خورد (*bedun-e ejāze-ye doktor nemi-shavad in davā rā khord*, One cannot take this medicine without the doctor's permission.)

شاید نشود امروز آن را تمام کرد (*shāyad na-shavad emruz ān rā tamām kard*, One might not be able to finish it today.)

دیروز می شد همین لباس را ارزانتر خرید (*diruz mi-shod hamin lebās rā arzān-tar kharid*, Yesterday one could buy this same dress cheaper.)

واقعا نمی شد هیچ کاری کرد (*vaghe'an nemi-shod hich kāri kard*, One couldn't really do anything.)

III.11 English modals or semi-modals and their Persian equivalents

As equivalents of the English modals or some semi-modals, Persian sometimes uses compound verbs / idioms that are not modals in any sense, so it will be helpful to check the list in Table 11.5 and learn about the structures used.

'Shall', 'will' and 'would'

For 'shall' and 'will', you can usually use the Persian *future tense*. Persian has no 'future perfect' tense, and the *present perfect* must be used for *shall have* and *will have*.

Table 11.5 English modals or some semi-modals and their Persian equivalents

	Modals Present	Past
must / have to / must have / had to	<p>Obligation: They must go. / آنها) باید بروند / مجبورند (که) بروند / مجبور هستند (که) بروند <i>(ānhā) bāyad beravand / majburand (ke) beravand / majbur hastand (ke) beravand</i></p>	<p>Past obligation: They had to go. / آنها) باید می‌رفتند / مجبور بودند (که) بروند <i>(ānhā) bāyad mi-raftand / majbur budand (ke) beravand</i></p>
	<p>No obligation: They don't have to go. / آنها) مجبور نیستند (که) بروند / اجباری ندارند (که) بروند / لازم نیست بروند <i>(ānhā) majbur nistand (ke) beravand / ejbāri na-dārand (ke) beravand / lāzem nist beravand</i></p>	<p>No obligation in past: They didn't have to go. / آنها) مجبور نبودند (که) بروند / اجباری نداشتند (که) بروند / لازم نبود بروند <i>(ānhā) majbur na-budand (ke) beravand / lejbāri na-dāshtand (ke) beravand / lāzem na-bud beravand</i></p>
	<p>Prohibition: They mustn't go. / آنها) نباید بروند / اجازه ندارند بروند <i>(ānhā) na-bāyad beravand / (ānhā) ejāze na-dārand beravand</i></p>	<p>Past prohibition: They weren't (allowed) to go. / آنها) نباید می‌رفتند / اجازه نداشتند بروند <i>(ānhā) na-bāyad mi-raftand / (ānhā) ejāze na-dāshtand beravand</i></p>
should / ought to / should have	<p>Conjecture / guesswork: That must be Mina. آن باید مینا باشد <i>ān bāyad mina bāshad</i></p>	<p>Conjecture / guesswork about the past: That must have been Mina. آن باید مینا بوده باشد <i>ān bāyad mina bude bāshad</i></p>
	<p>Obligation / propriety / recommendation: We should go. باید برویم <i>bāyad beravim</i></p>	<p>Unrealized past obligation or propriety: We should have gone by now. تا حالا باید می‌رفتیم / لازم بود می‌رفتیم <i>tā hālā bāyad mi-raftim / lāzem bud mi-raftim</i></p>
	<p>Necessity: You need to stay here. لازم است اینجا بمانی / باید اینجا بمانی <i>lāzem ast injā bemāni / bāyadinjā bemāni</i></p>	<p>Past necessity: I needed to say that. لازم بود آن را بگویم <i>lāzem bud ān rā beguyam</i></p>
need / need have	<p>No necessity: You needn't stay here. لازم نیست اینجا بمانی / مجبور نیستی اینجا بمانی <i>lāzem nist injā bemāni / majbur nisti injā bemāni</i></p>	<p>No necessity in past: You didn't need to say that. / You needn't have said that. لازم نبود آن را بگوئی / مجبور نبودى آن را بگوئی <i>lāzem na-bud ān rā begu'i / majbur na-budi ān rā begu'i</i></p>

(Continued)

Table 11.5 (Continued)

	<i>Modals Present</i>	<i>Past</i>
had better	Propriety / recommendation: You had better see him. بهتر است او را ببینید <i>behtar ast u rā bebinid</i>	Past propriety (→ see 'should have'): (You should have seen him.) بهتر بود او را می‌دیدید <i>behtar bud u rā mi-didid</i>
might have	Possibility: He may / might come. شاید بیاید / ممکن است بیاید / امکان دارد بیاید <i>shāyad biyāyad / momken ast biyāyad / emkān dārad biyāyad</i>	Past possibility: He may / might have come. شاید آمده باشد / ممکن است آمده باشد / امکان دارد آمده باشد <i>shāyad āmade bāshad / momken ast āmade bāshad / emkān dārad āmade bāshad</i>
may have / might	Asking for permission: May I go? اجازه می‌دهید بروم؟ / می‌توانم بروم؟ می‌شود بروم؟ ³ / ممکن است بروم؟ <i>ejāze mi-dahid beravam? / mi-tavānam beravam? / mi-shavad beravam? / momken ast beravam?</i>	–
have	Giving permission: You may go now. حالا می‌توانید بروید <i>hālā mi-tavānid beravid</i>	–
be able to	Ability / inability: I can (I am able to) write. / I can't (I'm not able to) write. می‌توانم بنویسم / نمی‌توانم بنویسم <i>mi-tavānam benevisam / nemi-tavānam benevisam</i>	Past ability / inability: I could (/ couldn't) write. می‌توانستم بنویسم / نمی‌توانستم بنویسم
		Past accomplishment / failure to accomplish: I was able to (= managed to) write. / I wasn't able to (= failed to) write. توانستم (/ موفق شدم) بنویسم / نتوانستم (/ موفق نشدم) بنویسم <i>tavānestam (/ movaffagh shodam) benevisam / natavānestam (/ movaffagh na-shodam) benevisam</i>
	Possibility / impossibility: It can (/ can't) / could (/ couldn't) get worse. می‌تواند (/ نمی‌تواند) بدتر بشود / ممکن است (/ نیست) بدتر بشود <i>mi-tavānad (/ nemi-tavānad) bad-tar beshavad / momken ast (/ nist) bad-tar beshavad</i>	Past possibility / impossibility: It can (/ can't) / could (/ couldn't) have gotten worse. می‌تواند (/ نمی‌تواند) بدتر شده باشد / ممکن است (/ نیست) بدتر شده باشد <i>mi-tavānad (/ nemi-tavānad) bad-tar shode bāshad / momken ast (/ nist) bad-tar shode bāshad</i>

(Continued)

Table 11.5 (Continued)

Modals	Present	Past
	<p>Suggestion: We could pick another color. می توانیم رنگ دیگری (را) انتخاب کنیم <i>mi-tavānim rang-e digari rā entekhāb konim</i></p>	<p>Suggestion for past: We could have picked another color. می توانستیم رنگ دیگری انتخاب کنیم <i>mi-tavānestim rang-e digari rā entekhāb konim</i></p>
	<p>Asking for permission / request: Could I leave? اجازه می دهید بروم؟ / می توانم بروم؟ می شود بروم؟ / ممکن است بروم؟ <i>ejāze mi-dahid beravam? / mi-tavānam beravam? / mi-shavad beravam? / momken ast beravam?</i></p>	–

‘Would’ is a different story. There being no *future in the past* in Persian, you would need to check the units on conditionals and reported speech. ‘Would have’ appears usually in *irrealis* or *counterfactual* statements, which is again covered in units on conditionals and wishes.

For ‘would’ used in polite requests, see *could* in Table 11.5 above.

For ‘would rather’ you should simply use the verb *ترجیح دادن* (*tarjih dādan*, to prefer) and conjugate it as a normal verb or use some expression like *بیشتر دوست داشتن* (*bishtar dust dāshtan*, to like better [‘more’]). In both cases, *تا* (*tā*) is used for *than* (not *از*, *az*), and the verb is placed before *تا* (and *اینکه* *ta* or *تا* should be used if a second verb is needed):

bishtar dust dāram (بیشتر دوست دارم / ترجیح می‌دهم) یک گربه باشم
[*/ tarjih mi-daham*] *yek gorbe bāsham*, I’d rather be a cat.)

bishtar dust dāram (بیشتر دوست دارم / ترجیح می‌دهم) یک گربه باشم تا یک موش
[*/ tarjih mi-daham*] *yek gorbe bāsham tā yek mush*, I’d rather be a cat than a mouse.)

bishtar dust dāram (بیشتر دوست دارم / ترجیح می‌دهم) سفر کنم تا اینکه در خانه بمانم
[*/ tarjih mi-daham*] *safar konam tā in-ke dar khāne be-mānam*, I’d rather be on a trip than stay at home.)

However, if you want to use the above verbs with nouns and not a second verb, you would need the prepositions *به* and *از* for respectively *ترجیح دادن* and *بیشتر دوست داشتن*:

گربه را به موش ترجیح می‌دهم (*gorbe rā be mush tarjih mi-daham*, I prefer a cat to a mouse.)

safar (سفر کردن) را بیشتر از ماندن در خانه (*l* در خانه ماندن) دوست دارم [*kardan*] *rā bishtar az māndan dar khāne dust dāram*, I like travelling more than staying at home.)

And how about ‘would’ in a sense close to ‘used to’ (repeated actions in the past)? In Persian, you simply use *past progressive*:

پارسال هر هفته به خانه ما می‌آمد تا از مادرم فارسی یاد بگیرد (*pārsāl har-hafte be khāne-ye mā mi-āmad tā az mādar-am fārsi yād be-girad*, Last year he would come / used to come to our house every day to learn Persian from my mother.)

او تندتر و تندتر پارو می‌زد، ولی قایق به ساحل نزدیک نمی‌شد (*u tond-tar va tond-tar pāru mi-zad, vali ghāyegh be sāhel nazdik nemi-shod*, He paddled / would paddle faster and faster, but the boat wouldn’t get close to the shore.)

‘Could have’ also needs some attention:

Sometimes it is closer to ‘probability’ (may / might), as when you say, *Any student could have written that on the board*. The Persian translation would be:

هر شاگردی می‌تواند (*l* می‌توانست / می‌توانسته است) آن را روی تخته نوشته باشد (*har shāgerdi mi-tavānad [l mi-tavānest / mi-tavāneste ast] ān rā ru-ye takhte neveshte bāshad*)

Sometimes it is about some very real possibility which was not realized, as when you say, ‘Why did you talk to the officers like that? They could have arrested you.’ Here you wouldn’t use past subjunctive, and ‘They could have arrested you’ should be translated as:

(*mi-tavānestand to rā dastgir konand*) می‌توانستند تو را دستگیر کنند or
(*momken bud to rā dastgir konand*) ممکن بود تو را دستگیر کنند

Finally, ‘let’s’: For ‘let’s’, simply use *1Pl., subjunctive* – although this can also be preceded by the imperative *بیاید / بیا* (*biyā / biyā'id, lit. ‘come’*) or *بگذارید* (*begozār / begozārid*, here گذاشتن used in the sense of ‘to allow’).
Examples:

برویم شهر (*beravim shahr*, Let’s go to the city.)
دیگر آنجا غذا نخوریم (*digar ānjā ghazā na-khorim*, Let’s not eat there anymore.)

بیا / بیائید این فیلم را با هم نگاه کنیم
(*biyā / biyā'id in film rā bā ham negāh konim*, [Come] let's watch this movie together.)
بگذار / بگذارید از او هم بپرسیم
(*begozār / begozārid az u ham be-porsim*,
Let's ask him also.)

11.12 Past participles

The past participle, which was mentioned briefly among verb derivatives (Section 10.2.3.2), is the only derivative that has a function in the formation of certain verb forms (*perfect* formations) and deserves to be covered here in more detail.

Past participle is *Stem II (past stem)* + a stressed final *-e* suffix (written, naturally, with silent *hé*) – for all the verbs, without exception. (See Section 6.9 / E or Section 10.2.3.2 also.) Example:

Infinitive: گذشتن (*gozashtan*, to pass)

Stem II (*past stem* or *short infinitive*, what remains from infinitive after you drop the final *-an*): گذشت (*gozasht*)

Past participle: (after you add the *-e* suffix): گذشته (*gozashte*, 'passed' or 'past')

As گذشته shows, a past participle can be used as an adjective or as a noun. Similar to nouns and adjectives, it has its stress on the last syllable. When used as a noun, it can take a plural suffix if needed, following the same rules applied to plural of nouns. It can also take the *na-* prefix, with a meaning similar to the English *un-* prefix. Some examples:

هفته گذشته (*hafte-ye gozashte*, last week)

در گذشته (*dar gozashte*, in the past)

گذشته‌ها (*gozashte-hā*, past times)

مردگان / مرده‌ها (*morde-hā / mordegān*, the deceased)

یک کتابِ نخوانده (*yek ketāb-e na-khānde*, an unread book)

The most important function of a past participle, however, is its role in the formation of all *perfect* tenses and constructions.

Note that, in the last example mentioned above, *na-khāndé* (unread) is an adjective with final stress, whereas in a sentence like من آن کتاب را نخوانده‌ام (*man ān ketāb rā na-khānde-am*, I have not read that book.), *nā-khānde* is a past participle used in a negative *present perfect* tense, and here the negative *na-* prefix takes the main stress.

For the use of a past participle as a substitute for a finite verb (sometimes called *participial absolute*), see Section 13.18.

11.13 List of Persian simple verbs

- The following is a complete list of all simple Persian verbs, not only those common in contemporary usage but those still not so obsolete as being impossible in contemporary literary / poetic language.
- With the past stem (*Stem II*) being regular in Persian – always obtained by dropping the final *-an* in infinitive – only the present stem (*Stem I*) has been mentioned.
- In the few cases where there is a change in the pronunciation of *Stem I* (from imperative to present; see Section 12.2), these have been indicated by using the sign → (*imp.* → *pres.*) where the pronunciation is given. (The same sign has been used for giving the *Stem I* as well as for cross-references between different entries.)
- *Stem I* has been entered separately also on the list, to make it easier for those who do not know the infinitive.
- The list also mentions the causative form of the verbs (see Section 11.6), when these are common in the language. For the meaning, you should check the main verb, unless the meaning involves something more than just being the causative version of another verb.
- Although a list of simple verbs only, the compound verbs that use a prefix (like *bar-*) have also been included, while you are referred to the simple form for their *Stem I*. In transcription, these prefixes have been hyphenated to make it easier to find the main verb.
- A tilde indicates the omission of the entry word (or part of a compound).
- An asterisk may have been used in impersonal (compound) verbs to show where a pronoun should be added.
- As for the meaning, only one or two of the most common meanings are usually given, and in a few cases a usage note may have been added.
- It has been indicated through abbreviations what level of language the verb belongs to; no indication means they are common.
- The order of the Persian alphabet is shown here (right to left) to make the search easier:

آ ا ب پ ت ث ج چ ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ک گ ل م ن و ه ی

آ [ā] → آمدَن

آختن [ākhtan] obs.; → آهیختن

آرا [ārā] → آراستن

- آراستن [ārāstan] [→ آرا, ārā] to decorate (*lit.*)
 آرام [ārām] → آرمیدن
 آرمیدن [āramidan] [→ آرام, ārām] to rest (*lit.*)
 آزار [āzār] → آزدن
 آزدن [āzordan] [→ آزار, āzār] to torment (*form.*)
 آزما [āzemā] → آزمودن
 آزمودن [āzemudan] [→ آزما, āzemā] to try, to test (*form.*)
 آسا [āsā] → آسودن
 آسودن [āsudan] [→ آسا, ā.sā] to rest (*lit.*)
 آشام [āshām] → آشامیدن
 آشامیدن [āshāmidan] [→ آشام, ā.shām] to drink (*form.*)
 آشفتن [āshoftan] [→ آشوب, ā.shub] to make chaotic (*form.*)
 آشوب [āshub] → آشفتن
 آغار [āghār] → آغاردن → آغشتن
 آغاردن [āghārdan] *obs.*; → آغشتن
 آغاز [āghāz] → آغازیدن
 آغازیدن [āghāzidan] [→ آغاز, āghāz] to begin (*lit.*)
 آغر [āghar] → آگردن → آغشتن
 آگردن [āghardan] *obs.*; → آغشتن
 آغشتن [āgheshtan or āghashtan] [→ آغار or آغر; *obs.* in present] to smear, to dip, to mix, to pollute (*lit.*)
 آفریدن [āfaridan] [→ آفرین, āfarin] to create
 آفرین [āfarin] → آفریدن
 آکن [ākan] → آکندن
 آکندن [ākandan] [→ آکن, ākan] to stuff, to fill, to pack (*lit.*)
 آگاهان [āgāhān] → آگاهانیدن
 آگاهانیدن [āgāhānidan] [→ آگاهان] to inform, to warn (*lit.*)
 آلا [ālā] → آلودن
 آلودن [āludan] [→ آلا, ālā] to pollute, to dirty (*form.*)
 آمدن [āmadan] [→ آ, ā] to come
 آمرز [āmorz] → آمرزیدن
 آمرزیدن [āmorzidan] [→ آمرز, āmorz] to absolve
 آموختن [ā.mukh.tan] [→ آموز, ā.muz] to learn [*sth.* from: از]; to teach [*sth.* to: به]
 آموز [ā.muz] → آموختن
 آمیختن [ā.mikh.tan] [→ آمیز, ā.miz] to mix
 آمیز [ā.miz] → آمیختن
 آور [ā.var] → آوردن
 آوردن [ā.var.dan] [→ آور, ā.var] to bring

- آویختن [*ā.vikh.tan*] [→ آویز, *ā.viz*] to hang
 آویز [*ā.viz*] → آویختن
 آهختن / آهیکتن [*ābekhtan / āhikhtan*] [→ آهیز, *āhiz*, present *obs.*] to
 unsheathe (sword); usually past; see also آختن (all *obs.*)
 آختن / آهختن or آهیز [*āhiz*] → آختن / آهختن
 ارزیدن [*arz*] → ارز
 ارزیدن [*ar.zi.dan*] [→ ارز, *arz*] to be worth; to cost
 ایستادن [*estādan*] *lit.*; → استادن
 استادن [*estadan*] *obs.*; → ستاندن
 افتادن [*oft*] → افت
 افتادن [*of.tā.dan*] [→ افت, *oft*] to fall
 افراختن [*af.rākh.tan*] [→ افراز, *af.rāz*] to hoist; *obs.*; → افراشتن
 افراختن or افراشتن [*af.rāz*] → افراز
 افراشتن [*af.rāsh.tan*] [→ افراز, *af.rāz*] to hoist, to elevate
 افروختن [*af.rukh.tan*] [→ افروز, *af.ruz*] to kindle (*lit.*)
 افروز [*af.ruz*] → افروختن
 افزا [*af.zā*] → افزودن
 افزودن [*af.zu.dan*] [→ افزا, *af.zā*] to increase (*form.*)
 افسردن [*af.sor*] → افسردن
 افسردن [*af.sor.dan*] [→ افسر, *af.sor*] to freeze; to extinguish (*lit.*); also
 افسردن
 افشانان [*af.shān*] → افشانان
 افشانان [*af.shān.dan*] [→ افشان, *af.shān*] to scatter; to sprinkle
 افشردن [*af.shor.dan*] [→ افشر, *af.shor*] see فشردن
 افکن [*af.kan*] → افکنند
 افکنند [*af.kan.dan*] [→ افکن, *af.kan*] to throw (*lit.*); see also فکنند
 انباشتن [*an.bār*] → انباشتن
 انباشتن [*an.bāsh.tan*] [→ انبار, *an.bār*] to store
 انجامیدن [*an.jām*] → انجامیدن
 انجامیدن [*an.jā.mi.dan* (*be*)] [→ انجام, *an.jām*] to lead to; to result
 in; to end up
 اندادن [*an.dā*] → اندودن
 انداختن [*an.dākh.tan*] [→ انداز, *an.dāz*] to throw
 انداختن [*an.dāz*] → انداز
 اندوختن [*an.dukh.tan*] [→ اندوز, *an.duz*] to save; to accumulate
 اندودن [*an.du.dan*] [→ اندا, *an.dā*] to plaster (*lit.*)
 اندوز [*an.duz*] → اندوختن
 اندیشیدن [*an.dish*] → اندیشیدن
 اندیشیدن [*an.di.shi.dan*] [→ اندیش, *an.dish*] to think (*form.*)

- انگاشتن [en.gār] → انگار
 انگاشتن [en.gāsh.tan] [→ انگار, en.gār] to assume; to suppose
 انگيختن [an.gikh.tan] [→ انگيز, an.giz] to stir, to provoke
 انگيز [an.giz] → انگيختن
 ايستادن [ist] → ايستادن
 ايستادن [is.tā.dan] [→ ايست, ist] to stand; to stop/pause (causative: ايستاندن)
 باختن [bākh.tan] [→ باز, bāz] to lose; to play or gamble
 باريدن [bār] → باريدن
 باران [bārān] → باران
 باران [bārāndan] [→ باران, bārān] causative of باريدن
 باريدن [bā.ri.dan] [→ بار, bār] to rain (causative: بارانندن)
 باز [bāz] → باختن
 باز آمدن [bāz-ā] → باز آمدن
 باز آمدن [bāz-āmadan] [→ باز آ, bāz-ā] to come back (lit.)
 باز ايستادن [bāz-ist] → باز ايستادن
 باز ايستادن [bāz-istādan] [→ باز ايست, bāz-ist] to stop (intr. or with the prep. از) (lit.)
 باز داشتن [bāz-dār] → باز داشتن
 باز داشتن [bāz-dāsh.tan] [→ بازدار, bāz-dār] to prevent, to dissuade, to detain
 بازگشتن [bāz-gard] → بازگشتن
 بازگردان [bāz-gardān] → بازگردان
 بازگردان [bāz-gardāndan] [→ بازگردان, bāz-gardān] to return sth., to give back
 بازگرفتن [bāz-gereftan] [→ بازگير, bāz-gir] to take back (lit.)
 بازگشتن [bāz-gash.tan] [→ بازگرد, bāz-gard] to return (bāz- is a prefix) (lit.; see برگشتن)
 بازگفتن [bāz-goftan] [→ بازگو, bāz-gu] to relate, to recount
 بازگو [bāz-gu] → بازگفتن
 بازگرفتن [bāz-gir] → بازگرفتن
 باز ماندن [bāz-mān] → باز ماندن
 بازماندن [bāz-māndan] [→ باز مان, bāz-mān] to stop, to remain, to survive
 باز ياب [bāz-yāb] → باز يافتن
 باز يافتن [bāz-yāftan] [→ باز ياب, bāz-yāb] to salvage, to retrieve, to recover
 باشيدن and بودن [bāsh] → باشيدن
 باشيدن [bāshidan] [→ باش, bāsh] a formal version of بودن ('to be'), only for present tense; not used in spoken Persian and avoided in 'good' written Persian.

بافتن [bāf] → باف

بافتن [bāf.tan] [→ باف, bāf] to knit; to weave; to braid

بال [bāl] → بالیدن

بالیدن [bā.li.dan] [→ بال, bāl] to grow; to boast

باید [bā.yad] must; should (modal verb; same form for all persons).

Other variants sometimes used as synonyms: می‌باید [mi-bāyad], بایست

[bāyest], می‌بایست [mi-bāyest] or the rather archaic می‌بایستی/بایستی

[bāyesti/mi-bāyesti]

باید [bāyest/bāyesti] (both used also with mi-) → باید

بایستن [bāyestan] [see note under باید] must (modal verb)

بخشیدن [bakhsh] → بخشودن or بخشیدن

بخشیدن [bakhshā] → بخشائیدن or بخشودن

بخشائیدن [bakhshā'idan] [→ بخشا, bakhshā] to forgive; to pardon (*lit.*)

بخشودن [bakhshudan] [→ بخش, bakhsh or بخشا, bakhshā] to forgive; to pardon (*form.*)

بخشیدن به [bakh.shi.dan] [→ بخش, bakhsh] to forgive; to pardon به بخشیدن [- be] to bestow upon

بر [bar] → بردن

بر [bor] → بریدن

برآ [bar-ā] → برآمدن

برآشوب [bar-āshoftan] [→ برآشوب, bar-āshub] (*lit.*; emphatic form of برآشوب) to excite or agitate, to disturb, to get agitated

برآشوب [bar-āshub] → برآشوبتن

برآمدن [bar-āmadan] [→ برآ, bar-ā] to rise, to climb (*lit.*)

بر آوردن [bar-āvar] → بر آوردن

بر آوردن [bar-āvardan] [→ برآور, bar-āvar] to grant (as a wish), to meet (a need)

برازیدن [barāz] → برآزیدن

برآزیدن [barāzidan] [→ برآز, barāz] to benefit, to become, to suit

برافروختن [bar-afrukhtan] [→ بر افروز, bar-afruz] (*lit.*; emphatic form of برافروختن) to kindle, to burn

بر افروختن [bar-afruz] → بر افروختن

بر انداختن [bar-an.dākh.tan] [→ برانداز, bar-an.dāz] to overthrow

بر انداختن [bar-andāz] → برانداز

برچیدن [bar-chidan] [→ برچین, bar-chin] to pick up, to clear (the table), to remove, to wind up

برچیدن [bar-chin] → برچیدن

برخاستن [bar-khās.tan] [→ برخیز, bar-khiz] to rise; to stand up

بر خوردن [bar-khor] → بر خوردن

[*bar-khordan (be)*] [→ برخورد] to encounter, to come across
 (*به خوردن) [*bar-khordan (be*)*] [→ برخورد] to be offended (impersonal
 in this sense only)

برخاستن [*bar-khiz*] → بر خیز

برداشتن [*bar-dār*] → بردار

[*bar-dāsh.tan*] [→ بردار, *bar.dār*] to pick up (+ *mi-* in pres. and
 progressive tenses)

بُردن [*bordan*] [→ بر, *bar*] to take (away), to carry; to win (a prize or
 match)

برگشتن [*bar-gard*] → برگرد

برگرداندن [*bar-gar.dān*] → برگردان

[*bar-gar.dān.dan*] [→ برگردان, *bar.gar.dān*] to return *sth.* or *so.*
 (*tr.*)

برگشتن [*bar-gash.tan*] [→ برگرد, *bar-gard*] to return (*bar-* is a prefix)

بریدن [*boridan*] [→ بر, *bor*] (note: sometimes with *tashdid* as *bor.ridan*)
 to cut

بسودن [*basā*] → بسا

بستن [*bas.tan*] [→ بند, *band*] to close, to shut; to tie, to fasten; to attach

بسودن [*basudan*] [→ بسا, *basā*] to touch

بسیجیدن [*basij*] → بسیج

[*basijidan*] [→ بسیج, *basij*] to mobilize (*lit.*)

بلع [*bal'*] → بلعیدن

[*bal'idan*] [→ بلع, *bal'*] to swallow

بَند [*band*] → بستن

بوئیدن [*bu*] → بو

بودن [*bu.dan*] [→ باش, *bāsh*] to be; see note under باشیدن

بوسیدن [*bus*] → بوس

[*busidan*] [→ بوس, *bus*] to kiss

بوئیدن [*bu'idan*] [→ بو, *bu*] to smell (*lit.*)

بیختن [*bikh.tan*] [→ بیز, *biz*] to sift (*form./poet.*)

بیختن [*biz*] → بیز

دیدن [*bin*] → بین

پائیدن [*pā*] → پا

پاشیدن [*pāsh*] → پاش

پاشاندن [*pāshān*] → پاشان

[*pāshāndan*] [→ پاشان, *pāshān*] causative of پاشیدن

[*pā.shi.dan*] [→ پاش, *pāsh*] to strew; to sprinkle (causative:

پاشاندن)

پالودن [*pā.lā*] → پالا

- پالودن [pā.lu.dan] [→ پالا, pā.lā] to refine
 پائیدن [pā.i.dan] [→ پا, pā] to last; to watch or guard
 پختن [pokh.tan] [→ پز, paz] to cook (*tr.lintr.*)
 پذیر [pa.zir] → پذیرفتن
 پذیرفتن [pa.zi.rof.tan] [→ پذیر, pa.zir] to accept, to agree; to consent
 (*form.hwrt.*)
 پر [par] → پریدن
 پراکندن [pa.rā.kan] → پراکندن
 پراکندن [pa.rā.kan.dan] [→ پراکن, pa.rā.kan] to scatter (*lit.*)
 پراندن [parān] → پراندن
 پراندن [parāndan] [→ پران, parān] causative of پریدن
 پرداختن [pardākhtan] [→ پرداز, par.dāz] to pay; to proceed
 پرداز [pardāz] → پرداختن
 پرسیدن [pors] → پرسیدن
 پرستیدن [pa.rast] → پرستیدن
 پرستیدن [pa.ras.ti.dan] [→ پرست, pa.rast] to worship
 پرسیدن [por.si.dan (az)] [→ پرس, pors] to ask a question (from); don't
 use in the sense of asking someone to do sth.!
 پروردن [par.var] → پروردن
 پروراندن [parvarān] → پروراندن
 پروراندن [parvarāndan] causative of پروردن
 پروردن / پروریدن [parvardan/ parvaridan] [→ پرور, parvar] to cherish; to
 rear (*form./lit.*) (causative: پروراندن)
 پرهیزتن [parhikhtan] [→ پرهیز, parhiz] (past tense *obs.*) to abstain, to
 keep away
 پرهیز [parhiz] → پرهیزتن or پرهیزیدن (only present tense common)
 پرهیزیدن [parhizidan] [→ پرهیز, parhiz] (past tense *obs.*) to abstain, to
 keep away
 پریدن [paridan] [→ پر, par] to fly (not used for planes); to jump or leap
 (causative: پراندن)
 پز [paz] → پختن
 پژمردن [pazhmor] → پژمردن
 پژمردن [pazhmorān] → پژمردن
 پژمردن [pazhmorāndan] [→ پژمران, pazhmorān] causative of پژمردن
 پژمردن [pazhmordan] [→ پژمر, pazhmor] to wither (causative: پژمردن)
 پژوهیدن [pa.zhub] → پژوهیدن
 پژوهیدن [pa.zhu.hi.dan] [→ پژوه, pa.zhub] to do research, to investigate
 (*form.*)
 پس دادن [pas-dādan] [→ ده ~] to give back, to return (*tr.*)

- پس فرستادن [*pas-ferestādan*] [→ ~ فرست] to send back
 پس گرفتن [*pas-gereftan*] [→ ~ گیر] to take back
 پسندیدن [*pa.sand*] → پسندیدن
 پسندیدن [*pa.san.di.dan*] [→ پسند, *pa.sand*] to choose or like better; to admire
 پلاسیدن [*pa.lās*] → پلاسیدن
 پلاسیدن [*pa.lā.si.dan*] [→ پلاس, *pa.lās*] to wither
 پلکیدن [*pelek*] → پلکیدن
 پلکیدن [*pelekidan*] [→ پلک, *pelek*] (*colloq.*) to walk around some place to kill time
 پنداریدن [*pen.dār*] → پنداریدن or پنداشتن
 پنداریدن [*pendāridan*] (*obs*) see پنداشتن
 پنداشتن [*pen.dāsh.tan*] [→ پندار, *pen.dār*] to assume; to think (*form.*); also پنداریدن (*obs.*)
 پوئیدن [*pu*] → پوئیدن
 پوسیدن [*pus*] → پوسیدن
 پوسیدن [*pu.si.dan*] [→ پوس, *pus*] to decay; to decompose (*causative*: پوساندن)
 پوشیدن [*push*] → پوشیدن
 پوشیدن [*pu.shi.dan*] [→ پوش, *push*] to wear; to cover (*causative*: پوشاندن)
 پوکیدن [*puk*] → پوکیدن
 پوکیدن [*pu.ki.dan*] [→ پوک, *puk*] to become hollow, as a nutshell without a kernel (*causative*: پوکاندن)
 پوئیدن [*pu.'i.dan*] [→ پو, *pu*] to run in search of (*lit.*)
 پیچیدن [*pich*] → پیچیدن
 پیچاندن [*pichān*] → پیچاندن
 پیچاندن [*pichāndan*] [→ پیچان, *pichān*] *causative* of پیچیدن
 پیچیدن [*pich*] [→ پیچ, *pich*] to turn, to wrap
 پیراستن [*pirā*] → پیراستن
 پیراستن [*pirāstan*] [→ پیرا, *pirā*] to trim, to decorate, to dress up (*lit.*)
 پیمودن [*pey.mā*] → پیمودن
 پیمودن [*pey.mu.dan*] [→ پیمای, *pey.mā*] to traverse; to measure
 پیوستن [*pey.vas.tan*] [→ پیوند, *pey.vand*] to join
 پیوندیدن [*pey.vand*] → پیوستن
 تابیدن / تافتن [*tāb*] → تابیدن / تافتن
 تابیدن [*tāf.tan*] [→ تاب, *tāb*] to shine; see تافتن (*causative*: تاباندن)
 تاختن [*tākh.tan*] [→ تاز, *tāz*] to assault; to rush (*lit.*); also: تازیدن (*causative*: تازاندن)
 تاراندن [*tārān*] → تاراندن

- تاراندن [*tārāndan*] [→ تاران, *tārān*] to put to flight
 تاز [*tāz*] → تاختن
 تازاندن [*tāzān*] → تازاندن
 تازاندن [*tāzāndan*] [→ تازان, *tāzān*] causative of تاختن
 تازیدن [*tāz*] [→ تاز, *tāz*] see تاختن
 تاباندن [*tāf.tan*] [→ تاب, *tāb*] to shine (*lit.*); see تابیدن (causative: تاباندن)
 تپ [*tap*] → تپیدن
 تپاندن [*ta.pi.dan*] [→ تپ, *tap*] to beat; to pulsate (causative: تپاندن)
 تراشیدن [*ta.rāsh*] → تراشیدن
 تراشیدن [*ta.rā.shi.dan*] [→ تراش, *ta.rāsh*] to carve, to whittle; to shave
 تراویدن [*ta.rāv*] → تراویدن
 تراویدن [*ta.rā.vi.dan*] [→ تراو, *ta.rāv*] to trickle; to ooze (*lit.*)
 ترسیدن [*tars*] → ترسیدن
 ترساندن [*tar.si.dan*] [→ ترس, *tars*] to be afraid; to fear (causative: ترساندن)
 ترشیدن [*torsh*] → ترشیدن
 ترشیدن [*tor.shi.dan*] [→ ترش, *torsh*] to become sour
 ترکیدن [*tark*] → ترکیدن
 ترکاندن [*tar.ki.dan*] [→ ترک, *tark*] to explode (causative: ترکاندن)
 تکانیدن [*ta.kān*] → تکانیدن
 تکانیدن [*ta.kān.dan*] [→ تکان, *ta.kān*] to cause to shake
 تمرگیدن [*tamarg*] → تمرگیدن
 تمرگیدن [*tamargidan*] [→ تمرگ, *tamarg*] (*rude*) to sit, to sit down
 تنیدن [*tan*] → تنیدن
 تنیدن [*ta.ni.dan*] [→ تن, *tan*] to spin, to weave
 توانستن [*ta.vān*] → توانستن
 توانستن [*ta.vā.nes.tan*] [→ توان, *ta.vān*] can, to be able to
 توختن [*tukhtan*] [→ توز, *tuz*] (*obs.*) to perform or exercise
 توز [*tuz*] → توختن
 جهیدن [*jas.tan*] [→ جه, *jab*] to leap; to jump; see also جهیدن
 جستن [*jos.tan*] [→ جو, *ju*] to seek; to [search for *sth.* and] find (*form.*);
 also جوئیدن
 جنبیدن [*jonb*] → جنبیدن
 جنبیدن [*jon.bi.dan*] [→ جنب, *jonb*] to move; to wiggle; to hurry (causative: جنباندن)
 جنگیدن [*jang*] → جنگیدن
 جنگیدن [*jan.gi.dan*] [→ جنگ, *jang*] to fight
 جويدن [*jow* → *jav*] → جويدن
 جوئیدن [*ju*] → جوئیدن or جستن
 جوشیدن [*jush*] → جوشیدن

- جوشیدن [*ju.shi.dan*] [→ جوش, *jush*] to boil (*intr.*) (causative: جوشاندن)
- جویدن [*jowidan* or *javidan*] [→ جو, *jow* → *jav*] to chew
- جوئیدن [*ju'idan*] [→ جو, *ju*] see جُستن
- جه [jab] → جهیدن or جَستن
- جهان [*jahān*] → جهیدن or جَستن
- جهاندن [*jahāndan*] [→ جهان, *jahān*] causative of جَستن or جهیدن
- جهیدن [*jahidan*] [→ جه, *jab*] to jump, to leap; see also جستن [*jastan*]
- چاپ [*chāp*] → چاپیدن
- چاپیدن [*chā.pi.dan*] [→ چاپ, *chāp*] to plunder
- چپ [*chap*] → چپیدن
- چپان [*chapān*] → چپاندن
- چپاندن [*chapāndan*] [→ چپان, *chapān*] causative of چپیدن
- چپیدن [*cha.pi.dan*] [→ چپ, *chap*] to crowd into (causative: چپاندن)
- چر [*char*] → چریدن
- چراندن [*charān*] → چراندن
- چراندن [*charāndan*] [→ چران, *charān*] causative of چریدن
- چرب [*charb*] → چربیدن
- چربیدن [*charbidan*] [→ چرب, *charb*] to exceed the due weight; to turn the scale
- چرخ [*charkh*] → چرخیدن
- چرخیدن [*char.khi.dan*] [→ چرخ, *charkh*] to turn (around); to revolve (causative: چرخاندن)
- چریدن [*cha.ri.dan*] [→ چر, *char*] to graze (causative: چراندن)
- چس [*chos*] → چسیدن
- چسب [*chasb*] → چسبیدن
- چسبیدن [*chas.bi.dan*] [→ چسب, *chasb*] to stick; to adhere (causative: چسباندن)
- چسبیدن [*chosidan*] [→ چس, *chos*] (*slang/rude*) to fart without noise
- چش [*chesb*] → چشیدن
- چشیدن [*che.shi.dan*] [→ چش, *chesb*] to taste (causative: چشانندن)
- چک [*chek*] → چکیدن
- چکیدن [*che.ki.dan*] [→ چک, *chek*] to trickle (causative: چکانندن)
- چلان [*che.lān*] → چلانیدن
- چلانیدن [*che.lān.dan*] [→ چلان, *che.lān*] to squeeze; to wring
- چم [*cham*] → چمیدن
- چمیدن [*cha.mi.dan*] [→ چم, *cham*] to strut (*poet.*)
- چیدن [*chi.dan*] [→ چین, *chin*] to pick; to pluck; to set
- چین [*chin*] → چیدن
- خاریدن [*khār*] → خاریدن

- خاران [khārān] → خاراندن
 خاراندن [khārān] [→ خاران, khārān] causative of خریدن
 خریدن [khā.ri.dan] [→ خار, khār] to itch; to scratch (causative: خاراندن)
 خاستن [khās.tan] [→ خیز, khiz] to rise (usually with prefix بر, bar); also
 خیزاندن (causative: خریدن)
 خر [khar] → خریدن
 خراش [kharāsh] → خراشیدن
 خراشان [kharāshān] → خراشانیدن
 خراشانیدن [kharāshāndan] [→ خراشان, kharāshān] causative of خراشیدن
 خراشیدن [kharāshidan] [→ خراش, kha.rāsh] to scratch (causative:
 خراشانیدن)
 خرام [kharām] → خرامیدن
 خرامیدن [kharāmidan] [→ خرام, kharām] to strut (poet.)
 خروش [kho.rush] → خروشیدن
 خروشیدن [kho.ru.shi.dan] [→ خروش, kho.ru.sh] to clamour (lit.)
 خریدن [kha.ri.dan] [→ خر, khar] to buy
 خز [khaz] → خزیدن
 خزان [khazān] → خزانیدن
 خزانیدن [khazāndan] [→ خزان, khazān] causative of خزیدن
 خزیدن [kha.zi.dan] [→ خز, khaz] to crawl (causative: خزانیدن)
 خسبیدن / خسبیدن [khosb / khosp] → خسبیدن / خسبیدن
 خسبیدن / خسبیدن [khosbidan / khospidan] [→ خسب / خسب, khosb /
 khosp] to sleep; see also the more common خوابیدن / خفتن
 خستن [khas.tan] [only past tense] to wound (obs.)
 خشک [khoshk] → خشکیدن
 خشکان [khoshkān] → خشکانیدن
 خشکانیدن [khoshk] [→ خشکان, khoshkān] to dry; causative of خشکیدن
 خشکیدن [khosh.ki.dan] [→ خشک, khoshk] to become dry; [of plants] to
 wither (causative: خشکانیدن)
 خفتن [khof.tan] [→ خواب, khāb] to sleep (lit.; see خوابیدن) (causative:
 خواباندن)
 خل [khal] → خلیدن
 خلیدن [khalidan] [→ خل, khal] to prick; to sting (lit.)
 خم [kham] → خمیدن
 خممان [kham] → خمماندن
 خمماندن [khamāndan] [→ خممان, khamān] causative of خمیدن
 خمیدن [kha.mi.dan] [→ خم, kham] to bend (causative: خمماندن)
 خند [khand] → خندیدن
 خندان [khandān] → خندانیدن

- خندانند [*khandāndan*] [→ خندان, *khandān*] causative of خندیدن
 خندانند [*khan.di.dan*] [→ خند, *khand*] to laugh (causative: خندانند)
 خواب [*khāb*] → خوابیدن or خفتن
 خوابان [*khābān*] → خوابیدن or خفتن
 خواباندن [*khābāndan*] [→ خوابان, *khābān*] خوابیدن or خفتن
 خوابیدن [*khā.bi.dan*] [→ خواب, *khāb*] to sleep; to go to bed; also خفتن or
 خواباندن/ خوابانیدن (causative: خسییدن)
 خواستن [*khās.tan*] [→ خواه, *khāh*] to want
 خوان [*khān*] → خواندن
 خواندن [*khān.dan*] [→ خوان, *khān*] to read; to study (*tr.*); to sing; to call
 خواستن [*khāh*] → خواستن
 خور [*khōr*] → خوردن
 خوران [*khōrān*] → خوراندن
 خوراندن [*khōr*] [→ خوران, *khōrān*] causative of خوردن
 خوردن [*khōr.dan*] [→ خور, *khōr*] to eat (also 'to drink' in colloquial Per-
 sian) (causative: خوراندن/ خورانییدن)
 خیز [*khiz*] → خاستن; خیزیدن
 خیزیدن [*khizidan*] [→ خیز, *khiz*] → see خاستن
 خیس [*khis*] → خیسیدن
 خیساندن [*khi.sān*] → خیساندن
 خیساندن [*khi.sān.dan*] [→ خیسان, *khisān*] to soak
 خیسیدن [*khi.si.dan*] [→ خیس, *khis*] to get soaked
 دادن [*dā.dan*] [→ ده, *deh* → ده, *dah*] to give
 دار [*dār*] → داشتن
 داشتن [*dāsh.tan*] [→ دار, *dār*] to have (no *mi-* in pres. and progressive
 tenses)
 دان [*dān*] → دانستن
 دانستن [*dā.nes.tan*] [→ دان, *dān*] to know (something, not someone: see
 شناختن)
 در [*dar*] → دریدن
 در آمدن [*dar-ā*] → در آمدن
 در آمدن [*dar-āmadan*] [→ در آ, *dar-ā*] to come out (of, از)
 در آمیختن [*dar-āmikhtan*] [→ در آمیز, *dar-āmiz*] see در آمیختن
 در آمیختن [*dar-āmiz*] → در آمیختن
 در آوردن [*dar-āvar*] [→ در آوردن
 در آوردن [*dar-āvardan*] [→ در آور, *dar-āvar*] to take off (as clothes), to
 take out (of, از)
 در آویختن [*dar-ā.vikh.tan*] [→ در آویز, *dar-āviz*] see در آویختن
 دران [*da.rān*] → درانیدن or درانیدن

- دراندن [*da.rān.dan*] [→ دران, *da.rān*] to (cause to) tear or rend; also درانیدن; causative of دریدن
- در بردن [*dar-bor.dan*] [→ در بر, *dar-bar*] to save (from harm)
- درخش [*de.rakhsb*] → درخشیدن
- درخشیدن [*de.rakh.shi.dan*] [→ درخش, *de.rakhsb*] to shine
- در رفتن [*dar-raf.tan*] [→ در رو, *dar-row* → *dar-rav*] to run away; (of joints) to be dislocated; (of bullets) to be fired
- در کردن [*dar-kar.dan*] [→ در کن, *dar-kon*] to fire (off)
- در سپوختن [*dar-sopukhtan*] [→ در سپوز, *dar-sopuz*] see سپوختن
- در سپوز [*dar-sopuz*] → در سپوختن; see سپوختن
- در گذر [*dar-gozar*] → درگذشتن
- درگذشتن [*dar-gozashtan*] [→ در گذر, *dar-gozar*] to pass away; to forgive
- در گرفتن [*dar-gereftan*] [→ در گیر, *dar-gir*] to be kindled; to break out
- در گیر [*dar-gir*] → در گرفتن
- در ماندن [*dar-mān*] → در ماندن
- در ماندن [*dar-māndan*] [→ در مان, *dar-mān*] to be distressed or be stuck in
- در نورد [*dar-navard*] → در نوردیدن or نوشتن
- در نوردیدن [*dar-navardidan*] [→ در نورد, *dar-navard*] to cover (distance), to fold or roll up (*lit.*)
- در نوشتن [*dar-neveshtan*] [→ در نویس, *dar-nevis*] *obs.*; see نوردیدن
- درو [*derow* → *derav*] → درودن or درویدن
- درویدن [*dorudan*] [→ درو, *derow* → *derav*] see the more common درویدن
- درویدن [*deravidan*] [→ درو, *derow* → *derav*] to reap, to harvest (*lit.*); also درودن (*obs.*)
- در یافتن [*dar-yāb*] → دریافتن
- دریافتن [*dar-yāftan*] [→ دریاب, *dar-yāb*] to find out; to realize
- دریدن [*da.ri.dan*] [→ در, *dar*] to tear (apart) (*lit.*) (causative: دراندن or درانیدن)
- دزد [*dozd*] → دزدیدن
- دزدیدن [*doz.di.dan*] [→ دزد, *dozd*] to steal
- دم [*dam*] → دمیدن
- دمیدن [*da.mi.dan*] [→ دم, *dam*] to blow; to grow (of plants)
- دو [*dow* → *dav*] → دویدن
- دوان [*davān*] → دواندن
- دواندن [*davān*] [→ دوان, *davān*] causative of دویدن
- ¹ دوختن [*dukh.tan*] [→ دوز, *duz*] to sew
- ² دوختن [*dukh.tan*] [→ دوش, *dush*] to milk (more common form: دوشیدن)
- دوز [*duz*] → ¹ دوختن

- دوشیدن [dush] → دوختن² or دوشیدن
 دوشیدن [du.shi.dan] [→ دوش, dush] to milk (see also: ²دوختن)
 دویدن [da.vi.dan] [→ دو, dow → dow/dav] to run (causative: دواندن, da.vān.dan)
 دادن ده / ده [deh → dah] → دادن
 دیدن [di.dan] [→ بین, bin] to see
 راندن [rān] → راندن
 راندن [rān.dan] [→ ران, rān] to drive
 ربودن [ro.bā] → ربودن
 ربودن [ro.bu.dan] [→ ربا, ro.bā] to steal (form.)
 رزمیدن [razm] → رزمیدن
 رزمیدن [raz.mi.dan] [→ رزم, razm] to combat (lit.)
 رسیدن [res] → رسیدن
 رساندن [re.sān] → رساندن
 رساندن / رسانیدن [re.sān.dan/ re.sā.ni.dan] [→ رسان, re.sān] to cause to reach; to deliver
 رستن [ras.tan] [→ ره, rah] to escape or be saved (causative: رهندن)
 رستن [ros.tan] [→ رو, ru] to grow (of plants) (causative: رویاندن)
 رسیدن [re.si.dan] [→ رس, res] to reach, arrive
 رشتن [resh.tan] [→ ریس, ris] to spin; also رسیدن
 رفتن [raf.tan] [→ رو, row/ rav] to go
 رفتن / رفتن [rof.tan/ ruf.tan] [→ روب, rub] to sweep; also روبیدن
 رقصیدن [raghs] → رقصیدن
 رقصانیدن [raghsān] → رقصانیدن
 رقصانیدن [raghsāndan] [→ رقصان, raghsān] causative of رقصیدن
 رقصیدن [ragh.si.dan] [→ رقص, raghs] to dance (causative: رقصانیدن)
 رم [ram] → رمیدن
 رماندن [ramān] → رماندن
 رمیدن [ramāndan] [→ رمان, ramān] causative of رمیدن
 (از) رمیدن [ra.mi.dan] [→ رم, ram] to shy (away from) (causative: رماندن)
 رنجیدن [ranj] → رنجیدن
 (از) رنجیدن [ran.ji.dan] [→ رنج, ranj] to take offence (from) (causative: رنجاندن)
 رفتن [row/ rav] → رفتن
 رستن / روئیدن or رستن [ru] → رفتن
 روبیدن / رفتن / رفتن [rub] → رفتن or رفتن or رفتن
 روبیدن [rubidan] [→ روب, rub] see رفتن / رفتن
 رفتن [ruf.tan] see رفتن [rof.tan]
 رویاندن [ru.'i.dan] → رویاندن

- روئیدن [ru.'i.dan] [→ روئان, ruyān] causative of روئیدن
 روئیدن / روئیدن [ru'idan] [→ رو, ru] to grow (of plants) (causative: روئاندن)
 ره [rah] → رهیدن or رستن [rastan]
 رهاندن [ra.bi.dan] [→ رهاندن]
 رهاندن [ra.bi.dan] [→ ره, rah] causative of رهیدن
 رهیدن [ra.bi.dan] [→ ره, rah] to escape or be saved (*form./lit.*); also رستن
 (causative: رهاندن)
 ریختن [rikh.tan] [→ ریز, riz] to pour; to spill (*tr./intr.*)
 رییدن [ridan] [→ رین, rin] (*vulg.*) to shit; also ریستن
 ریز [riz] → ریختن
 ریس [ris] → رشتن or ریسیدن; also → ریستن
 ریستن [ristan] [→ ریس, ris] *obs.*; see رییدن
 رشتن [risidan] [→ ریس, ris] see رشتن
 رین [rin] → رییدن
 زائیدن [zā] → زادن and زائیدن
 زادن [zā.dan] [→ زَا, zā] to bear a child (*form.*; see زائیدن)
 زاریدن [zār] → زاریدن
 زاریدن [zā.ri.dan] [→ زار, zār] to wail (*lit.*)
 زایاندن [zāyān] → زایاندن
 زایاندن [zāyāndan] [→ زایان, zāyān] causative of زائیدن
 زاییدن [zā.'i.dan] [→ زَا, zā] to bear a child (causative: زایاندن)
 زدا [zo.dā] → زدودن
 زدن [za.dan] [→ زن, zan] to hit, to strike; to play an instrument
 زدودن [zo.du.dan] [→ زدا, zo.dā] to clean; to rub off
 زدن [zan] → زدن
 زیستن [zi] → زیستن
 زیبیدن [zib] → زیبیدن
 زیبیدن [zi.bi.dan] [→ زیب, zib] to befit, to become
 زیستن [zis.tan] [→ زی, zi] to live (*form.*)
 سا [sā] → سائیدن or سودن
 سابیدن [sāb] → سابیدن
 سابیدن [sā.bi.dan] [→ ساب, sāb] to grind; to abrade (see سائیدن also)
 ساختن [sākh.tan] [→ ساز, sāz] to build (in formal Persian used as a substitute for کردن, but not recommended)
 ساختن [sāz] → ساختن
 سائیدن / سائیدن [sā.'i.dan] [→ سا, sā] to grind; to abrade (also سودن [*lit.*];
 less formal: سابیدن)
 سپاردن [se.pār/ se.por] → سپاردن
 سپردن [se.por.dan] [→ سپار, se.por, or سپار, se.pār] to entrust

- سپوختن [*sopukhtan*] [→ سپوز, *sopuz*] (*vulg./obs.*) to bore, to force in
 سپوز [*sopuz*] → سپوختن
 ستا [*se.tā*] → ستودن
 ستان [*se.tān*] → ستاندن
 ایستادن [*se.tā.dan*] [→ ایست, *ist*] (*lit./obs.*) see ایستادن
 ستاندن [*se.tān.dan*] [→ ستان, *se.tān*] to take (*lit.*)
 ستر [*se.tor*] → ستردن
 ستردن [*se.tor.dan*] [→ ستر, *se.tor*] to eliminate or erase
 ستودن [*so.tu.dan*] [→ ستا, *se.tā*] to praise, to admire
 ستیز [*setiz*] → ستیزیدن
 ستیزیدن [*setizidan*] [→ ستیز, *setiz*] to fight, to quarrel (*lit.*)
 سُردن [*sor*] → سُردن
 سُرا [*so.rā*] → سُردن
 سُران [*sorān*] → سُرانندن
 سُرانندن [*sorāndan*] [→ سُران, *sorān*] causative of سُردن
 سُردن / سُرائیدن / سُرائیدن [*sorā'idan*] [→ سُرا, *so.rā*] see سُردن
 سرشتن [*sereshtan*] [→ سریش, *serish*] (only past tense common) to mix, to knead, to mould, to form
 سُرویدن [*so.ru.dan*] [→ سُرا, *so.rā*] to compose a poem; also سُرائیدن
 سُردن [*so.ri.dan*] [→ سُردن, *sor*] to slip (causative: سُرانندن)
 سرشتن [*serish*] → سرشتن
 سزیدن [*saz or sez*] → سزیدن
 سزیدن [*sazidan*] [→ سز, *saz or sez*] to merit, to deserve (*lit.*)
 سُفتن [*softan*] [→ سنب, *sonb*] to pierce, to bore (*poet.*)
 سنب [*sonb*] → سُفتن
 سنجیدن [*sanj*] → سنجیدن
 سنجیدن [*sanjidan*] [→ سنج, *sanj*] to weigh, to measure, to compare
 سوختن [*sukh.tan*] [→ سوز, *suz*] to burn (*tr./intr.*) (causative: سوزاندن)
 سودن [*sudan*] [→ سا, *sā*] *poet.*; see سائیدن
 سوز [*suz*] → سوختن
 سوزان [*suzān*] → سوزاندن
 سوزاندن [*suzāndan*] [→ سوزان, *suzān*] to (cause to) burn; causative form of سوختن
 شایستن [*shā*] → شایستن
 شاشیدن [*shāsh*] → شاشیدن
 شاشیدن [*shāshidan*] [→ شاش, *shāsh*] (*vulg.*) to piss, to urinate
 شایستن [*shā.yes.tan*] [→ شا, *shā*] to deserve; to be appropriate (*poet.*)
 شتاب [*she.tāb*] → شتابیدن or شتابیدن
 شتابیدن / شتابانیدن [*shetābānidan*] (*causative*) see شتابیدن
 شتابانیدن [*shetābānidan*] [→ شتاب, *she.tāb*]; see شتابیدن

شتابانیدن [*she.tāf.tan*] [→ شتاب, *she.tāb*] to hurry (*lit.*) (causative: شتابانیدن)
 شدن [*shodan*] [→ شو, *show/ shav*] to become
 شستن [*shos.tan*] [→ شو, *shu*; in colloquial شور, *shur*] to wash
 شکافتن [*she.kāf*] → شکافتن
 شکافتن [*she.kāf.tan*] [→ شکاف, *she.kāf*] to cleave, to split, to tear
 شکاندن [*shekāndan*] causative of شکستن
 شکستن [*she.kas.tan*] [→ شکن, *she.kan*] to break (*tr.* and *intr.*) (causative: شکاندن)
 شکفتن [*she.kof*] → شکفتن
 شکفتن [*she.kof.tan*] [→ شکف/شکوف, *she.kof/-kuf*] to blossom; to bloom, to flower, to cheer up (*lit.*) (causative: شکوفاندن)
 شکستن [*she.kan*] → شکستن
 شکوف [*she-/sho.kuf*] → شکفتن
 شکوفاندن [*she-/sho.ku.fān*] → شکوفاندن
 شکوفاندن [*she-/sho.ku.fān.dan*] [→ شکوفان, *she-/sho.ku.fān*] causative of شکفتن
 شکیبیدن [*shakib*] → شکیبیدن
 شکیبیدن [*shakibidan*] [→ شکیب, *shakib*] (*obs.*) to wait, to tolerate
 شمار [*sho.mār*] (*form.*) → شمردن
 شمردن [*she.mor*; also *sho.-*] → شمردن
 شمار [*she.mor.dan*; also *sho.-*] [→ شمار, *she.mor* – or (*form.*) شمار, *sho.mār*] to count
 شناختن [*she.nākh.tan*] [→ شناس, *shenās*] to know (a person), to be familiar with; to recognize (causative: شناساندن)
 شناختن [*she.nās*] → شناختن
 شناساندن [*shenāsān*] → شناساندن
 شناختن [*shenāsāndan*] [→ شناسان, *shenāsān*] causative of شناختن
 شنفتن [*she.nof*] → شنفتن
 شنفتن [*she.nof.tan*] [→ شنف, *she.nof*, or شنو, *she.now* → *she.nav*] to hear (see شنیدن)
 شنیدن [*she.now* → *she.nav*] → شنیدن
 شنیدن [*sho.nu.dan*] [→ شنو, *she.now* → *she.nav*] (*poet.*) see شنیدن
 شنیدن [*she.ni.dan*] [شنو, *she.now* → *she.nav*] to hear (شنودن and شنفتن are now *obs.*)
 شدن [*show/ shav*] → شدن
 شو [*shu*] → شستن
 شور [*shur*] → شوریدن; also → (*colloq. only*) شستن
 شوراندن [*shurān*] → شوراندن
 شوراندن [*shurāndan*] [→ شوران, *shurān*] causative of شوریدن
 شوراندن [*shu.ri.dan*] [→ شور, *shur*] to rebel (causative: شوراندن)

صرف [sarf] → صرفیدن

صرفیدن [sarfidan] [→ صرف, *sarf*] to be worth the price (*colloq.*)

طلب [ta.lab] → طلبیدن

طلبیدن [ta.la.bi.dan] [→ طلب, *ta.lab*] to desire

غرّ [ghorr] → غرّیدن

غرّیدن [ghor.ri.dan] [→ غرّ, *ghorr*] to growl; to rumble

غلت [ghalt] → غلتیدن

غلتان [ghaltān] → غلتاندن

غلتاندن [ghaltāndan] [→ غلتان, *ghaltān*] causative of غلتیدن

غلتیدن [ghal.ti.dan] [→ غلت, *ghalt*] to roll (causative: غلتاندن)

غلط [ghalt] → غلطیدن

غلطیدن [ghal.ti.dan] [→ غلط, *ghalt*] older spelling for غلتیدن

غنو [ghe.now → ghe.nav] → غنودن

غنودن [gho.nu.dan] [→ غنو, *ghe.now* → *ghe.nav*] to repose or sleep (*poet.*)

فتادن [fe.tā.dan or fo.-] [→ فت, *fet* or *fot*] shortened poetical version of افتادن

فراز [farāz] → فراختن

فراختن [farākhtan] [→ فراز, *farāz*] *obs.*; see فراختن

فراگرفتن [farā-gereftan] [*farā-* is a prefix; → گیر ~] to learn (*form.*)

فرجام [farjām] → فرجامیدن

فرجامیدن [farjāmidan] [→ فرجام, *farjām*] to end (in, as), to lead to

فرسا [far.sā] → فرسودن/فرسائیدن

فرسودن [far.sā.'i.dan] [→ فرسا, *far.sā*] see فرسودن

فرست [fe.rest] → فرستادن

فرستادن [fe.res.tā.dan] [→ فرست, *fe.rest*] to send

فرسودن [far.su.dan] [→ فرسا, *far.sā*] to erode; also فرسائیدن

فرما [far.mā] → فرمودن

فرمودن [far.mu.dan] [→ فرما, *far.mā*] to give a command; for its usage in polite language see Section 15.2.2.

فروختن [fo.rukh.tan] [→ فروش, *fo.rush*] to sell

فروش [fo.rush] → فروختن

فریب [fa.rib] → فریفتن

فریفتن [fa.rif.tan] [→ فریب, *fa.rib*] to deceive; to spellbind (*form.*)

فزا [fazā] → فزودن

فزودن [fozudan] [→ فزا, *fazā*] *obs.* form; see فزودن

فسردن [fe.sor.dan] [→ فسر, *fe.sor*] *obs.*; see افسردن

فشار [fe.shār] → فشردن

- فشاندن [*feshān*] → فشان
 افشاندن [*feshāndan*] [→ فشان, *feshān*] *obs. form*; see
 فشردن [*fe.shor*] → فشردن
 فشردن [*fe.shor.dan*] [→ فشردن/فشار, *fe.shor/fe.shār*] to press; to squeeze
 (also افشردن, *af.shor.dan*)
 فکندن [*fe.kan*] → فکندن
 افکندن [*fe.kan.dan*] [→ فکن, *fe.kan*] to throw (*poet.*); see also
 فهمیدن [*fahm*] → فهمیدن
 فهمیدن [*fah.mi.dan*] [→ فهم, *fahm*] to understand; to realize (causative:
 فهماندن)
 قبولاندن [*ghabulān*] → قبولاندن
 قبولاندن [*gha.bu.lān.dan*] [→ قبولان, *gha.bu.lān*] to cause to accept; to
 convince
 کاشتن [*kār*] → کاشتن
 کاستن [*kās.tan*] [→ کاه, *kāh*] to decrease
 کاشتن [*kāsh.tan*] [→ کار, *kār*] to plant
 کاویدن [*kāv*] → کاویدن
 کاویدن [*kā.vi.dan*] [→ کاو, *kāv*] to excavate; to dig; to search (*form.*)
 کاه [*kāh*] → کاستن
 کردن [*kar.dan*] [→ کن, *kon*] to do; to make
 کشیدن [*kesh*] → کشیدن
 کشتن [*kosh*] → کشتن
 کشتن [*kesh.tan*] *obs.*; see کاشتن
 کشتن [*kosh.tan*] [→ کُش, *kosh*] to kill
 کشیدن [*ke.shi.dan*] [→ کش, *kesh*] to draw; to pull; to drag (causative:
 کشاندن)
 کندن [*kan*] → کندن
 کردن [*kon*] → کردن
 کندن [*kan.dan*] [→ کن, *kan*] to dig; to pull off
 کوبیدن [*kub*] → کوبیدن or کوفتن
 کوبیدن [*ku.bi.dan*] [→ کوب, *kub*] to pound or hammer, to mash (causative:
 کوباندن)
 کوچیدن [*kuch*] → کوچیدن
 کوچیدن [*ku.chi.dan*] [→ کوچ, *kuch*] to migrate, to decamp (causative:
 کوچاندن)
 کوشیدن [*kush*] → کوشیدن
 کوشیدن [*kushidan*] [→ کوش, *kush*] to try, to make an effort
 کوفتن [*kuf.tan*] [→ کوب, *kub*] to pound, to hammer (*lit.*) (causative: کوباندن)

- گداختن [go.dākh.tan] [→ گداز, godāz] to melt (*lit.*)
 گائیدن [gā'idan] [→ گا, gā] (*vulg.*) to fuck
 گداختن [go.dākh.tan] [→ گداز, godāz] to melt (*lit.*)
 گداز [go.dāz] → گداختن
 گذار [go.zār] → گذاشتن or گذاردن
 گذاردن [gozārdan] see گذاشتن
 گذاشتن [go.zāsh.tan] [→ گذار, go.zār] to put; to leave behind; to let;
 also گذاردن
 گذر [go.zar] → گذشتن
 گذران [go.za.rān] → گذراندن
 گذراندن [go.za.rān.dan] [→ گذران, go.za.rān] to spend (time)
 گذشتن [go.zash.tan] [→ گذر, go.zar] to pass (*intr.*) (causative: گذراندن)
 گرا [ge.rā] → گرائیدن or گرویدن
 گرائیدن [ge.rā.'i.dan] [→ گرا, ge.rā] to incline; also گرویدن
 گرد [gard] → گشتن or گردیدن
 گردان [gar.dān] → گرداندن
 گردانیدن / گرداندن [gar.dān.dan/ gar.dā.ni.dan] [→ گردان, gar.dān] to
 cause to turn; to manage and run an enterprise
 گردیدن [gar.di.dan] [→ گرد, gard] to turn (= گشتن) (causative: گرداندن)
 گرفتن [ge.ref.tan] [→ گیر, gir] to take (≠ 'give')
 گرویدن [ge.ra.vi.dan] [→ گرا, ge.rā] to incline; also گرائیدن
 گری [geri] → گریستن
 گریان [geryān] → گریاندن
 گریاندن [geryāndan] [→ گریان, geryān] causative of گریستن
 گریختن [go.rikh.tan] [→ گریز, go.riz] to flee (*lit.*) (causative: گریزاندن)
 گریز [go.riz] → گریختن
 گریزان [gorizān] → گریزاندن
 گریزاندن [gorizāndan] [→ گریزان, gorizān] causative of گریختن
 گریستن [ge.ris.tan] [→ گری, ge.ri] to cry, to weep (*lit.*) (causative:
 گریاندن, ger.yān.dan)
 گز [gaz] → گزیدن [ga.zi.dan]
 گزار [go.zār] → گزاردن
 گزاردن [go.zār.dan] [→ گزار, gozār] to perform; to carry out (*form.*)
 گزیدن [ga.zi.dan] [→ گز, gaz] to bite; to sting (*form./lit.*)
 گزیدن [go.zi.dan] [→ گزین, go.zin] to choose, to select
 گزین [go.zin] → گزیدن
 گسلیدن [go.sas.tan] [→ گسل, go.sal] to sever; to disconnect; also گسلیدن
 and گسلاندن (*lit.*) (causative: گسلاندن)
 گسیختن and گسستن, گسلیدن [go.sal] → گسیختن

- گسلیدن [gosalidan] see گسیختن
 گسیختن [go.sikh.tan] [→ غسل, go.sal] to sever; to rupture (*lit.*) (causative: گسلاندن)
 گشادن [go.shā] → گشودن or گشودن
 گشادان [goshādan] *obs.*; see گشودن
 گشتن [gash.tan] [→ گرد, gard] to turn; to stroll; see also گردیدن (causative: گرداندن)
 گشودن [go.shu.dan] [→ گشا, go.shā] to open (*form.*)
 گفتن [gof.tan] [→ گو, gu] to say (to = به)
 گماردن [go.mār] → گماشتن / گماردن
 گماردن / گماشتن [go.mār.dan/ go.māsh.tan] [→ گمار, go.mār] to appoint (*form.*)
 گنجیدن [gonj] → گنجیدن
 گنجاندن [gonjān] → گنجاندن
 گنجاندن [gonjān] [→ گنجان, gonjān] causative of گنجیدن
 گنجیدن [gon.ji.dan] [→ گنج, gonj] to fit in; to be contained (causative: گنجاندن) (*form.*)
 گندیدن [gand] → گندیدن
 گندیدن [gan.di.dan] [→ گند, gand] to rot
 گفتن [gu] → گو
 گواریدن / گواردن [go.vār] → گواریدن
 گواریدن / گواردن [go.vār.dan/ go.vā.ri.dan] [→ گوار, go.vār] to digest
 گوزیدن [guz] → گوزیدن
 گوزیدن [guzidan] [→ گوز, guz] (*vulg.*) to fart
 گرفتن [gir] → گرفتن
 لاسیدن [lās] → لاسیدن
 لاسیدن [lāsidan] [→ لاس, lās] flirt
 لرزیدن [larz] → لرزیدن
 لرزاندن [larzān] → لرزاندن
 لرزاندن [larzāndan] [→ لرزان, larzān] causative of لرزیدن
 لرزیدن [lar.zi.dan] [→ لرز, larz] to tremble (causative: لرزاندن)
 لغزیدن [laghz] → لغزیدن
 لغزاندن [laghzān] → لغزاندن
 لغزاندن [laghzāndan] [→ لغزان, laghzān] causative of لغزیدن
 لغزیدن [laghzidan] [→ لغز, laghz] to slip or slide (causative: لغزاندن)
 لمیدن [lam] → لمیدن
 لمیدن [la.mi.dan] [→ لم, lam] to recline
 لنگیدن [lang] → لنگیدن
 لنگیدن [lan.gi.dan] [→ لنگ, lang] to limp

- لولیدن [lul] → لول
 لولیدن [lulidan] [→ لول, lul] to wriggle
 لهیدن [leh] → له
 لهیدن [le.hi.dan] [→ له, leh] to become mushy
 مالیدن [māl] → مال
 مالاندن [mālān] → مالان
 مالاندن [mālāndan] [→ مالان, mālān] causative of مالیدن
 مالیدن [mā.li.dan] [→ مال, māl] to rub (causative: مالاندن)
 مانیدن [mān] → ماندن ; also → مانستن
 ماندن [mān.dan] [→ مان, mān] to stay, to remain; also: to resemble (see مانستن)
 مانستن [mā.nes.tan] [→ مان, mān] to be similar to; to resemble
 مردن [mor.dan] [→ میر, mir] to die
 مزیدن [maz] → مز
 مزیدن [mazidan] [→ مز, maz] to taste
 مکیدن [mek or mak] → مکیدن
 مکیدن [me.ki.dan (form.: ma.-)] [→ مک, mek or mak] to suck
 موئیدن [mu] → مو
 موئیدن [mu'idan] [→ مو, mu] to mourn, to weep
 بایستن [mi-bāyad/ mi-bāyest/ mi-bāyesti] → می باید/می بایست/می بایستی
 مردن [mir] → میر
 نازیدن [nāz] → ناز
 نازیدن [nā.zi.dan] [→ ناز, nāz] to boast
 نالیدن [nāl] → نال
 نالیدن [nā.li.dan] [→ نال, nāl] to moan; to lament
 نامیدن [nām] → نام
 نامیدن [nā.mi.dan] [→ نام, nām] to name
 نشانیدن [ne.shān] → نشان
 نشانیدن [ne.shān.dan] [→ نشان, ne.shān] to cause to sit
 نشستن [ne.shas.tan] [→ نشین, ne.shin] to sit (causative: نشانیدن)
 نشستن [ne.shin] → نشین
 نکوهیدن [ne.kuh] → نکوه
 نکوهیدن [ne.ku.bi.dan] [→ نکوه, ne.kuh] to blame; to reproach (form.)
 نگاریدن [ne.gār] → نگاشتن or نگاریدن
 نگاریدن [negāridan] [→ نگار, negār] see نگاشتن
 نگاریدن [ne.gāsh.tan] [→ نگار, ne.gār] to paint; to write (lit.); also نگاریدن (obs.)
 نگریدن [ne.gar] → نگرستن
 نگریدن [ne.ga.ris.tan] [→ نگر, ne.gar] to look

نگه داشتن [*ne.gah dāsh.tan*] [→ دار ~] to keep (+ *mi-* in pres. and progressive tenses)

نما [*nomā*] → نمودن

نمایان [*nomāyān*] → نمایاندن

نمایاندن [*nomāyāndan*] [→ نمایان, *nomāyān*] causative of نمودن

نمودن [*no.mu.dan*] [→ نما, *no.mā*] to show; to appear; used also as a weak substitute for کردن in *wrt.* (not recommended) (causative: نمایاندن)

نواختن [*na.vāz*] → نواختن

نواختن [*na.vākh.tan*] [→ نواز, *na.vāz*] to play an instrument; to strike (*form.*)

نوردیدن [*navard*] → نوردیدن

نوردیدن [*navardidan*] [→ نورد, *navard*] (*obs.*) see the more common, compound form درنوردیدن [*dar-navardidan*]

نوش [*nush*] → نوشیدن

نوشان [*nushān*] → نوشاندن

نوشاندن [*nushāndan*] [→ نوشان, *nushān*] (*lit.*) causative of نوشیدن

نوشتن [*navashtan*] [→ نورد, *navard*] (*obs.*) see نوردیدن

درنوردیدن or درنوشتن [*ne.vesh.tan*] [→ نویسی, *nevis*] to write; see also درنوشتن or درنوردیدن

نوشیدن [*nu.shi.dan*] [→ نوش, *nush*] to drink

نوشتن [*ne.vis*] → نوشتن

نهادن [*nah*] → نهادن

نهادن [*na.hā.dan*] [→ نه, *nah*] to lay; to put (*form.*)

نهفتن [*na.hof.tan*] [only past tense; *lit.*] to hide

نیوش [*niyush*] → نیوشیدن

نیوشیدن [*niyushidan*] [→ نیوش, *niyush*] to listen, to hearken

وا دادن [*vā-dādan*] [→ ده ~] to give in

وا داشتن [*vā-dāshtan*] [→ دار ~] to oblige, to persuade

وارسیدن [*vā-residan*] [→ رس ~] to investigate

وا گذاشتن [*vā-gozāshstan*] [→ گذار ~] to give over, to transfer

وا نهادن [*vā-nahādan*] [→ نه ~] to give over, to give up

ور آمدن [*var-āmadan*] [→ آ ~] to come off, to peel off

ور افتادن [*var-oftādan*] [→ افت ~] to be abolished or go out of fashion; see بر افتادن

ورزیدن [*varz*] → ورزیدن

ورزیدن [*var.zi.dan*] [→ ورز, *varz*] to exercise; to cherish (*form.*)

وز [*vaz*] → وزیدن

وزیدن [*va.zi.dan*] [→ وز, *vaz*] to breeze, to blow

ویراستن [*vi.rā*] → ویراستن

- ویراستن [*virāstan*] [→ ویرا, *virā*] to edit
هراسیدن [*harās*] → هراس
هراساندن [*harāsān*] → هراسان
هراساندن [*harāsāndan*] [→ هراسان, *harāsān*] causative of هراسیدن
هراسیدن [*harāsīdan*] [→ هراس, *harās*] to fear (causative: هراساندن)
هشتن [*heshtan*] [→ هل, *hel*] (*obs.*) to put
هل [*hel*] → هشتن
یافتن [*yāb*] → یاب
یازیدن [*yāzīdan*] [→ یاز, *yāz*] (*obs.*) see یازیدن
یار [*yār*] → یارستن
یارستن [*yārestan*] [→ یار, *yār*] (*obs.*) to be able to, to have the power or
courage
یاز [*yāz*] → یازیدن
یازیدن [*yāzīdan*] [→ یاز, *yāz*] also یافتن (both *obs.*) to reach for, to raise,
to unsheathe
یافتن [*yāf.tan*] [→ یاب, *yāb*] to find

Notes

- 1 The archaic version *mi-na-* found in classical poetry is now obsolete.
- 2 This verb is used to additionally have a transitive meaning also ('to leave'), which is now considered archaic/obsolete.
- 3 In this usage, می شود has the same meaning as ممکن است ('it is possible'), always conjugated for 3rd person. (See also *impersonal* constructions in Chapter 12.)

Chapter 12

Tenses, aspects, moods, voices

Through using a lot of examples in complete sentences to illustrate usage and function, this chapter is primarily concerned with the *formation* of tenses, aspects, moods and voices.

12.1 An overview

The verbs بودن (*budan*, to be) and داشتن (*dāshtan*, to have) have already been covered in detail in the previous chapter (see Sections 11.8 and 11.9). As for all the other verbs, it would be helpful to have an overview of all the tenses and aspects, etc., before starting to explain the formation and functions of each one.

Table 12.1 The verb خوردن (*khordan*, to eat) conjugated for 1Sg

Stem I: خور (*khor*) – Stem II: خورد (*khord*) – Past participle: خورده (*khorde*)

	Future	Present	Past	Narrative past (used in reported speech)
Simple	خواهم خورد <i>khāham</i> <i>khord</i>	می خورم <i>mi-khoram</i>	خوردم <i>khordam</i>	→ (Use present perfect) خورده ام <i>khorde'am</i>
Progressive		[دارم] می خورم (<i>dāram</i>) <i>mi-khoram</i>	[داشتم] می خوردم (<i>dāshtam</i>) <i>mi-khordam</i>	→ (Use present perfect progressive) [داشته ام] می خورده ام (<i>dāshte'am</i>) <i>mi-khorde'am</i>
Perfect		خورده ام <i>khorde'am</i>	خورده بودم <i>khorde budam</i>	→ خورده بوده ام <i>khorde bude'am</i>
Perfect progressive		می خورده ام <i>mi-khorde'am</i>	(not common) (می خورده بودم) (<i>mi-khorde budam</i>)	→ (not common) (می خورده بوده ام) (<i>mi-khorde bude'am</i>)

Table 12.2 The 3 subjunctive forms

	Simple (or present)	Perfect I (or past)	Perfect II
Subjunctive	بخورم <i>be-khoram</i>	خورده باشم <i>khorde bāsham</i>	خورده بوده باشم <i>khorde bude bāsham</i>

Table 12.3 The imperative

	Singular	Plural
Imperative	بخور! <i>be-khor!</i>	بخورید! <i>be-khorid!</i>

12.2 Simple present tense / present progressive tense

Persian has only a single tense as the equivalent of the English *simple present* and *present progressive* tenses. (See Section 12.2.1 below for a predominantly colloquial, not fully developed version of the *present progressive* tense.) In the following examples, you can see that the verb می‌نویسد does not change:

او الآن نامه می‌نویسد (*u al'ān nāme mi-nevisad*, He is writing a letter now.)
او هر روز چند نامه می‌نویسد (*u har-ruz chand nāme mi-nevisad*, Every day he writes several letters.)

Persian does have a future tense (see Section 12.3), maybe a little more common in formal language than informal, but the present tense can also be used for future. The context or the accompanying adverb of time will help you determine which tense to use in English when translating.

To conjugate verbs in this tense, the present stem (*Stem I*) is needed, to which the set of six conjugational suffixes are added (always written joined), and, in addition to that, a stressed *mi-*(می) prefix. The only exceptions to this rule are the verbs 'to be' and 'to have' that were covered in the previous chapter: *dāshtan* does not need the prefix, and *budan* has its own special form.

Table 12.4 The conjugational suffixes

1Sg.	2Sg.	3Sg.	1Pl.	2Pl.	3Pl.
م (-am)	ی (-i)	د (-ad)	یم (-im)	ید (-id)	ند (-and)

Thus, to say ‘I know’ in Persian, one needs the prefix *mi-*, then the present stem of the verb دانستن (*dānestan*, to know), which is دان (*dān*), and finally the conjugational ending for ‘I’ (1Sg. = *-am*). The result would be می‌دانم (*midānam*), and for other persons simply the conjugational ending is changed: ‘We know’ would thus be می‌دانیم (*midānim*) and so on.

For negative, the prefix می- (*mi-*) changes to its negative form نمی- (*nemi-*), and this is the only case where the negative prefix *na-* is pronounced *ne-*. The negative prefix always has the main stress in all tenses.

The *mi-* (or, in negative, *nemi-*) prefix is now usually written separately, although it used to be written joined in the past, and some might still write it that way (i.e., میدانم instead of می‌دانم).

If the present stem of a verb ends in the vowels *-ā* or *-u*, the glide ی (*-y-*) should be added between the stem and the conjugational suffix. For three of the conjugational suffixes, which either consist of or start with the sound *i* – namely, 1Pl., 2Sg. and 2Pl. – the glide is more commonly written as *hamze* (ث) before that *i-*, but writing ‘double ye’ is also possible and almost as common.

In the case of the verb رفتن (*raftan*, to go) – present stem رو (*row*) – and a few other verbs with present stems ending in *-ow*, this *-ow* changes its pronunciation in conjugation to *-av*. می‌روم (‘I go’) will therefore be pronounced *mi-rav-am*, not *mi-row-am*. (The *-ow* pronunciation will be needed for imperative [singular] only and for making compound words, like راهرو [*rābrow*, corridor].) You might occasionally see other vowel changes also, like *-eh* → *-ah* in the verb دادن (*dādan*, to give; Stem I *deh* → *dah*: imperative *bedeh*, present tense *mi-daham*). These possible changes, very few in number, have been shown on the list of verbs in the previous chapter.

As can be seen in below table 12.5, after the vowels *-ā* and *-u*, one ی alone functions as the consonant *y* only and never as the vowel *i*: می‌گوید is always *mi-gu-yad* and never *mi-gu-’id*; the latter would need a glide before *-i* (written as a *hamze* or another ی) to make that pronunciation possible: می‌گوئید or می‌گوئید.

In compound verbs, *mi-* or *nemi-* are always added to the verbal part:

بر می‌دارم (*bar-mi-dāram*, I take / pick up), بر نمی‌دارم (*bar-nemi-dāram*, I don’t take / don’t pick up.)
گوش می‌کنم (*gush mi-konam*, I listen.), گوش نمی‌کنم (*gush nemi-konam*, I don’t listen.)

Table 12.5 Some examples of conjugation

	Regular	Irregular	Stem ending in -ā (glide needed)	Stem ending in -u (glide needed)	Stem ending in -ow (→ -av)
Infinitive	رسیدن <i>residan</i> to reach / arrive	نوشتن <i>neveshtan</i> to write	آمدن <i>āmadan</i> to come	گفتن <i>goftan</i> to say	رفتن <i>raftan</i> to go
Present stem	رس <i>res</i>	نویس <i>nevis</i>	آ <i>ā</i>	گو <i>gu</i>	رو <i>row</i> (→ <i>rau</i>)
1Sg. (I)	می‌رسم <i>mi-res-am</i>	می‌نویسم <i>mi-nevis-am</i>	می‌آیم <i>mi-ā-yam</i>	می‌گویم <i>mi-gu-yam</i>	می‌روم <i>mi-raw-am</i>
2Sg. (you / thou)	می‌رسی <i>mi-res-i</i>	می‌نویسی <i>mi-nevis-i</i>	می‌آئی or می‌آی <i>mi-ā-'i</i>	می‌گویی or می‌گویی <i>mi-gu-'i</i>	می‌روی <i>mi-raw-i</i>
3Sg. (he / she / it)	می‌رسد <i>mi-res-ad</i>	می‌نویسد <i>mi-nevis-ad</i>	می‌آید <i>mi-ā-yad</i>	می‌گوید <i>mi-gu-yad</i>	می‌رود <i>mi-raw-ad</i>
1Pl. (we)	می‌رسیم <i>mi-res-im</i>	می‌نویسیم <i>mi-nevis-im</i>	می‌آییم or می‌آئیم <i>mi-ā-'im</i>	می‌گوییم or می‌گوییم <i>mi-gu-'im</i>	می‌رویم <i>mi-raw-im</i>
2Pl. (you)	می‌رسید <i>mi-res-id</i>	می‌نویسید <i>mi-nevis-id</i>	می‌آید or می‌آید <i>mi-ā-'id</i>	می‌گویید or می‌گویید <i>mi-gu-'id</i>	می‌روید <i>mi-raw-id</i>
3Pl. (they)	می‌رسند <i>mi-res-and</i>	می‌نویسند <i>mi-nevis-and</i>	می‌آیند <i>mi-ā-yand</i>	می‌گویند <i>mi-gu-yand</i>	می‌روند <i>mi-raw-and</i>

More examples:

پروین به مدرسه می‌رود (*parvin be madrese mi-ravad*, Parvin goes to school.)

شما هر روز غذا می‌خرید (*shomā har-ruz ghazā mi-kharid*, You buy food every day.)

تو الآن نامه می‌نویسی (*to al'ān nāme mi-nevisi*, You are writing a letter now.)

امروز نمی‌آیم (*emruz nemi-āyam*, I'm not coming today.)

امروز به شهر هفتم می‌رسیم (*emruz be shahr-e haftom mi-resim*, Today we'll reach the seventh city.)

آنها فردا می‌رسند (*ānhā fardā mi-resand*, They will arrive tomorrow.)

فردا به پدرش می‌گوئیم (*fardā be pedarash mi-gu'im*, Tomorrow we'll tell his / her father.)

Regarding the 'state verbs' see Section 12.6 (Present Perfect Tense).

12.2.1 **Present progressive formed with داشتن**

A new development in the language (predominantly in colloquial Persian) and not fully developed as a tense, the present progressive construction of داشتن (*dāsh-tan*, to have) is used to focus on the action expressed by the verb, to stress and make it clear that something is happening right now.

Two limitations in usage:

- It has no negative form: always affirmative.
- It is used to focus on an action and, therefore, cannot be used for verbs that are either *equating* in their function or are more about the *state* rather than the *action*. (In English, for instance, you can say 'I am realizing now,' but not 'I am knowing'; you can say 'the sun is appearing,' but not 'is seeming'.)

Formation: The main verb is conjugated in present tense in the normal way at the end of the sentence; the verb داشتن is also conjugated for the same person (same conjugational suffixes, but no *mi*-prefix) and usually placed after the subject or at the beginning of the sentence if the subject is not mentioned or after the adverb of time. Although there is some flexibility about its position, whenever possible, it should be placed closer to the beginning of the sentence and not immediately before the main verb. Here داشتن is an auxiliary verb with no independent meaning of its own, and it is only the context that can help you decide whether it means 'to have' or is simply part of the progressive aspect.

Examples to demonstrate the difference:

سه برادر دارم (*se barādar dāram*, I have three brothers.)

دارم به خانه می‌روم (*dāram be khāne miravam*, I'm going home.) – Here *dāram* functioning as auxiliary.

وقت دارم ولی به آنجا نمی‌روم (*vaght dāram vali be ānjā nemiravam*, I have time but I don't go. / I'm not going there.)

آیا دارید می‌روید؟ (*āyā dārid mi-ravid?*, Are you going / leaving?)

Table 12.6 رفتن (*raftan*, to go) in simple present tense and in present progressive with داشتن

Present / present progressive tense		Present progressive tense	
Affirmative	Negative	Affirmative	Negative
می‌روم <i>mi-ravam</i> I go / I am going	نمی‌روم <i>nemi-ravam</i> I don't go / I am not going	دارم می‌روم <i>dāram mi-ravam</i> I am going	(No negative!)
می‌روی <i>mi-ravi</i> you (singular) go / you are going	نمی‌روی <i>nemi-ravi</i> you (singular) don't go / you are not going	داری می‌روی <i>dāri mi-ravi</i> you (singular) are going	(No negative!)
می‌رود <i>mi-ravad</i> he goes / he is going	نمی‌رود <i>nemi-ravad</i> he doesn't go / he is not going	دارد می‌رود <i>dārad mi-ravad</i> he is going	(No negative!)
می‌رویم <i>mi-ravim</i> we go / we are going	نمی‌رویم <i>nemi-ravim</i> we don't go / we are not going	داریم می‌رویم <i>dārim mi-ravim</i> we are going	(No negative!)
می‌روید <i>mi-ravid</i> you (plural) go / you are going	نمی‌روید <i>nemi-ravid</i> you (plural) don't go / you are not going	دارید می‌روید <i>dārid mi-ravid</i> you (plural) are going	(No negative!)
می‌روند <i>mi-ravand</i> they go / they are going	نمی‌روند <i>nemi-ravand</i> they don't go / they are not going	دارند می‌روند <i>dārand mi-ravand</i> they are going	(No negative!)

More mixed examples of present tense:

الآن دارم یک نامه می‌نویسم (*al'ān dāram yek nāme mi-nevisam*, Now I'm writing a letter.)

شهر نزدیک است، داریم می‌رسیم (*shahr nazdik ast, dārim mi-resim*, The city is near; we are arriving.)

مدرسه نزدیک است، دیر نمی‌رسی (*madrese nazdik ast, dir nemi-resi*, The school is near; you won't be late.)

حالا نمی‌گویم ولی فردا می‌گویم (*hālā nemi-guyam vali fardā mi-guyam*, I won't say [it] now, but I'll say tomorrow.)

هر روز دو بار به خانه ما می‌آید (*har-ruz do-bār be khāne-ye mā mi-āyad*, He comes to our house twice a day.)

معمولاً در ده غذا می‌خرند (*ma'mulan dar deh ghazā mi-kharand*, They usually buy food in the village.)

پدرم آنجاست، دارد غذا می‌خرد (*pedar-am ānjā-st, dārad ghazā mi-kharad*, My father is there, he's buying food.)

آیا خواهرت نمی‌داند؟ (*āyā khāhar-at nemi-dānad?*, Doesn't your sister know?)

به کلاس نمی‌روم؛ مادرم دارد از ایران می‌آید (*be kelās nemi-ravam; mādar-am dārad az irān mi-āyad*, I'm not going to class; my Mom is coming from Iran.)

وقت نداریم، داریم به کلاس می‌رویم (*vaght na-dārim, dārim be kelās mi-ravim*, We don't have time, we're going to class.)

12.3 Future tense

Formation of this tense is simple and regular for all the verbs, because it uses *Stem II*. This tense uses the verb خواستن (*khāstan*, meaning 'to want' when used as an independent verb) as auxiliary.

- 1 Start with خواه (*khāh*, present stem of خواستن);
- 2 add conjugational endings (stressed); and finally
- 3 add the past stem (also called *Stem II* or *short infinitive*) of the main verb – which is always regular.

Note that, although here the *Stem I* of خواستن is conjugated, this differs from present tense of خواستن in that the prefix *mi-* is not used. Another difference is that the main verb (in the form of *Stem II*) comes immediately after this auxiliary verb, unlike the independent verb خواستن and a second verb, where that verb (usually in subjunctive form) does not have to be placed immediately after it. Compare:

آن نامه را امروز خواهم نوشت (*ān nāme rā emruz khāham nevesht*, I'll write that letter today.)

می‌خواهم آن نامه را امروز بنویسم (*mi-khāham ān nāme rā emruz be-nevisam*, I want to write that letter today.)

Another point to note is that, in future tense, the main stress is on the conjugational ending of the auxiliary خواستن – which is unusual, because the

conjugational endings are otherwise usually unstressed. In compound verbs, the auxiliary خواستن always comes between the two parts, and the main stress shifts to the (last) syllable before the auxiliary:

بر خواهم گشت (*bar khāham gasht*, 'I shall return.' – stress on *bar*)
نگاه خواهند کرد (*negāh khāhand kard*, 'They will look.' – stress on *-gāh*)

For negative, the prefix *na-* is added to the auxiliary خواستن and not to the main verb (again something unusual). In negative, *na-* will take the main stress, as it always does in all tenses:

نخواهد شنید (*nakhāhad shenid*, He will not hear.)
گوش نخواهید کرد (*gush nakhāhid kard*, You will not listen.)

In colloquial Persian, usually the present tense is used for the future also. Although educated people may use this tense quite often even in conversation, the future tense is more for written and formal Persian. But even in written and formal Persian, the present tense can always replace the future without changing meaning.

Persian has no *perfect future* or *progressive future* and, if necessary, uses present perfect and present progressive instead.

Mixed examples of present tense and future:

او فردا برخواهد گشت (or او فردا برمی‌گردد) (*u fardā bar khāhad gasht [u fardā bar-mi-gardad]*, He will return tomorrow.)
او فردا ساعت هشت دارد از سفرش برمی‌گردد (*u fardā sā'at-e hasht dārad az safar-ash bar-mi-gardad*, Tomorrow at 8, he will be returning from his trip.)
یک قلم می‌خواهم (*yek ghalam mi-khāham*, I want a pen.)
فردا این قلم را خواهم خواست (*fardā in ghalam rā khāham khāst*, I'll want this pen tomorrow.)
فردا ما را نخواهید دید (*fardā mā rā nakhāhid did*, You'll not see us tomorrow.)
هفته آینده به تهران خواهند رفت (*hafte-ye āyande be tehrān khāhand raft*, Next week they'll go to Tehran.)
این بچه همه چیز را می‌فهمد (*in bach.che hame chiz rā mi-fahmad*, This child understands everything.)

پدرت همه چیز را خواهد فهمید (*pedar-at hame-chiz rā khāhad fahmid*, Your father will realize everything.)

روزی ما در این کشور آزادی خواهیم داشت (*ruzi mā dar in keshvar āzādi khāhim dāsh*t, One day we will have freedom in this country.)

12.4 Simple past tense

The simple past tense is formed by simply adding the *conjugational suffixes* to the *past stem*. And *conjugational suffixes* for the past tense are the same as those for all other tenses, with only one difference: 3Sg. in the past tense does not need any conjugational ending (i.e., no *-ad* needs to be added!). This means that *Stem II* ('past stem' or 'short infinitive') in Persian is at the same time and with no change the 3Sg. in the past tense.

The past stem in Persian is obtained by just dropping the *-an* from the infinitive – always regular and no exceptions.

For negative, the negative prefix *na-* is added, and if the past stem starts with the vowels *ā*, *a* and *o*, the glide *-y-* (ی) is used. If the initial vowel is *ā*, the *madd* sign is dropped: آمد (*āmad*, He / she came), نیامد (*nayāmad*, He / she didn't come). In the case of *a* and *o*, 'good Persian' recommends that the *alef* be dropped altogether:

انداخت (*andākht*, He / she threw.) → نینداخت (*nayandākht*, He / she didn't throw.)

افتاد (*oftād*, He / she fell) → نیفتاد (*nayoftād*, He / she didn't fall.)

Table 12.7 A comparison of present and past, the verb داشتن (*dāshtan*, to have)

	Present stem: دار, <i>dār</i>	Past stem: داشت, <i>dāsh</i> t
1Sg.	دارم, <i>dāram</i>	داشتم, <i>dāsh</i> tam
2Sg.	داری, <i>dāri</i>	داشتی, <i>dāsh</i> ti
3Sg.	دارد, <i>dārad</i>	داشت, <i>dāsh</i> t
1Pl.	داریم, <i>dārim</i>	داشتیم, <i>dāsh</i> tim
2Pl.	دارید, <i>dārid</i>	داشتید, <i>dāsh</i> tid
3Pl.	دارند, <i>dārand</i>	داشتند, <i>dāsh</i> tand

As can be expected, in compound verbs, the negative prefix *na-* is added to the verb part:

حرف زدیم (*harf zadim*, We talked.) → حرف نزدیم (*harf na-zadim*, We didn't talk.)

The simple past tense is used in Persian for what was done and completed in the past at a certain time. Unlike the English past tense, however, it is usually not used with frequency adverbs or with a function similar to 'used to' (for which the *past progressive* will be needed); focus is on completion and not on continuation. Examples:

من سال قبل در ایران بودم (*man sāl-e ghabl dar irān budam*, Last year I was in Iran.)

بعد از کلاس کجا رفتی؟ (*ba'd az kelās kojā rafti?*, Where did you go after class?)

دیروز مینا را در خیابان دیدیم (*diruz minā rā dar khiyābān didim*, Yesterday we saw Mina on the Street.)

چرا اینقدر زود برگشتید؟ (*cherā in-ghadr zud bar-gashtid?*, Why did you return so early?)

بچه‌ها دو ساعت در حیاط بازی کردند (*bachche-hā do sā'at dar hayāt bāzi kardand*, The children played in the yard for 2 hours.)

Sometimes in *if clauses* and *time clauses*, the simple past tense is used for present / future to emphasize the completion of the action or the ending of some state, and usually the verb in the main clause also denotes some action that follows the first one. Examples:

وقتی که برادرم از سفر برگشت حتماً به دیدنت خواهیم آمد (*vaghti-ke barādar-am az safar bar-gasht hatman be didan-at khāhim āmad*, We'll certainly come to see you when my brother returns from the trip.)

اگر احتیاج به پول داشتی به من خبر بده (*agar ehtiyāj be pul dāshti be man khabar bedeh*, Let me know should you need money.)

بعد از اینکه حالت خوب شد با هم به سینما می‌رویم (*ba'd az in-ke hālat khub shod bā ham be sinamā mi-ravim*, We'll go together to the movies once you get better.)

12.5 Past progressive tense

To form this tense, the prefix *mi-* is added to the past tense, which changes to *nemi-* in the negative. The verbs بودن (*budan*, to be) and داشتن (*dāshtan*, to have) do not use the prefix *mi-* (except in *irrealis* or ‘counterfactual’ constructions) – which means that, for these two verbs, usually the same form used as *past tense* is used where other verbs would use *past progressive*.

Past progressive (or *continuous*) *tense* is used for things that were happening in the past,

- at a certain time:

دیروز ساعت یازده نامه می نوشتم (*diruz sā'at-e yāzdah nāme mi-neveshtam*, I was writing a letter yesterday at 11.);

- for a certain period of time:

در زمستان گذشته فارسی یاد می گرفتم (*dar zemestān-e gozashte fārsi yād mi-gereftam*, I was learning Persian during last winter.); or

- habitually (= used to):

هر سال تابستان به شیراز می رفتیم (*har sāl tābestān be shirāz mi-raftim*, Every summer we went / we used to go to Shirāz.).

This last usage (for what habitually used to happen in the past) is the main difference between Persian and English *past progressive* tenses.

For the use of this tense in *irrealis* constructions (another difference with English) see Sections 13.2.2 and 13.3.

Also important to know: For a certain group of verbs, that can be called ‘verbs of *state*,’ Persian uses a *perfect* tense where English would normally use a *progressive* tense; see the details and examples under perfect tenses (see Section 12.8; see also Section 12.6 / Usage Note B).

Caution: Since the *past progressive* and the *simple present* both use the prefix *mi-*, with certain verbs, this can cause confusions that only the context can disentangle. Some examples:

- With the group of regular verbs whose infinitive ends in *-idan*, like رسیدن (*residan*, ‘to reach / arrive’ – present stem *res*, past stem *resid*) or خندیدن (*khandidan*, ‘to laugh’ – present stem *khand*, past stem *khandid*), the 2Pl.

in *present tense* is exactly the same as 3Sg. in *past progressive*, both in writing and in pronunciation. Thus, a question like چرا می خندید؟ (*cherā mi-khandid?*) can both mean ‘Why are you laughing? / Why do you laugh?’ (*present*) and ‘Why was he / she laughing?’ (*past progressive*). To see how this happens, you should conjugate this verb for all persons in these two tenses (starting with *mi-khandam* for present tense and *mi-khandidam* for past progressive).

- With another group of regular verbs, with infinitive ending in *-āndan*, like ماندن (*māndan*, ‘to stay’ – present stem *mān*, past stem *mānd*), 3Sg. would be exactly the same in writing in present and past progressive, though not in pronunciation. Since, however, the diacritical marks (for the ‘short’ vowels *a*, *e* and *o*) are usually not written, this can be a problem – and again the context should help you decide how to read and to understand the verb: should it be pronounced *-ānd* at the end (past) or *-ānad* (present)? می ماند can mean ‘he stays’ when pronounced *mi-mānad*, but ‘he was staying’ when pronounced *mi-mānd*. Again, conjugate this verb in these two tenses to see how this happens.
- Some of the irregular verbs can also cause this latter confusion in reading, like بردن (*bordan*, ‘to take [away]’ – present stem *bar*, past stem *bord*): می برد can be *mi-barad* (he is taking) or *mi-bord* (he was taking).

12.5.1 Past and past progressive of certain verbs

With certain verbs like خواستن (*khāstan*, to want); توانستن (*tavānestan*, to be able to); and دانستن (*dānestan*, to know), the past progressive, which is the tense more commonly used, shows some passive state of *wanting*, *knowing* or *being able* in general (with *mi*-prefix used in its durative function), while the simple past tense shows the more active side of these verbs at some particular moment in the past. They might need different verbs in English translation.

12.5.1.1 خواستن (*khāstan*, to want)

In the past progressive tense, خواستن with *mi*- is the passive *state* of *wanting*, while without *mi*- (simple past), it is more an *act* and indicates some immediate or sudden *decision* or intention (similar to ‘being just about to’). Compare the following examples with and without *mi*-:

وقتی جوان بود می خواست هنرپیشه بشود (*vaghti javān bud mi-khāst honar-pishe be-shavad*, When she was young, she wanted to become an actress.)
خواست / می خواست به او سلام کند، ولی خجالت کشید (*khāst / mi-khāst be u salām konad vali khejālat keshid*, He wanted to say ‘hello’ to her, but

was [too] timid / bashful.) – The version without *mi-* (simple past) has more of an *act*: he was *just about to do so*.

– “چرا نخواستی با او حرف بزنی؟” – “خواستم / می‌خواستم، ولی او وقت نداشت.” – (*‘cherā na-khāsti bā u harf be-zani?’* – *‘khāstam / mi-khāstam vali u vaght na-dāsh’t,* – ‘Why didn’t you want to talk to him?’ – ‘I wanted to, but he had no time.’)

همینکه خواستم اسمش را بپرسم، مادرش صدایش کرد و فهمیدم اسمش چیست (*hamin-ke khāstam esm-ash rā be-porsam mādar-ash sedā-yash kard va fahmidam esm-ash chist,* Just as I wanted to ask her name, her mother called her and I found out what her name was.)

آیا پلیس از تو خواست که از ماشین پیاده شوی؟ (*āyā polis az to khāst ke az māshin piyāde shavi?*, Did the police want / ask you to get off the car?)

همیشه می‌خواستم سوار آن ماشین بشوم (*hamishe mi-khāstam savār-e ān māshin be-shavam,* I always wanted to ride in that car.)

از او خواستیم (که) سوار شود، ولی ترسید (*az u khāstim [ke] savār shavad vali tarsid,* We asked him to get in [the car], but he was afraid.)

12.5.1.2 توانستن (tavānestan, to be able to)

The past progressive tense of توانستن (with *mi-*) shows a general *state* of capability (or, if negative, inability), while its simple past (with no *mi-*) shows more the *act* of *managing to do* something (or, if negative, *failing to do* something) – again at some particular point of time in the past. Examples:

از یکی از پنجره‌ها می‌توانستیم دریاچه را ببینیم (*az yeki az panjare-hā mi-tavānestim daryāche rā be-binim,* From one of the windows, we could see the lake.)

وقتی پنجره باز شد، توانستیم دریاچه را ببینیم (*vaghti panjare bāz shod tavānestim daryāche rā be-binim,* When the window was opened, we were able to see the lake.)

خوشبختانه می‌توانستم شنا کنم و توانستم خودم را با شنا به ساحل برسانم (*khosh-bakhtāne mi-tavānestam shenā konam va tavānestam khodam rā bā shenā be sāhel be-resānam,* Luckily I could swim and was able to / managed to reach [/ bring myself to] the shore by swimming.)

12.5.1.3 دانستن (dānestan, to know)

The object of دانستن is often a statement (= to know that . . .) and, when used in this way, we have a similar difference between its *simple past* and *past progressive* tenses, the latter being by far the more common tense. ‘I knew’

is usually می دانستم (*mi-dānestam*), and you use it without می only when by 'I knew' you mean 'I realized,' as in these examples:

وگتی به آنجا می رفتم، می دانستم که ممکن است خانه نباشد
(*vaghti be ānjā mi-raftam mi-dānestam ke momken ast khāne na-bāshad*, When [I as] I was going there, I knew that he might not be home.)
همینکه صورتش را دیدم، دانستم که همه چیز را به او گفته اند
(*hamin-ke surat-ash rā didam dānestam ke hame-chiz rā be u gofte'and*, As soon as I saw his face, I knew that they had told him everything.)

Even when used in this sense, the form without *mi-* is not usually used for the negative or interrogative. There are other verbs that are much more common in Persian for the *act* of realization, a fact that contributes to making دانستم (without *mi-*) such a rare occurrence: instead of دانستم, you are much more likely to say فهمیدم (*fahmidam*) متوجه شدم (*motevaj.jeh shodam*) or, in more formal Persian, دریافتم (*dar-yāftam*). Examples:

آیا همینکه او را دیدی، فهمیدی (متوجه شدی) که آبستن است؟
(*ayā hamin-ke u rā didi fahmidi [I motevaj.jeh shodi] ke ābestan ast?*, Did you realize that she was pregnant as soon as you saw her?) – Here دانستی would sound awkward.
ولی نفهمید (متوجه نشد) که من مینا نیستم
(*surat-am rā did vali na-fahmid [I motevaj.jeh na-shod] ke man minā nistam*, He / she saw my face but did not realize that I was not Minā.) – Here ندانست would be wrong.

One thing to remember is that, in Persian, as in some other languages, there is a difference between knowing something and knowing a person (consider *wissen* and *kennen* in German, for example). دانستن is not used for *knowing a person*, where the verb شناختن (*shenākhtan*) is usually used, and again, we will witness the same difference between شناختم (*act* = 'I recognized') and می شناختم (*state* = 'I knew'), as in these examples:

برادرت را تا همین دیروز نمی شناختم
(*barādar-at rā tā hamin diruz nemi-shenākhtam*, I didn't know your brother until [just] yesterday.)
همینکه پدرت را دیدم، او را شناختم
(*hamin-ke pedar-at rā didam u rā shenākhtam*, As soon as I saw your father, I recognized him.)

'To know how to do *sth.*' is more often expressed by بلد بودن (*balad budan*) in colloquial Persian.

12.5.2 Past progressive with *dāshtan* (داشتن)

Similar to the *present progressive* (see Section 12.2.1), the verb داشتن can be used with the *past progressive* also, with almost the same functions and limitations:

- It is used predominantly in colloquial Persian.
- It makes it clear that the verb is about an action *in progress* and not what *used to be done*.
- It is used for verbs that denote an *action*, not a *state*.
- It has no negative form and is always affirmative.
- Here داشتن is an auxiliary verb with no independent meaning of its own; not to be translated as ‘to have.’

The main verb does not change here at all: it is in the past progressive and is placed at the end of the sentence. Additionally, the past tense of داشتن is conjugated for the same person (without *mi-*) and placed usually closer to the beginning of the sentence, like after the subject, if it is mentioned, or after time adverbs. Example:

داشتم برای دخترم نامه می‌نوشتم (*dāshtam barāye dokhtaram nāme mi-neveshtam*, I was writing a letter for my daughter.)

Without *dāshtam*, the above sentence could still have the same meaning (with less focus on the time of the action), but it could also mean ‘I used to write letters for my daughter.’

Mixed examples of simple past and past progressive:

نامه‌ات را خواندم (*nāme-at rā khāndam*): ‘I read your letter.’ Here the action of ‘reading’ was completed and finished.

نامه‌ات را می‌خواندم (*nāme-at rā mi-khāndam*): ‘I was reading your letter’ (maybe I finished reading it, maybe not), or ‘I used to read your letter.’

داشتم نامه‌ات را می‌خواندم (*dāshtam nāme-at rā mi-khāndam*): ‘I was reading your letter’ (at a certain time in the past: I was *in the process of* reading).

دیروز پول نداشتیم (*diruz pul nadāshitim*): ‘Yesterday we had no money.’

دیروز داشت با برادرم حرف می‌زد (*diruz dāsht bā barādaram harf mi-zad*): ‘Yesterday he / she was talking to my brother.’

12.6 Present perfect tense

All perfect tenses and constructions use the *past participle*, which is formed by adding a stressed *-e* suffix (using the silent *ه* letter in writing) to *Stem II* (see also Section 6.9 / E or Section 10.2.3.2). And perfect tenses and constructions are often about something that happens *before* a point of time (whether in the past, present or future).

The auxiliary verb used in Persian for perfect tenses and constructions is the verb ‘to be’ – for *present perfect* always the shorter, suffixed version of ‘to be.’

In the negative, the prefix *na-* is attached to the past participle (see Section 12.7 for the progressive form of this tense, where *mi-* changes to *nemi-* in negative.) This means that the auxiliary verb (‘to be’) does not change to the negative. Whenever something like this is observed, the past participle is simply an adjective used with the verb ‘to be’:

او عواقب کار را نسنجیده است (*u avāgheb-e kār rā na-sanjide ast*, He has not weighed up / has not carefully considered the consequences of the work / of doing that.) – This is *present perfect* tense with the negative *na-* attached to the past participle.

کارهای او سنجیده نیست (*kār-hā-ye u sanjide nist*, His actions are not carefully weighed / well-deliberated.) – This is simply the *present tense* of ‘to be’ (negative) + a past participle used as adjective. In this sentence, you can even use the adjective نسنجیده (*na-sanjide*, not well thought-out), which is using the *na-* prefix added to adjectives. See, however, the difference in stress in the example of نگفته (Section 6.9.1 / E), which will be the case here also.

Although the shorter, *suffixed version* of ‘to be’ should be used here, it is clear that the past participle and the verb ‘to be’ cannot be written joined because the past participle ends in silent *ه* (*hé*), standing for a final *-e* vowel, and is therefore never written joined. In this case, an *alef* is added in writing to represent the glottal stop which is needed between this final *-e* and the initial vowels of the suffixed version of ‘to be.’

In spoken Persian, است in 3Sg. of present perfect tense is always dropped, and only the past participle remains. This *can* sometimes happen in more formal, written Persian also.

Table 12.8 Present perfect tense of the verb نوشتن (*neveshtan*, to write); past participle: نوشته (*neveshte*)

Affirmative	Negative
نوشته‌ام (<i>neveshte'am</i> , I have written.)	ننوشته‌ام (<i>na-neveshte'am</i> , I have not written.)
نوشته‌ای (<i>neveshte'i</i> , You [sg.] have written.)	ننوشته‌ای (<i>na-neveshte'i</i> , You [sg.] have not written.)
نوشته [است] (<i>neveshte (ast)</i> , He / she has written.)	ننوشته [است] (<i>na-neveshte (ast)</i> , He / she has not written.)
نوشته‌ایم (<i>neveshte'im</i> , We have written.)	ننوشته‌ایم (<i>na-neveshte'im</i> , We have not written.)
نوشته‌اید (<i>neveshte'id</i> , You [pl.] have written.)	ننوشته‌اید (<i>na-neveshte'id</i> , You [pl.] have not written.)
نوشته‌اند (<i>neveshte'and</i> , They have written.)	ننوشته‌اند (<i>na-neveshte'and</i> , They have not written.)

Usage: The Persian present perfect tense has a variety of functions, not all of which correspond with those of the same tense in English; the following are the most important uses:

- (A) It is used for past actions or states whose influence and / or results are still felt and are relevant. Examples:

من این کتاب را خوانده‌ام (*man in ketāb rā khānde'am*, I have read this book.)

مینا دیروز آمده (است) (*minā diruz āmade [ast]*, Mina has come yesterday [i.e., she is still here].)

حافظ در شیراز به دنیا آمده است (*hāfez dar shirāz be donyā āmade ast*, Hāfez [poet of 14th Century] has been born [= was born] in Shirāz. [: a historical fact which is still pertinent])

In the above examples, simple past tense would only emphasize the pastness of the actions and they would become irrelevant to the present time.

- (B) With *verbs of state*: With a group of verbs that can be called *verbs of state* (because they show in what *state* the subject is), present perfect tense is used where you normally expect present progressive to be used. Four important verbs of this group are نشستن (*neshestan*, to sit); ایستادن (*istādan*, to stand); خوابیدن (*khābidan*, to sleep); and پوشیدن (*pushidan*, to wear). In these cases, the past participle is functioning as an adjective,

or is hardly distinguishable from a predicative adjective, and the main verb can be said to be the verb 'to be' in its present tense – it only *resembles* the present perfect tense in its structure. If the past participle is not used in an adjectival sense, then the verb would be about an *act* rather than a *state* and would be the normal *present perfect* similar to other verbs. Also by using some adverb of time (to show *when* this started), we come closer again to the normal *present perfect* while keeping something of the *state*. Compare the following:

بابک نشست (*bābak neshast*, Bābak sat down.)

بابک می‌نشیند (*bābak mi-neshinad*, Bābak sits down.) – Maybe every day? Or maybe this is the *act* of sitting down: right now he is changing his position from standing to sitting.

بابک نشسته است (*bābak neshaste ast*, Bābak is sitting.) – This is about his *state*: he *is* in a *seated position* now.

بابک از یک ساعت قبل اینجا نشسته است (*bābak az yek sā'at[-e] ghabl injā neshaste ast*, Bābak has been sitting here since an hour ago [= he *has been* in this *seated position* . . .].)

آذر لباس آبی می‌پوشد (*āzar lebās-e ābi mi-pushad*, Āzar is putting on a blue dress [= an *act*], or: Āzar wears a blue dress [apparently always]); but:

آذر لباس آبی پوشیده است (*āzar lebās-e ābi pushide ast*, Āzar is wearing a blue dress [= a *state*]); or:

آذر از ساعت هشت این لباس آبی را پوشیده است (*āzar az sā'at-e hasht in lebās-e ābi rā pushide ast*, Āzar has been wearing this blue dress since 8 o'clock [= she *has been* in this *state* . . .].)

Some more verbs with pairs of examples showing them as both state verbs and normal verbs:

وقتی‌که دیدم روی تخت دراز کشیده است، فکر کردم خواب است (*vaghti-ke didam ru-ye takht derāz keshide ast, fekr kardam khāb ast*, When I saw her *lying* / saw that *she was lying* on the bed, I thought she was asleep.)

در حدود نیم ساعت می‌شود که غذایش را خورده است و دراز کشیده است (*dar hodud-e nim-sā'at mi-shavad ke ghazā-yash rā khorde ast va derāz keshide ast*, It is about half an hour that she has eaten and *has lain down*.)

مینا آن دختری است که به آن درخت تکیه کرده است و دارد با دوستش حرف می‌زند (*minā ān dokhtari ast ke be ān derakht tekye karde ast va dārad bā dust-ash harf mi-zanad*, Mina is the girl [who is] *leaning against* that tree [and is] talking to her friend.)

zāherā sarsh gīj rafte (است) و به دیوار تکیه کرده (است) که نیفتد *gij rafte [ast] va be divār tekye karde ast ke nayoftad*, Apparently she has felt dizzy and has leaned against the wall in order not to fall [down].)

bebin che-tour arusak-ash rā dar āghush gerefte [ast] *va khāb-ash borde* [ast], See how she is holding her doll in her arms and has fallen asleep!)

jelow-e hame ān mard rā dar āghush gerefte [ast] *va buside ast*, She has embraced that man in front of everybody and has kissed him.)

chand sā'at bud که آنجا چمباتمه زده بود و از جایش نکان نمی خورد *ke ānjā chambātme zade bud va az jā-yash takān nemi-khord*, It was a few hours that he was squatting there and did not move / budge from his place.)

hamin-ke ānjā chambātme zade bud, ماری نیشش زده بود، As soon as he had squatted there, a snake had bitten him.)

Table 12.9 lists the most common expressions for putting on, taking off and wearing, as state verbs and as normal verbs.

Table 12.9 Putting on, taking off

Article	To put on	To be wearing	To take off
General (excluding head, hands, feet), e.g., <i>clothes, shirt, jacket, pullover, suit, skirt, etc.</i>	I am putting on a shirt: پیراهن می پوشم (<i>pirāhan mi-pusham</i>) پیراهن تنم می کنم (<i>col.: pirāhan tan-am mi-konam</i>) پیراهن به تن می کنم (<i>form.: pirāhan be tan mi-konam</i>)	I am wearing a shirt: پیراهن پوشیده ام (<i>pirāhan pushide'am</i>) پیراهن دارم پیراهن تنم است (<i>col.: pirāhan tan-am ast</i>) پیراهن به تن دارم (<i>form.: pirāhan be tan dāram</i>)	I am taking off my shirt: پیراهنم را در می آورم (<i>col.: pirāhan-am rā dar mi-āvaram</i>) پیراهنم را از تن بیرون می آورم (<i>form.: pirāhan-am rā az tan birun mi-āvaram</i>)
Hat	I am putting on a hat: کلاه سرم می گذارم (<i>col.: kolāh sar-am mi-gozāram</i>) کلاه به / بر سر می گذارم (<i>form.: kolāh be / bar sar mi-gozāram</i>)	I am wearing a hat: کلاه دارم (<i>kolāh dāram</i>) کلاه سرم است (<i>col.: kolāh sar-am ast</i>) کلاه بر سر دارم (<i>form.: kolāh bar sar dāram</i>)	I am taking off my hat: کلاهم را برمی دارم (<i>col.: kolāh-am rā bar-mi-dāram</i>) کلاه از سر برمی دارم (<i>form.: kolāh az sar bar-mi-dāram</i>)

(Continued)

Table 12.9 (Continued)

Article	To put on	To be wearing	To take off
Glasses	I am putting on my glasses: عینک می‌زنم (<i>eynak mi-zanam</i>) عینک (به) چشمم می‌گذارم (<i>col.: eynak [be] cheshm-am mi-gozāram</i>) عینک به / بر چشمم می‌گذارم (<i>form.: eynak be / bar cheshm mi-gozāram</i>)	I am wearing glasses: عینک دارم (<i>eynak dāram</i>) عینک زده‌ام (<i>eynak zade'am</i>) عینک چشمم است (<i>col.: eynak cheshm-am ast</i>) عینک به / بر چشم دارم (<i>form.: eynak be / bar cheshm dāram</i>)	I am taking off my glasses: عینکم را (از چشمم) برمی‌دارم (<i>col.: eynak-am rā [az cheshm-am] bar-mi-dāram</i>) عینک از چشمم برمی‌دارم (<i>form.: eynak az cheshm bar-mi-dāram</i>)
Gloves	I am putting on my gloves: دستکش دستم می‌کنم (<i>col.: dastkesh dast-am mi-konam</i>) دستکش به دستم می‌کنم (<i>form.: dastkesh be dast mi-konam</i>)	I am wearing gloves: دستکش دارم (<i>dastkesh dāram</i>) دستکش دستم است (<i>col.: dastkesh dast-am ast</i>) دستکش به دست دارم (<i>form.: dastkesh be dast dāram</i>)	I am taking off my gloves: دستکشم را درمی‌آورم (<i>dastkesh-am rā dar-mi-āvaram</i>)
Pants, shoes and socks (example given for pants only)	I am putting on my pants: شلوارم را می‌پوشم (<i>shalvār-am rā mi-pusham</i>) شلوار پایم می‌کنم (<i>col.: shalvār pā-yam mi-konam</i>) شلوار به پا می‌کنم (<i>form.: shalvār be pā mi-konam</i>)	I am wearing pants: شلوار دارم (<i>shalvār dāram</i>) شلوار پوشیده‌ام (<i>shalvār pushide'am</i>) شلوار پایم است (<i>col.: shalvār pā-yam ast</i>) شلوار به پا دارم (<i>form.: shalvār be pā dāram</i>)	I am taking off my pants: شلوارم را درمی‌آورم (<i>col.: shalvār-am rā dar-mi-āvaram</i>) شلوار از پا درمی‌آورم (<i>form.: shalvār az pā dar-mi-āvaram</i>)
Walking stick	I take my walking stick in the hand: عصایم را دستم می‌گیرم (<i>col.: asā-yam rā dast-am mi-giram</i>) عصا به / در دستم می‌گیرم (<i>form.: asā be / dar dast mi-giram</i>)	I have my walking stick in the hand: عصا دستم است (<i>col.: asā dast-am ast</i>) عصا به / در دست دارم (<i>form.: asā be / dar dast dāram</i>)	

(C) Since the *future perfect tense* is not common in Persian, the *present perfect* can be used instead of it whenever needed, usually with prepositions like تا (*tā*, until) or قبل از (*ghabl az*, before):

من فردا قبل از رسیدن بابک این نامه را نوشته‌ام (*man fardā ghabl az residan-e bābak in nāme rā neveshte'am*, I [will] have written this letter tomorrow before Bābak's arrival.)

- (D) This tense was traditionally known in Persian grammar as ماضی نقلی (*māzi-ye naghli*, narrative past) because of its usage when narrating some past event with some distance as something one just heard, but this usage of present perfect will be discussed in more detail under *indirect* or *reported* speech (see Section 13.17).

More examples:

من تا به حال ایران را ندیده‌ام (*man tā be hāl irān rā na-dide'am*, Until now I have not seen Iran.)

آیا این کتاب را خوانده‌اید؟ (*āyā in ketāb rā khānde'id?*, Have you read this book?)

ما خبری نداشته‌ایم از او دو سال قبل (*az do sāl[-e] ghabl az u khabari na-dāshte'im*, We have had no news / have not heard from him since two years ago.)

امروز پنجره‌ها را تمیز کرده‌اند (*emruz panjare-hā rā tamiz karde'and*, They've cleaned the windows today.)

او همیشه چای بیشتر از قهوه دوست داشته است (*u hamishe chāy bishtar az ghahve dust dāshte ast*, He / she has always liked tea more than coffee.)

12.7 Present perfect progressive tense

This tense is simply formed by adding the prefix *mi-* (or *nemi-* in negative) to the past participle in the *present perfect tense* (Section 12.6). It usually emphasizes the continuation of the action from sometime in the past until present; normally a period of time is mentioned or a frequency adverb is used.

When used in this tense, the 'verbs of state' mentioned in Section 12.6 are treated in the same way as other verbs.

بودن (*budan*, to be) and داشتن (*dāshtan*, to have) are usually not used in this tense.

Examples:

ما قبل از آمدن شما کتاب می‌خوانده‌ایم (*tā ghabl az āmadan-e shomā ketāb mi-khānde'im*, We have been reading books [until] before your coming / before you came.)

او همیشه بیشتر از برادرش غذا می‌خورده است (*u hamishe bishtar az barādarash ghazā mi-khorde ast*, He has always eaten / been eating more than his brother.)

آنها معمولاً در این اتاق می‌خوابیده‌اند (*ānhā ma'mulan dar in otāgh mi-khābide'and*, They have usually been sleeping in this room.)

12.8 Past perfect tense

The past perfect tense is like the present perfect tense; it only uses the past tense of the verb 'to be' as auxiliary instead of its present tense.

It is used for actions that happened before other past actions in the past or before a point of time in the past.

For 'verbs of state' (see Section 12.6 / Usage Note B), the past perfect tense serves as past progressive – or it is the simple past tense of 'to be' + past participle used as adjective.

The *past perfect tense* is one of the two tenses (the other being *past progressive*) used in irrealis or counterfactual situations; for a detailed discussion with examples, see *conditionals* and *wishes* (Sections 13.2.2 and 13.3).

Understandably, the verb بودن – used as auxiliary here – has no *past perfect* itself (i.e., there is no بوده بودم, etc.), and the simple past tense is used instead.

Examples:

من قبل از شما آن کتاب را خوانده بودم (*man ghabl az shomā ān ketāb rā khānde budam*, I had read that book before you.)
آذر هرگز به آنجا نرفته بود (*āzar hargez be ānjā na-rafte bud*, Āzar had never gone there.)

12.9 Past perfect progressive tense

This tense is theoretically possible (by adding *mi-* to past perfect), but it is hardly ever used in Persian: usually *past progressive* or *past perfect* is used instead.

12.10 Imperative

Imperative, which is used for commands and requests, has a singular and a plural form in Persian (2Sg. and 2Pl.). But even when addressing a single

person, the plural is often used to be more polite, whereas the singular is used for closer relations.

To form the imperative, the *Stem I* is required. The singular imperative has no conjugational ending, but the imperative for *2Pl.* uses the same *ید* (-*id*) ending common for all tenses.

When affirmative, the imperative needs the prefix *ب* (*be-*), always written joined. If the *Stem I* of the verb starts with the vowels *a*, *o* or *ā*, the glide *ی* (-*y*-) would be required, and the pronunciation changes from *be-* to *bi-*. In writing, in stems starting with *آ* (*ā*) the diacritical sign (called *madd*) will no longer be written on top of *alef*; if they start with *a-* or *o-*, both represented by *alef*, good Persian requires that the *alef* be dropped altogether, although not everyone follows this recommendation.

Two notes about changes in pronunciation:

- In the case of verbs like *فتن*, whose present stem ends in *-ow*, the *-ow* does not change in the *singular* imperative, but it does change to *-av-* in the plural imperative, as it does change for all persons in present tense also (see Section 12.2). Similarly, in a few verbs like *دادن* there will be a vowel change from singular to plural imperative (again similar to present tense).
- In a few cases the vowel in *be-* is influenced by the first vowel in present stem and changes to that, especially in singular. Also, sometimes the first vowel in stem *may* be dropped in the case of some very common verbs to make the word shorter, as is the case with the verb *گذاشتن* (*gozāsh-tan*, to put).

The negative: In the negative, the imperative verb (or the verb part in compounds) is invariably preceded by the negative *na-* (replacing the *be-* prefix, which is then dropped); is invariably pronounced *na-* (even before the *-y*-glide); and is always written joined.

12.10.1 Compound verbs and the imperative

In compounds the *be-* prefix, or the *na-* in the negative, is added to the verb part – which means that they always come between the two parts of the compound verb:

حرف *زدن* (*harf zadan*, ‘to talk’ – present stem *زن*, *zan*):
 حرف *بزن*! / حرف *نزن*!
 حرف *بزنید*! / حرف *نزنید*!

Table 12.10 Present tense and imperative, some examples

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present stem</i>	<i>Present tense (2nd person only)</i>	<i>Imperative</i>
خوردن (<i>khordan</i> , 'to eat')	خور (<i>khor</i>)	می خوری (<i>mi-khori</i>) می خورید (<i>mi-khorid</i>) 'You eat' (sg. & pl.)	بخور! (<i>bekhor</i>) بخورید! (<i>bekhorid</i>) 'Eat!' (sg. & pl.)
بردن (<i>bordan</i> , 'to take (away)')	بر (<i>bar</i>)	می بری (<i>mi-bari</i>) می برید (<i>mi-barid</i>) 'You take' (sg. & pl.)	بر! (<i>bebar</i>) برید! (<i>bebarid</i>) 'Take!' (sg. & pl.)
گفتن (<i>goftan</i> , 'to say')	گو (<i>gu</i>)	می گوئی (<i>mi-gu'i</i>) می گوئید (<i>mi-gu'id</i>) 'You say' (sg. & pl.)	بگو! (<i>begu</i>) بگوئید! (<i>begu'id</i>) 'Say!' (sg. & pl.)
رفتن (<i>raftan</i> , 'to go')	رو (<i>row / → rav</i>)	می روی (<i>mi-ravi</i>) می روید (<i>mi-ravid</i>) 'You go' (sg. & pl.)	برو! (<i>borow</i>) بروید! (<i>beravid</i>) 'Go!' (sg. & pl.)
دادن (<i>dādan</i> , 'to give')	ده (<i>deh / → dah</i>)	می دهی (<i>mi-dahi</i>) می دهید (<i>mi-dahid</i>) 'You give' (sg. & pl.)	بده! (<i>bedeh</i>) بدهید! (<i>bedahid</i>) 'Give!' (sg. & pl.)
گذاشتن (<i>gozāshstan</i> , 'to put')	گذار (<i>gozār</i>)	می گذاری (<i>mi-gozāri</i>) می گذارید (<i>mi-gozārid</i>) 'You put' (sg. & pl.)	بگذار! (<i>begozār</i> or <i>bogzār</i>) بگذارید! (<i>begozārid</i> or <i>bogzārid</i>) 'Put!' (sg. & pl.)
آمدن (<i>āmadan</i> , 'to come')	آ (<i>ā</i>)	می آئی (<i>mi-ā'i</i>) می آید (<i>mi-ā'id</i>) 'You come' (sg. & pl.)	بیا! (<i>biyā</i>) بیاید! (<i>biyā'id</i>) 'Come!' (sg. & pl.)
افتادن (<i>oftādan</i> , 'to fall')	افت (<i>oft</i>)	می افتی (<i>mi-ofiti</i>) می افتید (<i>mi-oftid</i>) 'You fall' (sg. & pl.)	بیفت! (<i>biyoft</i>) بیفتید! (<i>biyoftid</i>) 'Fall!' (sg. & pl.)
ایستادن (<i>istādan</i> , 'to stop / stand up')	ایست (<i>ist</i>)	می ایستی (<i>mi-isti</i>) می ایستید (<i>mi-istid</i>) 'You stop' (sg. & pl.)	بایست! (<i>be'ist</i>) بایستید! (<i>be'istid</i>) 'Stop!' (sg. & pl.)

Dropping the be-prefix in most of the compounds:

The majority of verbs in contemporary Persian are compound verbs, and the absolute majority of these compound verbs are formed by using either کردن (*kardan*, to do) or شدن (*shodan*, to become) – and in compounds with these two verbs, the *be*-prefix is usually dropped.

Also, in all of the compound verbs whose first part is a prefix (like a preposition, not a noun or adjective), the *be*-prefix is dropped.

Table 12.11 Imperative with no *be*-prefix

Infinitive	Present stem	Imperative	
		Singular	Plural
برگشتن (<i>bargashtan</i> , to return)	برگرد (<i>bargard</i>)	برگرد! (<i>bargard</i> , Return!)	برگردید! (<i>bargardid</i> , Return!)
تمیز کردن (<i>tamiz kardan</i> , to clean)	تمیز کن (<i>tamiz kon</i>)	تمیز کن! (<i>tamiz kon</i> , Clean!)	تمیز کنید! (<i>tamiz konid</i> , Clean!)
بیدار شدن (<i>bidār shodan</i> , to wake up)	بیدار شو (<i>bidār show / → shav</i>)	بیدار شو! (<i>bidār show</i> , Wake up!)	بیدار شوید! (<i>bidār shavid</i> , Wake up!)

And, as one can see, not much is really left. That is why the *singular imperative* is often nothing but the *present stem*.

For the imperative of ‘to be’ and ‘to have,’ see also Sections 11.8.3 and 11.9 respectively.

‘To be’ uses *Stem I* باش (*bāsh*) without adding the *be*-prefix:

!باشید / باش اینجا ساعت چهار اینجا باش! / *bāshid!*, Be here at 4 o’clock!)

!باشید! / نباشید! / زیاد مطمئن نباش! / *ziyād motma’en na-bāsh!* / *na-bāshid!*, Don’t be so sure!)

‘To have,’ with the exception of a few ‘less irregular’ compound verbs formed by it, uses the perfect form داشته باش (*dāshte bāsh*).

Less irregular:

!دار ماشین را نگه دار! (*māshin rā negah-dār!*, Stop the car!)

!آن را بر ندار! (*ān rā bar-na-dār!*, Don’t take / pick up that!)

More irregular:

!پول با خودت داشته باش! (*hamishe kami pul bā khodat dāshte bāsh!*, Always have some money with you!)

!به او اعتماد نداشته باش! (*be u e’temād na-dāshte bāsh!*, Don’t trust him!)

12.10.2 Remnants of archaic or obsolete features

The negative prefix for imperative used to be *ma-* instead of *na-* (still common in some dialects), for instance مگو (*ma-gu*, Don't say) instead of نگو (*na-gu*). This has changed in standard contemporary Persian but can still be seen in poetry, even contemporary poetry.

Another feature, now to be found only in traditional poetry, is the use of what can be called the *progressive* or *continuous imperative*, used for singular only and with the purpose of emphasizing continuation. This form uses the prefix *mi-* instead of *be-*: می‌رو (*mi-row*, Go!) instead of برو (*boro[w]*) or می‌باش (*mi-bāsh*, Be!) instead of just باش (*bāsh*).

12.11 The subjunctive

Traditionally, grammarians have referred to *present* and *past* subjunctives in Persian. This book prefers to refer to these as *simple* and *perfect* subjunctives and adds a third version also (*perfect subjunctive II*).

12.11.1 Simple (or present) subjunctive

In formation, the simple subjunctive shares the *Stem I + conjugational endings* with simple present tense, while it shares the *be-* prefix (instead of *mi-*) with the imperative. And this *be-* prefix is in every respect similar to that covered above under the *imperative*: in writing and pronunciation, the glide *-y-* that is sometimes needed, where it *can* or *must* usually be dropped (in compound verbs), and so on. Similar also in the case of the verbs 'to be' and 'to have.'

In the negative, the *be-* prefix is replaced by the stressed negative *na-* prefix.

If you conjugate a verb in the subjunctive, you will see that in *2Pl.* the subjunctive and the imperative are identical. See Table 12.2 for a comparison.

As in the imperative, the *be-* prefix (or *na-* for the negative) would require the glide *ی* (*-y-*) if the *Stem I* starts with the vowels *ā-*, *a-* or *o-* (all represented in writing by the letter *alef*), and the pronunciation of *be-* would then change in these cases to *bi-*. And again, in the case of the vowels *a-* and *o-*, 'good

Table 12.12 The verb خواندن (*khāndan*, to read / sing) – from present tense and imperative to the subjunctive

Present tense	Imperative	Subjunctive
می خوانم (<i>mi-khānam</i>) I read		بخوانم (<i>be-khānam</i>)
نمی خوانم (<i>nemi-khānam</i>) I don't read		نخوانم (<i>na-khānam</i>)
می خوانی (<i>mi-khāni</i>) you (sg.) read	! بخوان (<i>be-khān</i>) Read! (sg.)	بخوانی (<i>be-khāni</i>)
نمی خوانی (<i>nemi-khāni</i>) You don't read	! نخوان (<i>na-khān</i>) Don't read! (sg.)	نخوانی (<i>na-khāni</i>)
می خواند (<i>mi-khānad</i>) he reads		بخواند (<i>be-khānad</i>)
نمی خواند (<i>nemi-khānad</i>) he doesn't read		نخواند (<i>na-khānad</i>)
می خوانیم (<i>mi-khānim</i>) we read		بخوانیم (<i>be-khānim</i>)
نمی خوانیم (<i>nemi-khānim</i>) we don't read		نخوانیم (<i>na-khānim</i>)
می خوانید (<i>mi-khānid</i>) you (pl.) read	! بخوانید (<i>be-khānid</i>) Read! (pl.)	بخوانید (<i>be-khānid</i>)
نمی خوانید (<i>nemi-khānid</i>) you don't read	! نخوانید (<i>na-khānid</i>) Don't read! (pl.)	نخوانید (<i>na-khānid</i>)
می خوانند (<i>mi-khānand</i>) they read		بخوانند (<i>be-khānand</i>)
نمی خوانند (<i>nemi-khānand</i>) they don't read		نخوانند (<i>na-khānand</i>)

Persian' requires that the initial letter *alef* be dropped in writing when the glide is added, and the *madd* sign on *alef* is dropped in the case of *ā*:

می افتد (*mi-oftad*, He / she / it falls.) → شاید بیفتد (*shāyad biyoftad*, He / she / it may fall.)

آن را می اندازد (*ān rā mi-andāzad*, He throws / drops it.) → شاید آن را بیندازد (*shāyad ān rā biyandāzad*, He may throw / drop it.)

آن را می آورد (*ān rā mi-āvarad*, He brings it.) → شاید آن را بیاورد (*shāyad ān rā biyāvarad*, He may bring it.)

In compound verbs, the affirmative *be-* and the negative *na-*prefixes are added to the verbal part. Examples:

شاید حرف بزند (*shāyad harf be-zanad*, He may talk.)

شاید فریب نخورد (*shāyad farib na-khorad*, Maybe he won't be tricked.)

For the simple subjunctive, the verb 'to be' uses باش (*bāsh*), as it does for the imperative (see Section 11.8.3), and then adds the conjugational suffixes:

شما باید خواهر مهناز باشید (*shomā bāyad kbāhar-e mahnāz bāshid*, You must be Mahnāz's sister.)
کتابها شاید در اتاق من باشند (*ketāb-hā shāyad dar otāgh-e man bāshand*, The books may be in my room.)

The verb 'to have,' on the other hand, and its two versions (see Section 11.9) needs more attention. In some of its compounds – those that use the *mi*-prefix for present tense and are 'less irregular' – it is treated like other verbs:

میتوانم این را تا شنبه نگه دارم؟ (*mi-tavānam in rā tā shanbe negah-dāram?*, Can I keep this until Saturday?)
باید پایت را از روی میز برداری (*bāyad pāyat rā az ru-ye miz bar-dāri*, You must take your feet off the table.)

In all other cases, whether used alone or as part of compound verbs that retain something of the base meaning, it uses perfect subjunctive (see Section 12.11.2) instead of simple subjunctive:

امیدوارم امروز کمی وقت داشته باشید (*omidvāram emruz kami vaght dāshte bāshid*, I hope you will have a little time today.)
ممکن است این سفر هیچ نتیجه‌ای نداشته باشد (*momken ast in safar hich natije'i na-dāshte bāshad*, It is possible that this trip won't have any results.)

The subjunctive is much more common in Persian than one expects it to be. The reason is that in Persian the subjunctive most of the times is doing what in English normally the *infinitive* does when used as dependent or 'second' verb – whereas the Persian infinitive itself is functioning more like the English *gerund*. Compare:

- (a) Persian subjunctive = English infinitive:
می‌خواهم بروم (*mi-khāham be-ravam*, I want to go.)
(b) Persian infinitive = English gerund:
رفتن آسان نیست (*raftan āsān nist*, Going / leaving is not easy.)

When used independently, usually some unstated modal verb (like *must*, *should*, *might*, *let's* . . .) is understood. Examples:

برویم خرید! (*be-ravim kharid!*, Let's go shopping!)
به مادرش چیزی نگوید! (*be mādar-ash chizi na-guyad!*, He shouldn't tell his mother anything!)
چند بار بگویم؟ (*chand-bār be-guyam?*, How many times should I say?)

When used for the 2Sg., it is stronger than the imperative and can imply some warning also. (2Pl., as mentioned earlier, has the same form as the imperative.) Compare:

Imperative: آن نامه را بنویس! (*ān nāme rā be-nevis!*, Write that letter!)

Subjunctive: آن نامه را بنویسی! (*ān nāme rā be-nevisi!*, Don't forget to write / make sure that you write that letter!)

When used as a dependent second verb, the first verb is either a modal verb or one expressing a wish, command, possibility, purpose ('in order to') and the like. Or it is used simply when the action described by the second verb happens (or is / was supposed to happen) after that of the first verb.

A comparison with English will show again that the Persian subjunctive in this case functions very much like the English infinitive used as the second verb. One can compare 'remember to do something' with 'remember doing something' in English. When you 'remember to do' something, you first *remember* and then *do* something. But when you 'remember doing' something, you first *did* something and then you *remember* it. It is exactly the same in Persian:

به یاد آوردم که نامه را بنویسم (*be yād āvardam ke nāme rā be-nevisam*, I remembered to write the letter.)

نوشتن نامه را به یاد آوردم (*neveshtan-e nāme rā be yād āvardam*, I remembered writing the letter.)

Similar to the English infinitive, the subjunctive is not affected by the tense of the verb that it complements:

می خواهم بروم (*mi-khāham beravam*, I want to go.)

می خواستم بروم (*mi-khāstam beravam*, I wanted to go.)

For expressing *purpose* ('in order to'), it is possible to simply use the subjunctive without any conjunction (again like the infinitive in English):

رفتم مینا را ببینم (*raftam minā rā be-binam*, I went to see Mina.)

Or conjunctions can be used, the most common of which (to convey *purpose*) are تا (*tā*), که (*ke*) and برای اینکه (*barāye in-ke*) or a variety of other compound conjunctions [به این منظور که] (*be in manzur ke*) or به منظور آن که (*be manzur-e*

ān-ke], به این قصد که [*be in ghasd ke*] or که به قصد آن که [*be ghasd-e ān-ke*],
با این هدف که [*bā in hadaf ke*], به این نیت که / با [*bā / be in niyyat ke*], etc.).
Examples:

رفتیم که مینا را ببینیم (*raftam ke minā rā be-binam*, I went to see Mina.)
سرخیز باش تا کامروا باشی (*sahar-khiz bāsh tā kām-ravā bāshi*, Be an
early riser in order to be happy in life [a proverb].)
کمی نشستیم برای اینکه استراحت کنیم (*kami neshastim barāye in-ke
esterāhat konim*, We sat for a little while in order to rest.)

Note: برای اینکه is sometimes used in the sense of 'for the reason that' (or
'because,' like چون [*chon*] and زیرا [*zirā*]), and in that case, it would not
require the subjunctive:

نرفتم، برای اینکه هوا سرد بود (*na-raftam, barāye in-ke havā sard bud*, I did
not go, because it was cold.)

Examples with modals and other verbs:

باید صبر کنید (*bāyad sabr konid*, You have to wait.)
می‌توانیم برویم (*mi-tavānim be-ravim*, We can go.)
می‌خواهید بدانید؟ (*mi-khāhid be-dānid?*, Do you want to know?)
تصمیم گرفتم او را ببینم (*tasmim gereftam u rā be-binam*, I decided to see
him.)
به او بگوئید کمی دیرتر بیاید (*be u be-gu'id kami dir-tar biyāyad*, Tell him
to come a little later.)
سعی کنید آن را باز کنید (*sa'y konid ān rā bāz konid*, Try to open it.)

For the negative, some of the modals or ordinary verbs, followed by the sub-
junctive, allow you to change either the first verb into negative or the second
verb or occasionally (if needed) both. See here the different options for the
negative and how meaning changes in each:

به من گفت بروم (*be man goft be-ravam*, He told me to go.)
به من نگفت بروم (*be man na-goft be-ravam*, He didn't tell me to go.)
به من گفت نروم (*be man goft na-ravam*, He told me not to go.)
به من نگفت نروم (*be man na-goft na-ravam*, He didn't tell me not to go.)
می‌توانم ببینم (*mi-tavānam be-binam*, I can see.)
نمی‌توانم ببینم (*nemi-tavānam be-binam*, I cannot see.)

می‌توانم نبینم (*mi-tavānam na-binam*, I can *not* see = I also have the option of *not* seeing.)
نمی‌توانم نبینم (*nemi-tavānam na-binam*, I cannot *not* see = I cannot help seeing; I have to see.)

There are, of course, certain conjunctions and structures also that would require the subjunctive. These include conjunctions in either time clauses or other kinds of subordinate clauses that express some objective, suggestion or possibility. See the next chapter for more details and examples (Sections 13.11 and 13.12).

On the whole, it can be said that uncertainty can be a decisive factor in using the subjunctive. With some verbs and expressions, affirmative and negative forms differ in using or not using the subjunctive because a change from certainty to uncertainty (and vice versa) is involved. Compare the following:

i No need for subjunctive when there is no doubt:

اطمینان دارم که او اینجا نیست (*etminān dāram ke u injā nist*, I'm certain that he's not here.)
شک ندارم که او اینجا است (*shak na-dāram ke u injā ast*, I have no doubt that he's here.)

ii Subjunctive needed because of doubt and uncertainty:

اطمینان ندارم که او اینجا باشد (*etminān na-dāram ke u injā bāshad*, I'm not sure if he's here.)
شک دارم که او اینجا باشد (*shak dāram ke u injā bāshad*, I doubt if he's here.)

Some verbs like فکر کردن (*fekr kardan*, to think); تصور کردن (*tasav.vor kardan*, to imagine); and به نظر رسیدن (*be nazar residan*, to seem) often need subjunctive when negative (not with negative imperative, though!), but subjunctive can be used with their affirmative also to decrease likelihood:

فکر نمی‌کنم که بیاید (*fekr nemi-konam ke biyāyad*, I don't think that he comes.)
فکر می‌کنم که بیاید (*fekr mi-konam ke biyāyad*, I think that he probably comes.)
فکر می‌کنم که می‌آید (*fekr mi-konam ke mi-āyad*, I think he's coming.)
فکر نکن که او حتماً می‌آید! (*fekr na-kon ke u hatman mi-āyad!*, Don't be so sure that he comes!) – Here with negative imperative, it is no more

some uncertainty about *what is going to happen*: it is about what someone is thinking *now*.

حدس زدن (*hads zadan*, to guess) is rarely used in negative, and in affirmative, it is similar to the previous group, with subjunctive making it less likely and referring more to what will happen in future:

حدس می‌زنم که نامه شما را بخواند (*hads mi-zanam ke nāme-ye shomā rā be-khānad*, I guess he will read your letter.)

حدس می‌زنم که نامه شما را می‌خواند (*hads mi-zanam ke nāme-ye shomā rā mi-khānad*, I guess / think that he reads / is reading your letter.)

حدس می‌زدم که بیاید (*hads mi-zadam ke biyāyad*, I guessed that he would come.)

حدس می‌زدم که می‌آید (*hads mi-zadam ke mi-āyad*, I guessed / knew that he would come.)

Some other verbs, however, always need subjunctive: ممکن بودن / امکان داشتن (*momken budan / emkān dāshtan*, to be possible); احتمال داشتن (*ehtemāl dāshtan*, to be likely); and all the verbs that have to do with hope (امیدوار بودن, *omidvār budan*), with wish (آرزو داشتن, *ārezu dāshtan*) or with trying, deciding, suggesting, encouraging and the like:

ممکن نیست که بداند / ممکن است (*momken nist ke be-dānad*, It is possible / not possible that he knows.)

امیدوارم / امیدوار نیستم که بیاید (*omidvāram /omidvār nistam ke biyāyad*, I hope / do not hope that he comes.)

سعی نکرد که بنویسد / سعی کرد (*sa'y kard / sa'y na-kard ke be-nevisad*, He tried / did not try to write.)

پیشنهاد کردم او را استخدام کنند (*pishnahād kardam u rā estekhdām konand*, I suggested that they hire him.)

او را تشویق کنید که برگردد (*u rā tashvigh konid ke bar-gardad*, Encourage him to return.)

Note that with شاید (*shāyad*, perhaps, maybe [originally a modal]) the use of subjunctive is optional, depending on the degree of uncertainty. Compare:

شاید بیاید (*shāyad biyāyad*, He may come.) – We are speculating. No certainty.

شاید می‌آید (*shāyad mi-āyad*, Maybe he's coming.) – There has been some hint or indication to this effect: we are imagining him coming, as some fact, or he may be on his way right now.

12.11.2 The perfect (or past) subjunctive, I and II

Similar to the formation of other ‘perfect’ constructions in Persian, the perfect subjunctive (type I) is formed by the past participle of the verb + the verb ‘to be’ as auxiliary, this time in its subjunctive form.

For negative, add *na-* to the main verb (= to the *past participle*).

As in perfect tenses, stress is on the final *-e* of past participle, except in negative, where *na-* will take the stress.

As it was the case with the simple subjunctive, here also the perfect subjunctive is not affected by the tense of the verb that it complements.

The perfect subjunctive is often used to show uncertainty, for things that may or may not have happened (in the past or by a certain point of time in the future). Table 12.13 compares the simple and perfect (I) subjunctives and, as can be seen, the perfect version can sometimes be translated into English as present perfect or past perfect.

Table 12.13 The two subjunctives: a comparison of usage

<i>Simple subjunctive</i>	<i>Perfect subjunctive (I)</i>
فکر نمی‌کنم بیاید (<i>fekr nemi-konam biyāyad</i>) I don't think he comes.	فکر نمی‌کنم آمده باشد (<i>fekr nemi-konam āmade bāshad</i>) I don't think he has come.
فکر نمی‌کردم بیاید (<i>fekr nemi-kardam biyāyad</i>) I didn't think he would come.	فکر نمی‌کردم آمده باشد (<i>fekr nemi-kardam āmade bāshad</i>) I didn't think he had come.
می‌تواند بیاید (<i>mi-tavānad biyāyad</i>) He can come.	می‌تواند آمده باشد (<i>mi-tavānad āmade bāshad</i>) He can have come.
می‌توانست بیاید (<i>mi-tavānest biyāyad</i>) He could come.	می‌توانست آمده باشد (<i>mi-tavānest āmade bāshad</i>) He could have come.
شاید بیاید (<i>shāyad biyāyad</i>) He may come.	شاید آمده باشد (<i>shāyad āmade bāshad</i>) He may have come.
شاید نیاید (<i>shāyad na-yāyad</i>) Maybe he won't come.	شاید نیامده باشد (<i>shāyad na-yāmade bāshad</i>) Maybe he hasn't come.
باید بیاید (<i>bāyad biyāyad</i>) He must come.	باید آمده باشد (<i>bāyad āmade bāshad</i>) He must have come.

The perfect subjunctive of ‘to be’ (بودن, *budan*) – using the past participle of ‘to be’ followed by the subjunctive of the same verb – sounds a little awkward in Persian and is rarely used unless necessary in more pedantic style: بوده باشم (*bude bāsham*, 1Sg.), بوده باشی (*bude bāshi*, 2Sg.), بوده باشد (*bude bāshad*, 3Sg.), بوده باشیم (*bude bāshim*, 1Pl.), بوده باشید (*bude bāshid*, 2Pl.), بوده باشند (*bude bāshand*, 3Pl.). Example of usage:

شاید درست بوده باشد (*shāyad dorost bude bāshad*, It may have been correct.)

آنها ممکن نیست آنجا بوده باشند (*ānhā momken nist ānjā bude bāshand*, They can’t possibly have been / It is not possible that they have been there.)

As mentioned above (Section 12.11.1) as well as in the previous chapter (Section 11.9), the verb ‘to have’ (داشتن, *dāshtan*) can be said to have a ‘less irregular’ version (where some compound verbs formed by it are using the prefix *mi-* for present tense like other verbs) and a ‘more irregular’ version (that includes ‘to have’ itself as a simple verb and most of the compounds formed by it). The former version is treated in perfect subjunctive like the other verbs, whereas the latter version, which is already using *perfect subjunctive I* where other verbs use simple subjunctive, would have to resort here to *perfect subjunctive II* – a construction usually avoided in contemporary Persian and considered pedantic and awkward.

‘Less irregular’ داشتن using perfect subjunctive I:

شاید مادرش آن را نگه داشته باشد (*shāyad mādar-ash ān rā negah dāshte bāshad*, His mother may have kept it.)

ممکن است پول را از حسابش برنداشته باشد (*momken ast pul rā az hesāb-ash bar-na-dāshte bāshad*, He may not have taken / withdrawn the money from his account.)

‘More irregular’ داشتن using perfect subjunctive II instead of perfect subjunctive I:

ممکن است از لغو برنامه خبر نداشته باشد (*momken ast az laghv-e barnāme khabar na-dāshte bude bāshad*, He may not have known [lit.

‘have had the news’] about the cancelation of the program.)

باید خیلی به او اعتماد داشته باشد (*bāyad kheyli be u e'temād dāshte bude bāshad*, He must have had a lot of trust in her / must have trusted her a lot.)

To avoid using this unloved construction, the last example can simply be changed to a form that uses present perfect tense:

حتماً خیلی به او اعتماد داشته است (*hatman kheyli be u e'temād dāshte ast*,
He has certainly had a lot of trust in her / has certainly trusted her a lot.)

English-Persian comparisons. It was mentioned earlier that the Persian *subjunctive*, especially when used as the second verb, functions very much like the English *infinitive*. One would expect then to see the same similarity between the Persian *perfect subjunctive* and the English *perfect infinitive*. There is enough evidence to support this comparison, as several of the above examples clearly demonstrate (especially with modal verbs; see the Persian equivalents of ‘must’ and ‘must have’ in Table 12.13). Nevertheless, there are more cases that this equation does not answer, and the translation of the Persian *perfect subjunctive* would preferably be the *present perfect* (occasionally *past perfect*) tense in English. On the other hand, there are cases where the English *perfect infinitive* equals the *present perfect tense* in Persian, especially where Persian treats certain structures as indirect speech. An example for this:

English: He pretended to have read that book.

Persian: وانمود می کرد که آن کتاب را خوانده است (*vā-nomud mi-kard ke ān ketāb rā khānde ast*) – In Persian treated as *indirect speech* (see Section 13.17), and no subjunctive is used.

It's also good to note the difference between ‘to have done something’ and ‘to have something done,’ which are two totally different things in both languages. While the first one comes close to the Persian *perfect subjunctive*, the latter usually is expressed by the verb دادن (*dādan*, to give) in Persian, followed by either the subjunctive or past tense:

تمام پنجره ها را داد تمیز کردند (*tamām-e panjare-hā rā dād tamiz kardand*,
He had all the windows cleaned.)

این دو جفت کفش را هم باید بدهم واکس بزنند (*in do joft kafsh rā ham bāyad be-daham vāks be-zanand*, I must also have these two pairs of shoes polished.)

(See Section 12.13.1 / B also for more on ‘to have something done.’)

Perfect subjunctive II: As the above examples with the ‘more irregular’ version of داشتن show, this type of *perfect subjunctive* differs from *type I* in

that, after the past participle of the verb, it uses the perfect subjunctive of the auxiliary بودن and not its simple subjunctive, thus adding a بوده between the past participle of the main verb and the subjunctive of بودن. Example:

باید مادرش را خیلی دوست داشته بوده باشد (*bāyad mādar-ash rā kheyli dust dāshhte bude bāshad*, She must have liked her mother a lot.)

Here also, the above sentence would sound much better when said in the following way:

حتماً مادرش را خیلی دوست داشته است (*hatman mādar-ash rā kheyli dust dāshhte ast*, Certainly she has liked her mother a lot.)

12.12 Optative mood

An outmoded mood now, it was used in early modern Persian as a form of prayer, for wishing and cursing. In poetical / archaic language you can still encounter examples of this, which mostly consists of changing the third person *-ad* ending to *-ād*. Thus, دهاد (*dahād*) and کناد (*konād*) would be the optative forms of respectively *dādan* and *kardan*.

The only verb whose *optative* mood is still widely used is the verb بودن ('to be'), its irregular optative form being باد (*bād*, sometimes بادا [*bādā*] in poetry, meaning 'May [it] be . . .'), especially common in the expression 'Long live . . .':

زنده باد آزادی! (*zende bād āzādi!*, Long live freedom!)

هرچه بادا باد! (*har-che bād-ā-bād!*, Come what may! / Whatever will be, will be! [a proverb])

12.13 Passive voice

The formation of passive in Persian is simple and not very different from English, with only one difference: the auxiliary verb used in Persian for passive voice is شدن (*shodan*, 'to get / become') (and not بودن, which is used in Persian as the auxiliary in *perfect* constructions). Thus, instead of 'he was killed' in Persian one would say, 'he got killed.'

Only *transitive* verbs that have objects can have a passive voice. To change an active sentence to passive, the *past participle* of the main verb is needed + the

same tense (as in the active sentence) from the verb شدن, which should now be conjugated for a new subject, namely, the object of the active sentence.

In the negative, *na-* is added to the *auxiliary* (i.e., to شدن, following the rules for different tenses) and not to the *past participle* (which is the main verb). In this regard – adding *na-* to the auxiliary instead of the main verb – the *passive voice* and *future tense* are the only exceptions in Persian language.

Some examples of changing an active sentence to passive:

ما او را به بیمارستان خواهیم برد (*mā u rā be bimārestān khāhim bord*, We will take him to the hospital.)

→ او به بیمارستان برده خواهد شد (*u be bimārestān borde khāhad shod*, He will be taken to the hospital.)

دوستم ماشینش را فروخته است (*dust-am māshin-ash rā forukhte ast*, My friend has sold his car.)

→ ماشین دوستم فروخته شده است (*māshin-e dust-am forukhte shode ast*, My friend's car has been sold.)

تمام پنجره‌ها را بسته بودیم (*tamām-e panjare-hā rā baste budim*, We had closed all the windows.)

→ تمام پنجره‌ها بسته شده بودند (*tamām-e panjare-hā baste shode budand*, All the windows had been closed.)

هزار بار از او پرسیدم (*hezār bār az u porsidam*, I asked him a thousand times.)

→ هزار بار از او پرسیده شد (*hezār bār az u porside shod*, A thousand times he was asked.)

چند کتاب می‌آورید؟ (*chand ketāb mi-āvarid?*, How many books are you bringing?)

→ چند کتاب آورده می‌شود؟ (*chand ketāb āvarde mi-shavad?*, How many books are brought?)

باید آن را امروز بنویسی (*bāyad ān rā emruz be-nevisi*, You must write it today.)

→ آن باید امروز نوشته شود (*ān bāyad emruz neveshte shavad*, It must be written today.)

12.13.1 Alternatives for passive

Persian is not very fond of passive and tries to avoid it in different ways, such as the following:

(A) *Using 3Pl. without mentioning the subject.*

This is possible and common in English also, but much more common in Persian. If you say, ‘They have cleaned the windows today’ (امروز پنجره‌ها را تمیز کرده‌اند, *emruz panjare-hā rā tamiz karde'and*), it is already like saying, ‘The windows have been cleaned today.’ Or if you say جایزه را داد نخواهند (جایزه را نخواهند داد, *jāyze rā na-khāhand dād*, They will not give the award.), it does already sound like passive in Persian, much better (and more common) than the real passive, i.e., جایزه داده نخواهد شد (جایزه داده نخواهد شد, *jāyze dāde na-khāhad shod*, The award will not be given.).

(B) *Switching a transitive verb with an intransitive one.*

There are some verbs that are both transitive and intransitive, and Persian would use them intransitively instead of changing them to passive. شکستن (*shekastan*, to break) in Persian and ‘to break’ in English are good examples. However, in English, you can both say ‘the window broke’ (intransitive) and ‘the window was broken’ (passive), whereas in Persian the passive version پنجره شکسته شد (*panjare shekaste shod*, The window was broken.) would sound *very* awkward, and you would always say پنجره شکست (*panjare shekast*, the window broke).

Apart from that, most of the compound verbs with کردن (*kardan*) are *transitive*; to change these to passive, you simply replace کردن by شدن (*shodan*), and they become the *intransitive* version of the same verb.

Once you know that دعوت کردن (*da'vat kardan*, to invite) is transitive, you can be sure that there is an intransitive version with شدن also which not only *can*, but *has to* be used when passive is needed:

Active: او را دعوت کردم (*u rā da'vat kardam*, I invited him.)

Passive: او دعوت شد (*u da'vat shod*, He was invited.)

You may ask here: Could we also say: او دعوت کرده شد (*u da'vat karde shod*)?

Answer: NO! NEVER!

Here it should be noted that sometimes, especially in colloquial Persian, the verb کردن ('to do') is used in the sense of 'having something done,' as in the following examples:

کردن را عمل کرد (damāgh-ash rā amal kard, [lit. She operated her (own) nose.] = She had a nose job. / She had her nose operated.)

= داد عمل کردند (damāgh-ash rā dād amal kardand, She had a nose job. / She had her nose operated.)

!کردی کوتاه را بالاخره موهایت (bel'akhare mu-hā-yat rā kutāh kardi!, [lit. You finally shortened your hair! – Which could make sense if someone did it by himself / herself.] = You finally had a hair-cut! / You finally had your hair cut!)

=! دادی کوتاه کردند (bel'akhare mu-hā-yat rā dādi kutāh kardand!, You finally had a hair-cut! / You finally had your hair cut!)

Similarly, there are other transitive compound verbs in which the verb part can be switched with another verb to make the meaning intransitive, and you usually learn such verbs in pairs, like فریب دادن (farib dādan, to deceive) and فریب خوردن (farib khordan, to be deceived):

Active: ما پرویز را فریب دادیم (mā parviz rā farib dādīm, We deceived / cheated / tricked Parviz.)

Passive: پرویز فریب خورد (parviz farib khord, Parviz was deceived / cheated / tricked.)

(C) Some other ways of avoiding passive voice, like using مورد (mowred-e).

There are some expressions in Persian that can give the statement a quasi-passive meaning without using the real passive.

One common expression is مورد (mowred-e) + some noun (usually the non-verbal part of a compound verb) + the verbs قرار گرفتن (gharār gereftan, which is the intransitive version of قرار دادن, gharār dādan, to put, to place) or sometimes واقع شدن (vāghe' shodan, to occur, to be subjected to). This would draw the focus from the *subject* to the *object*, which is thus *being subjected to* the action described by the noun that follows it. Examples:

ما آن موضوع را بررسی کردیم (mā ān mowzu' rā bar-rasi kardīm, We looked into that matter.)

= مورد بررسی قرار دادیم (*mā ān mowzu' rā mowred-e bar-rasi gharār dādīm*, same meaning ['We subjected that matter to our investigation'.])

→ گرفت / مورد بررسی قرار گرفت (*ān mowzu' mowred-e bar-rasi gharār gereft*, That matter was looked into.)

= مورد بررسی شد (*ān mowzu' bar-rasi shod*, That matter was looked into.)

استعدادش را تحسین کردند (*este'dād-ash rā tahsin kardand*, They admired her talent.)

= مورد تحسین قرار دادند (*este'dād-ash rā mowred-e tahsin gharār dādand*, same meaning ['They made her talent the object of admiration'.])

→ مورد تحسین قرار گرفت / واقع شد (*este'dād-ash mowred-e tahsin gharār gereft / vāghe' shod*, Her talent was admired.)

= مورد تحسین شد (*este'dād-ash tahsin shod*, Her talent was admired.)

هیچ توجهی به حرفهای من نمیکنند (*hich tavaj.johi be harf-hā-ye man nemi-konand*, They pay no attention to my words.)

= حرفهای مرا هیچ مورد توجه قرار نمیدهند (*harf-hā-ye marā hich mowred-e tavaj.joh gharār nemi-dahand*, They pay no attention to my words / subject them to no attention.)

→ حرفهای من اصلاً مورد توجه قرار نمیگیرد (*harf-hā-ye man aslan mowred-e tavaj.joh gharār nemi-girad*, My words are not heeded at all.)

= به حرفهای من هیچ توجهی نمی شود (*be harf-hā-ye man hich tavaj.johi nemi-shavad*, My words are not heeded at all.)

Sometimes the verb changes to بودن (*budan*) or شدن (*shodan*) after the مورد construction, occasionally with other changes in the phrasing – often when a 'real passive' is grammatically not possible or not common. Examples:

پدرم خیلی به اشعار حافظ علاقه دارد (*pedar-am kheyli be ash'ār-e hāfez alāghe dārad*, My father likes the poems of Hāfez a lot.)

→ اشعار حافظ مورد علاقه پدرم هستند (*ash'ār-e hāfez mowred-e alāghe-ye pedar-am hastand*, same meaning ['The poems of Hāfez are the object of my father's great affection'.]) – Or, still better:

شاعرِ موردِ علاقهٔ پدرم حافظ است (*shā'er-e mowred-e alāghe-ye pedar-am hāfez ast*, My father's favorite poet is Hāfez.) – No 'real passive' version possible here.

کدام پیشنهاد را قبول می‌کنید؟ (*kodām pishnahād rā ghabul mi-konid?*, Which proposal would you go for?)

→ پیشنهادِ موردِ قبولِ شما کدام است؟ (*pishnahād-e mowred-e ghabul-e shomā kodām ast?*, Which is the proposal you would accept?)

= کدام پیشنهاد (از سوی شما) قبول می‌شود؟ (*kodām pishnahād [az su-ye shomā] ghabul mi-shavad?*, Which proposal would be accepted [by you]?)

The word *تحت* (*taht-e*) means 'under.' It is not always interchangeable with the much more common word *زیر* (*zir-e*), but it comes closer to the English 'under' in certain constructions similar to *مورد* (where *زیر* cannot be used), as in *تحت بررسی* (*taht-e bar-rasi*, under investigation) or *تحت اشغال* (*taht-e eshghāl*, under occupation). Examples in sentences:

او را در بیمارستان معالجه کردند (*u rā dar bimārestān mo'āleje kardand*, They treated him in the hospital.)

→ او در بیمارستان تحت معالجه قرار گرفت (*u dar bimārestān taht-e mo'āleje gharār gereft*, He underwent treatment in the hospital.)

سبکِ کوبیسم بر نقاشیهای او اثر (تأثیر) گذاشته است (*sabk-e kubism bar nagh.ghāshi-hā-ye u asar [l ta'sir] gozāshte ast*, [The style of] Cubism has influenced her paintings.)

→ نقاشیهای او تحت تأثیر سبکِ کوبیسم است (*nagh.ghāshi-hā-ye u taht-e ta'sir-e sabk-e kubism ast*, Her paintings are under the influence of [l are influenced by] Cubism.)

= نقاشیهای او از سبکِ کوبیسم تأثیر گرفته است (*nagh.ghāshi-hā-ye u az sabk-e kubism ta'sir gerefte ast*, same meaning ['Her paintings have taken influence from Cubism'].)

12.13.2 How to mention the agent

Passive sentences that mention the agent often sound awkward in Persian and are rarely used; they usually sound like translations from other languages by inexperienced translators. Examples of this are more likely to be found in administrative language or in scientific texts.

However, if – for whatever reason – one has to mention the agent, there are some compound prepositions that can be used, all meaning ‘by means of’ / ‘by using’ or ‘by way of’ / ‘via’ / ‘through’: به وسیله (be vasile-ye), توسط (tavas. sot-e), از طریق (az tarigh-e), از طرف (az taraf-e), از سوی (az su-ye), از جانب (az jāneb-e), etc.

Examples:

پاسخ این مسئله ریاضی به وسیله یک دانشمند جوان انگلیسی داده شد (*pāsokh-e in mas'ale-ye riyāzi be vasile-ye yek dāneshmand-e javān-e engelisi dāde shod*, The answer to this math problem was given by a young English scientist.)

پیشنهادش از سوی همه پذیرفته شد (*pishnahād-ash az su-ye hame pazirofte shod*, His suggestion was accepted by all.)

اطلاعات لازم از طریق پدرشان برای آنها فرستاده شد (*et.telā'āt-e lāzem az tarigh-e pedar-eshān barāye ānhā ferestāde shod*, The necessary information was sent to them by / via their father.)

12.13.3 Passive of infinitives and past participles

This also follows the same rule: *past participle* of the main verb + same form from the verb *shodan*. Examples:

گرفتن (*gereftan*, to take) → گرفته شدن (*gerefte shodan*, to be taken) (*neg.*: گرفته نشدن, *gerefte na-shodan*)

گرفته (*gerefte*, taken) → گرفته شده (*gerefte shode*, [having been] taken) (*neg.*: گرفته نشده, *gerefte na-shode*)

غذاهای خورده نشده را در یخچال بگذار (*ghazā-hā-ye khorde na-shode rā dar yakh-chāl begozār*, Put the uneaten food [= leftovers] in the fridge.)

از کشته شدن شوهرش چند ماه می گذشت (*az koshte shodan-e showhar-ash chand māh mi-gozasht*, A few months passed since her husband's being killed.)

Sentences: from phrases to complex sentences

This chapter is predominantly about syntax and sentence structure, although certain phrasal idioms / structures also may be mentioned when relevant and related.

13.1 Simple and complex Persian sentences

There is a lot of flexibility in the order of words in Persian, especially in less formal or colloquial Persian. Since the person of the subject is included in a Persian verb as a conjugational suffix, a Persian sentence in its simplest form can be just a verb, like شنیدی؟ (*shenidi?*, Did you [2Sgl.] hear?) or رفته (rafte, He / she / it has gone.). This means that the subject does not have to be always mentioned in the form of a separate personal pronoun.

The verb is expected to be placed at the end of the sentence (or at the end of each clause in complex sentences). An example for a longer sentence:

آن شب مسافرهایی جامانده از آخرین قطار تهران چمدانهای سنگینشان را با عصبانیتی آشکار دوباره عرقریزان از آن راهرو نیمه تاریک و بدبو به ایستگاه تاکسی برگرداندند (*ān shab mosāfer-hā-ye jā-mānde az ākharin ghatār-e tehrān chamedān-hā-ye sangin-eshān rā bā asabāniyyati āshekār do-bāre aragh-rizān az ān rāhrow-e nime-tārik va bad-bu be istgāh-e tāksi bar-gardāndand*, That night the passengers who could not make it to the last train to Tehran [*‘jā-mānde az’*: ‘left behind from / by’] took their heavy suitcases, while sweating and clearly angry, back to the taxi station through that half-dark and reeking corridor.)

This is still a *simple* sentence with one verb only, placed at the end of the sentence, and its structure follows the most common, standard word order in a Persian sentence, i.e., *SOV* or *Subject-Object-Verb*, with adjectival or

adverbial phrases and other temporal or locational adverbs making the sentence so long.

Colloquial Persian shows more flexibility, even regarding the end position of the verb. In particular, after a *verb of movement*, words denoting some location or destination can be placed after the verb. In such cases, the preposition in the adverbial phrase that follows the verb is often dropped. Examples:

بعد از دو هفته همسرش برگشت (به) مشهد (*ba'd-az do hafte hamsar-ash bar-gasht [be] mashhad*, After two weeks his / her spouse returned to Mashhad.)

رفتیم (به) آلمان به امید آنکه علی را ببینیم ولی آنجا نبود (*raftim [be] ālmān be omid-e ān-ke ali rā be-binim vali ānjā na-bud*, We went to Germany in the hope of seeing Ali, but he was not there.)

شیر را ریخت توی لیوان (و) گذاشت جلو بچه (*shir rā rikht tu-ye livān [va] gozāsh t jelow-e bach.che*, She poured the milk into the mug and put [it] in front of the child.)

شوهرش را انداختند (به / توی) زندان و حتی اجازه ملاقات هم ندادند (*showhar-ash rā andākh t and [be / tu-ye] zendān va hat.tā ejāze-ye molāghāt ham na-dādand*, They threw her husband in jail and didn't even give [her] a visiting permit.)

In colloquial Persian, you can find such examples with no 'movement' in the verb or with no 'location / destination' mentioned:

چند روز بمان (در) تهران تا با شهر آشنا شوی (*chand ruz be-mān [dar] tehrān tā bā shahr āshenā shavi*, Stay in Tehran for a few days to get to know the city.)

تلاش زیادی کردم برای پنهان کردن اضطرابم (*talāsh-e ziyādi kardam barāye penhān kardan-e ezterāb-am*, I tried hard to hide my anxiety.)

زنش را معرفی کرد به همکارش و رفت بلیط بخرد (*zan-ash rā mo'ar.refi kard be ham-kār-ash va raft belit be-kharad*, He introduced his wife to his colleague and went to buy tickets.)

خیلی می ترسید از عواقب آن، ولی چاره ای نبود (*kheyli mi-tarsid az avāgheb-e ān, vali chāre'i na-bud*, He was very much afraid of its consequences, but there was no way out / he had no other choice.)

If there are two or more subjects and the narrator is one of them, no hierarchical priority needs to be observed: you can say من و استاد (*man va ostād*, me and the professor) or استاد و من (*ostād va man*, the professor and me) – but

the pronouns themselves have different forms for different levels of formality and politeness (see Sections 5.2.4 and 15.2.1).

Not mentioning the subject as an independent pronoun (or noun) can only cause ambiguity in 3rd person; to reduce the ambiguity and avoid confusion, the subject of a sentence or clause must be mentioned whenever it differs from that of the previous one:

به سختی از جایش بلند شد. گفت: نمیدانم چرا چنین اتفاقی باید می افتاد
(*Be-sakhti az jā-yash boland shod. Goft: nemi-dānam cherā chenin et.tefāghi bāyad mi-oftād*, [He] rose from his place with difficulty. [He] said: I don't know why something like this had to happen.) – Here we assume that the same person is the subject of both sentences.
دوباره روی صندلی نشست. علی گفت: نباید به مادرت خبر بدهی؟
(*Do-bāre ru-ye sandali neshast. Ali goft: na-bāyad be mādar-at khabar be-dahi?*, [He] sat again on the chair. Ali said: Shouldn't you let your mother know?) – Here we know that Ali is not the subject of the first sentence.

As it was already mentioned in Chapter 5 (see Section 5.4), in an interrogative sentence, no change of word order is needed in Persian, nor is any subject / verb inversion or use of auxiliaries required – all that is needed is a change of intonation, namely, a rising tone at the end of the sentence, while at the end of an indicative sentence the tone falls. The word آيا (*āyā*) may be placed at the beginning of all interrogative statements, even those that have a question word, or it may be dropped. If mentioned, its only function is *announcing* right from the beginning of the sentence that you are dealing with a question, without keeping the listener waiting until the end of the sentence for that interrogative intonation. And, interestingly, sometimes *āyā* is placed in the middle of a sentence or at the beginning of the second clause. In the following sentence, the four possible positions for *āyā* have been shown by numbers, with number 1 being the most likely and number 4 the least likely position:

وقتی گذرنامه‌ات را گم کردی،^۱ *vaghti gozar-nāme-at rā gom kardi*,^۲ *be polis*^۳ *khabar dādi*^۴ ؟^۴،
(When you lost your passport, did you inform the police?)

In a complex sentence, if the subordinate clause is inserted in the middle of the main clause, the two verbs for the main and subordinate clauses may sometimes appear together at the end of the sentence, not unlike subordinate

clauses in German language, but Persian prefers to avoid such situations, which in very long sentences may be awkward or confusing.

Some categories of complex sentences will be introduced throughout this chapter.

13.2 Conditionals

Conditionals are ‘if-then’ statements. The word اگر (*agar*) in Persian means ‘if’ (in its *conditional* sense only, not the ‘if’ used for indirect questions) and is usually placed at the beginning of the *if-clause* (the ‘condition’ or ‘protasis’), which is usually the first clause in Persian, followed by the *main clause* (the ‘consequence’ or ‘apodosis’).

In colloquial Persian, sometimes اگر is dropped, and only the intonation (i.e., raising the pitch of voice at the end of the first clause) shows that it is a dependent clause with a ‘condition’ (if) implied.

Examples with اگر dropped:

چکار می کردی؟ من نبودم، (man na-budam, che-kār mi-kardi?, What would / could you have done had I not been there?) – Note that this could also mean: ‘What were you doing when I was not there?’
زودتر آمده بودید، می توانستید مینا را هم ببینید (zud-tar āmade budid, mi-tavānestid minā rā ham be-binid, Had you come earlier, you could have seen Mina also.)

Persian has two major categories of conditionals: *indicative* and *counterfactual*.

13.2.1 Indicative conditionals

Indicative conditionals involve different degrees of doubt and uncertainty; they are about things that may or may not be true, may or may not happen.

Many combinations of tenses are possible, some more common than others. But it might be easier to start with what is *not* common or acceptable:

- No *subjunctives* – whether *simple* (present) or *perfect* (past) – in the *main clause*!
- No *past progressive* or *past perfect* in the *main clause*! (Their use in the main clause would make the conditional *counterfactual*; see Section 13.2.2).

The most common tenses used in indicative conditional are:

- If-clause: *simple subjunctive* (or a *simple past* used for present)
- Main clause: *simple present* or *future* or *imperative*

If another tense is used in the if-clause (like present tense or present perfect), it could mean that you are treating a situation as a fact (not a real *condition*), as when you are taking someone by his word, repeating what he says and saying, 'If that is really the case / if that is really what you are saying, why then . . . ?'

In the following examples, different possible combinations have been used; in some combinations, the if-clause is not much different from a time clause, and اگر (if) comes very close to *when* or *after*:

من او را می بینم اگر پری فردا بیاید، (agar pari fardā biyāyad, man u rā mi-binam, If Pari comes tomorrow, I'll see her.)

اگر پری فردا آمد، حتماً با او حرف بزن (agar pari fardā āmad, hatman bā u harf be-zan!, Should Pari come tomorrow, certainly talk to her!)

اگر پری فردا می آید، چرا با او به سینما برویم؟ (agar pari fardā mi-āyad, cherā bā u be sinamā na-ravim, If Pari [really] comes tomorrow, why shouldn't we go with her to the cinema?)

اگر پری فردا آمده باشد، حتماً کتابش را هم آورده است (agar pari fardā āmade bāshad, hatman ketāb-ash rā ham āvarde ast, If Pari comes / has come tomorrow, she has / will have certainly brought her book also.)

اگر پری امروز آمده است، چرا مادرش چیزی نگفت؟ (agar pari emruz āmade ast, cherā mādar-ash chizi na-goft?, If Pari has come today, why didn't her mother say anything?)

Reminder: The verb داشتن (*dāshtan*) in its 'more irregular' form would use again the *perfect subjunctive* instead of the *simple subjunctive* (see Sections 12.11.1 and 12.11.2):

اگر وقت داشته باشم، نامه را تمام می کنم (agar vaght dāshte bāsham, nāme rā tamām mi-konam, If I have time, I'll finish the letter.)

13.2.2 Counterfactual conditionals

A counterfactual conditional is not about doubt or uncertainty; it only tells you what would have been the case if a certain assumption had been true

(although you know that it is not true). It is about things that you cannot, or can no longer, change – therefore, it is often, though not necessarily always, about the past.

In counterfactual conditionals, only two tenses are possible: the *past progressive* and the *past perfect*, each of which can be used in either of the clauses – which means that there are four possible combinations. The past progressive, however, can be said to be the more common of the two tenses, especially in the main clause.

The past perfect tense should not be used in the main clause if:

- it has the nature of some general statement (whether true or false);
- some frequency adverb (always, every day, etc.) is mentioned; or
- the tense of the first verb (in *if-clause*) is *past progressive* and the action of the verb in the main clause could not have happened *before* that.

In the following examples of counterfactual conditionals, each of them corresponding with one of the points mentioned above, the *past progressive* should preferably be used in the main clause:

اگر خدائی می بود، اینهمه مردم در بدبختی زندگی نمی کردند (*agar khodā'i mi-bud, in-hame mardom dar bad-bakhti zendegi nemi-kardand*, If there had been a God, people wouldn't have lived in such misery.) – 'General statement' here.

اگر می دانستم از ایران رفته (است)، هر روز به خانه اش تلفن نمی زدم (*agar mi-dānestam az irān rafte [ast], har-ruz be khāne-ash telefon nemi-zadam*, If I had known that he had left Iran, I wouldn't have called his home every day.) – 'Frequency adverb' here.

اگر در سفارتخانه را باز می کردند، مردم از دیوار بالا نمی رفتند (*agar dar-e sefārat-khāne rā bāz mi-kardand, mardom az divār bālā nemi-raftand*, If they had opened the embassy's door, people wouldn't have climbed the wall.) – The order of the actions is an important factor here.

Important: In this and similar *irrealis* or *counterfactual* constructions, the verbs بودن (*budan*, to be) and داشتن (*dāshtan*, to have) also can have – and often do have – the past progressive prefix *mi-*.

More examples, the first four of them with *budan* or *dāshtan*:

اگر فردا روز تولد مادرم نبود [نمی بود]، می توانستم با شما بیایم (*agar fardā ruz-e taval.lod-e mādar-am na-bud [nemi-bud], mi-tavānestam bā shomā*

biyāyam, If tomorrow hadn't been my Mom's birthday, I would have been able to come with you.)

اگر بیشتر پول [می] داشتیم، حتماً آن خانه را تا به حال خریده بودم (*agar bishtar pul [mi-]dāshdam, hatman ān khāne rā tā be hāl kharide budam*, If I had had more money, I would certainly have bought that house until now.)

اگر جای تو [می] بودم، تا حالا ده بار طلاق گرفته بودم (*agar jā-ye to [mi-] budam, tā hālā dah bār talāgh gerefte budam*, If I had been you [*lit.* 'in your place'], I would have taken divorce long ago [*lit.* 'ten times'].)

اگر بیشتر تخفیف نمی‌داد، امکان نداشت آن را بخرم (*agar bishtar takhfif nemi-dād, emkān na-dāshd ān rā be-kharam*, If he had not given more discount, there was no way I would have bought it.)

اگر او را بهتر شناخته بودم، هرگز با او به آن سفر نمی‌رفتم (*agar u rā behtar shenākhte budam, hargez bā u be ān safar nemi-raftam*, If I had known him better, I would never have gone with him on that trip.)

اگر از من پرسیده بود، همه چیز را به او گفته بودم (*agar az man porside bud, hame-chiz rā be u gofte budam*, If he had asked me, I would have told him everything.)

13.2.3 Some substitutes for اگر (*agar, if*)

While اگر often appears to be little different from وقتیکه in time clauses, you can have a stronger, more emphatic 'condition' by using conjunctions that mean 'provided that,' namely:

به شرط آنکه (*be shart-e ān-ke*)

به شرطی که (*be sharti ke*)

مشروط به آنکه (*mashrut be ān-ke*)

These are not very common in the past ('irrealis') conditions – especially never placed at the beginning of the sentence in *irrealis* – and they would always need the subjunctive.

The conjunction در صورتی که (*dar surati-ke*, in case, in the event that) is also very close to this group, though not as strong (and, therefore, the use of *subj.* not obligatory).

To say 'I'll buy you that shirt provided that you study well,' you can use one of the following forms:

به شرطی که خوب درس بخوانی، آن پیرهن را برایت می‌خرم (*be sharti ke khub dars be-khāni, ān pīrhan rā barāyat mi-kharam*)

آن پیرهن را به شرطی که خوب درس بخوانی برایت می‌خرم
(*ān pirhan rā be sharti ke khub dars be-khāni barāyat mi-kharam*)

آن پیرهن را به شرطی برایت می‌خرم که خوب درس بخوانی
(*ān pirhan rā be sharti barāyat mi-kharam ke khub dars be-khāni*)

آن پیرهن را برایت می‌خرم، به شرطی که خوب درس بخوانی
(*ān pirhan rā barāyat mi-kharam, be sharti ke khub dars be-khāni*)

در صورتی که can also be used in a similar way:

در صورتی که زودتر برسند، برای تماشای آن فیلم هم وقت خواهیم داشت
(*dar surati-ke zud-tar be-resand, barāye tamāshā-ye ān film ham vaght khāhim dāsh*t, If / in case they come / arrive earlier, we will have time to watch that movie also.)

Dar surati-ke may be used in a quite different sense also, as a synonym of *dar hāli-ke* (meaning ‘whereas / while’ (see Section 13.4.6) – and always at the beginning of the second clause in this sense:

او را دستگیر کردند، در صورتی که او مغازه را آتش نزنده بود
(*u rā dastgir kardand, dar surati-ke u maghāze rā ātash na-zade bud*, They arrested him, whereas / although he had not set fire to the store.)

13.2.4 مگر (magar, if not; unless)

مگر (magar ke) or just مگر alone can be used as the negative of اگر (agar, if) in conditional sentences. It has, however, one major difference with the English ‘unless’: it always introduces the second clause and is never at the beginning of a sentence when used in the sense of ‘unless.’ Compare:

اگر تو بروی، من هم می‌روم (agar to be-ravi, man ham mi-ravam, If you go, I’ll go too.)

اگر تو نروی، من هم نمی‌روم (agar to na-ravi, man ham nemi-ravam, If you don’t go, I won’t go either.)

من نمی‌روم مگر اینکه تو هم بروی (man nemi-ravam magar in-ke to ham be-ravi, I won’t go unless you do too.)

برای او هم یک بلیط می‌خرم، مگر اینکه بخواد با ماشین خودش بیاید
(*barāye u ham yek belit mi-kharam, magar in-ke be-khābad bā māshin-e khod-ash biyāyad*, I’ll buy him also a ticket, unless he wants to drive in his own car.)

13.2.4.1 Other uses of مگر

- (A) مگر is used in questions to show disbelief or surprise (or protest, indignation) – this means that you normally expect to hear the opposite of what you are saying (regarding affirmative / negative).

او آنجا بود؟ (*u ānjā bud?*) means ‘Was he there?’

مگر او آنجا بود؟ (*magar u ānjā bud?*) still means ‘Was he there?’ although it is more like ‘But was he really there?’ and shows that you expect to hear: نه، نبود (*na, nabud*, No, he wasn’t.).

مگر او آنجا نبود؟ (*magar u ānjā na-bud?*, Wasn’t he there?) would have the opposite effect; it is closer to ‘But he was there, wasn’t he?’ and you expect to hear: چرا، بود (*cherā, bud*, Yes, he was). (For چرا used to give an affirmative answer to a negative question, see Section 11.2.1)

The word *magar* in the following examples has not been translated, but it must be obvious what rhetorical function it has in each case:

چرا جواب نمی‌دهی؟ مگر زبانت را گربه خورده است؟ (*Cherā javāb nemi-dahi? Magar zabānat rā gorbe khorde ast?*, Why don’t you answer? Cat got your tongue? [*lit.* ‘has the cat eaten your tongue?’])

چرا به پلیس نگفتی؟ مگر این شهر پلیس ندارد؟ (*Cherā be polis nagofti? Magar in shahr polis na-dārad?*, Why didn’t you tell the police? Doesn’t this city have any police?)

چرا عصبانی می‌شوی؟ مگر من چه گفتم؟ (*Cherā asabāni mi-shavi? Magar man che goftam?*, Why do you get angry? What did I say?)

همه دارند می‌دوند، مگر چه اتفاقی افتاده؟ (*Hame dārand mi-davand, magar che et.tefāghi oftāde?*, Everybody is running, what has happened?)

This usage of مگر is similar to a usage of که (*ke*), and sometimes they are used in two consecutive sentences for emphasis, which only differ in using affirmative and negative: the affirmative form of one has the effect of the negative form of the other, and vice versa:

او که آمد! مگر نیامد؟ (*Magar na-yāmad? U ke āmad!*, But didn’t he come? He did come, alright?)

او که نمی‌داند! مگر می‌داند؟ (*U ke nemi-dānad! Magar mi-dānad?*, But he doesn’t know – or does he?)

The adverb آخر (*ākhar*) is also close in certain ways to مگر / که when used as some filler to justify a situation. Examples:

آخر چرا از من نپرسیدی؟ (*ākhar cherā az man na-porsidi?*, But why didn’t you ask me?)

نرفتم، آخر دیگر تاریک شده بود (*na-raftam, ākhar digar tārik shode bud*, I didn't go; it was already dark.)

- (B) The interrogative phrase مگر نه؟ (*magar na*) is used in colloquial Persian in a way similar to the English question tags. (See also Section 11.2.2 for question tags.) As the following examples show, it is the verb that determines whether you need چرا in response or not:

. (*u rā mi-shenāsi*, او را می شناسی، مگر نه؟ (- بله، می شناسم. / - نه، نمی شناسم.)
magar na? [-*bale, mi-shenāsam / - na, nemi-shenāsam*], You know him, don't you? [-Yes, I do. / - No, I don't.]

. (*in maghāle rā na-khānde budī*, این مقاله را نخوانده بودی، مگر نه؟ (- چرا، خوانده بودم. / - نه، نخوانده بودم.)
magar na? [- *cherā, khānde budam / - na, na-khānde budam*], You hadn't read this article, had you? [- Yes, I had. / - No, I hadn't.]

- (C) Sometimes مگر is simply a preposition meaning 'except' or 'other than' – its synonyms being جُز / بجز (*joz / be-joz*), غیر از (*gheyr-az*) and الّا (*el.lā*). Among these, مگر and الّا are the least likely to be placed at the beginning of a sentence, but they are interchangeable in other positions. Examples:

. (*hame āmadand magar [/ be-joz / gheyr-az / el.lā] kāmbiz*, همه آمدند مگر (/ بجز / غیر از / الّا) کامبیز
gheyr-az / el.lā] kāmbiz, Everybody came except Kāmbiz.)

. (*hich kāri nemi-konad magar [/ be-joz / gheyr-az / el.lā] khordan va khābidan*, هیچ کاری نمی کند مگر (/ بجز / غیر از / الّا) خوردن و خوابیدن
khordan va khābidan, He does nothing except eating and sleeping.)

. (*be-joz [/ gheyr-az] khordan va khābidan hich kāri nemi-konad*, بجز (/ غیر از) خوردن و خوابیدن هیچ کاری نمی کند
khordan va khābidan hich kāri nemi-konad, Except for eating and sleeping, he does nothing.)

It would be wrong to conclude from the equation مگر = *except* that مگر *magar in-ke* can always be used for 'except that': if you are using *except that* to show a *difference* (= *with the difference that / but for the fact that*), then the appropriate Persian equivalent would be: با این تفاوت که (*bā in tafāvot ke*) or با این فرق که (*bā in fargh ke*). Examples:

. (*dorost shekl-e mādar-ash ast*, با این تفاوت که قدش بلندتر است
bā in tafāvot ke ghad.d-ash boland-tar ast, She looks exactly like her mother, with the difference that [= except that] she is taller.)

. (*havā-ye injā mesl-e tehrān ast*, با این فرق که خیلی تمیزتر است
bā in fargh ke kheyli tamiz-tar ast, The weather here is like Tehran [s], with the difference that [= except that] it is much cleaner.)

In most of the other cases, 'except that' can be translated into Persian as بجز اینکه (*be-joz in-ke*), غیر از اینکه (*gheyr-az in-ke*) and الا اینکه (*el.lā in-ke*), as in these examples:

آنجا هیچ کاری نکردیم بجز اینکه (/ غیر از اینکه / الا اینکه) خوردیم و خوابیدیم
(*ānjā hich kāri na-kardim be-joz in-ke [/ gheyr-az in-ke / el.lā in-ke] khordim va khābidim*, We did nothing there except that we ate and slept.)

چیزی از او نخواستم بجز اینکه (/ غیر از اینکه / الا اینکه) درسهایش را بهتر بخواند
(*chizi az u na-khāstam be-joz in-ke [/ gheyr-az in-ke / el.lā in-ke] dars-hā-yash rā behtar be-khānad*, I asked / demanded nothing from him except that he [should] study better.)

And sometimes you can just use the word فقط (*faghat*) or تنها (*tanhā* [more *form.*]), both meaning 'only,' as in these examples:

مقاله خوبی نوشته‌ای، فقط کمی طولانی است
(*maghāle-ye khubi neveshte'i, faghat kami tulāni ast*, You have written a good article; only, it's a bit too long.)

قصد داشتم به شما بگویم، فقط پیدایتان نکردم
(*ghasd dāshtam be shomā be-guyam, faghat peydā-yetān na-kardam*, I intended to tell you; only, I didn't find you.)

Using مگر اینکه (*magar in-ke*) in the above examples would not be possible.

13.2.5 واگرنه (*va gar na, otherwise; if not so; or else*)

As in English, واگرنه (or اگر نه, otherwise) is usually not used at the beginning of a sentence. Two common synonyms are والا (*va el.lā*) and در غیر این صورت (*dar gheyr-e in surat*). Examples:

باید دستهایت را بشوئی، وگرنه اجازه نمی‌دهم غذا بخوری
(*bāyad dast-hā-yat rā be-shu'i, va gar na ejāze nemi-daham ghazā be-khori*, You must wash your hands; otherwise, I won't allow you to eat.)

بگو بچه‌ها با کبریت بازی نکنند، وگرنه تمام خانه آتش می‌گیرد
(*be-gu bach. che-hā bā kebrit bāzi na-konand, va gar na tamām-e khāne ātash mi-girad*, Tell the children not to play with matches; otherwise, the whole house will catch fire.)

باید کار را تمام کنی؛ در غیر این صورت، به تو پول نخواهند داد
(*bāyad kār rā tamām koni; dar gheyr-e in surat, be to pul na-khāhand dād*, You have to finish the job; otherwise, they won't give you [any] money.)

باید صبح تا شب درس بخوانی، و الا قبول نمی شوی (*bāyad sobh tā shab dars be-khāni, va el.lā ghabul nemi-shavi*, You have to study from morning till night; otherwise, you won't pass / get a passing grade.)

وگرنه does not require the subjunctive, and the subjunctive in the following sentence is because of some implied 'should / had better':

اگر خسته نیست برود، وگرنه بماند تا صبح (*agar khaste nist be-ravad, va-garna be-mānad tā sobh*, He [can] go if he's not tired; otherwise, he [had better] stay until tomorrow.)

13.2.6 'As if' and 'to look as if'

انگار (*engār*) – and the more formal or literary گوئی (*gu'i*) or پنداری (*pendāri*) – all mean 'as if,' and they do not need the subjunctive in Persian, because what is expressed after them is treated as some pseudo-fact:

طوری با من حرف می زنی انگار (که) من احمقم (*touri bā man harf mizani engār [ke] man ahmagham*, You talk to me as if I am / I were stupid.)

آنقدر لاغر شده ای که انگار یک هفته است غذا نخورده ای (*ān-ghdr lāghar shode'i ke engār yek hafte ast ghazā na-khorde'i*, You've lost so much weight as if you haven't eaten for a week.)

انگار حرفهای یک هفته پیش خودت را فراموش کرده ای (*engār harf-hā-ye yek hafte pish-e khod-at rā farāmush karde'i*, It looks as if you have forgotten what you said a week ago.)

بعد از جنگ همه چیز را از نو ساختند، گوئی هیچ اتفاقی نیفتاده است (*ba'd-az jang hame-chiz rā az-now sākhtand, gu'i hich et.tefāghi nayoftāde ast*, After the war they built everything anew, as if nothing had happened.)

'To look as if'

The verbs به نظر رسیدن (*be nazar residan*), به نظر آمدن (*be nazar āmadan*) and, in *form. / lit. Persian*, نمودن (*nomudan*) all mean 'to look,' 'to seem,' 'to appear.' The first two need the subjunctive when negative, but normally no subjunctive when affirmative, unless you want to decrease the likelihood when talking about what is going to happen next. Compare:

به نظر می رسد که حالت خوب نیست (*be nazar mi-resad ke hālat khub nist*, It seems as if you don't feel well.)

به نظر نمی‌رسد که امشب غذای خوشمزه‌ای داشته باشیم (*be nazar nemi-resad ke emshab ghazā-ye khosh-maze'i dāshte bāshim*, It doesn't look as if we're going to have some delicious dinner tonight.)

The more *form.* / *lit.* نمودن, usually preceded by words like چنان (*chenān*, such), may be used with the subjunctive regardless of affirmative / negative.

13.3 Wishes

Similar to conditionals, wishes too have real and unreal, or *indicative* and *counterfactual*, forms.

Indicative wishes can be expressed:

- by using the words کاش (*kāsh*, sometimes preceded by ای [*ey*, 'O!'] and written as ای کاش or (ایکاش) or کاشکی (*kāsh-ki*), both meaning 'I wish,' or
- by using the word آرزو (*ārezu*) and the different compound verbs made with it (usually آرزو کردن [*~ kardan*] or آرزو داشتن [*~ dāshtan*]).

Indicative wishes are about future, about what is (or was) to happen next, and they always need one of the two subjunctive forms:

- the simple subjunctive, if they are about future (or a future in the past) but
- the perfect subjunctive, if they are about the past (or a past in the future: the completion and fulfillment of a wish before a point of time in future).

The tense of the compound verbs with آرزو plays no role here.

Indicative wishes are not much different from hopes; one can often use the verb امیدوار بودن (*omidvār budan*, 'to hope' – *lit.* 'to be hopeful') to say the same thing.

Counterfactual wishes are always expressed by using the words کاش or کاشکی; other variants with آرزو are not possible here. They are unreal or *irrealis*; they are regrets about past (things we know we cannot change) or wishes that we know can never be fulfilled. Similar to *counterfactual conditionals*, these unreal wishes also are expressed by using either the *past progressive* or *past perfect*. And the verbs بودن (*budan*, to be) and داشتن (*dāshtan*, to have) can here also have the past progressive prefix *mi-*.

Table 13.1 Wishes and regrets

	<i>Future / future in the past</i>	<i>Past</i>
Indicative	کاش او را ببینم (<i>kāsh u rā be-binam</i>)	کاش آمده باشد (<i>kāsh āmade bāshad</i>)
	I wish to see her.	I hope she has come.
	کاش با مادرش بیاید (<i>kāsh bā mādar-ash biyāyad</i>)	کاش با مادرش آمده باشد (<i>kāsh bā mādar-ash āmade bāshad</i>)
	I wish she came / I hope she comes with her mother.	I hope she has come with her mother.
Counterfactual	آرزو می‌کنم بیاید (<i>ārezu mi-konam biyāyad</i>)	آرزو می‌کنم آمده باشد (<i>ārezu mi-konam āmade bāshad</i>)
	I wish she came / I hope she comes.	I hope she has come.
	آرزو داشتم بیاید (<i>ārezu dāshtam biyāyad</i>)	آرزو داشتم او آمده باشد (<i>ārezu dāshtam u āmade bāshad</i>)
	I wished / hoped she would come.	I hoped she had come.
Counterfactual	کاش فردا می‌آمد / کاش فردا بود آمده بود (<i>kāsh fardā mi-āmad / kāsh fardā āmade bud</i>)	کاش دیروز می‌آمد / کاش دیروز بود آمده بود (<i>kāsh diruz mi-āmad / kāsh diruz āmade bud</i>)
	(I wish he could have come tomorrow. [= I know that he wouldn't and that he has other plans.])	(Both meaning 'I wish he had come yesterday.')

More examples:

کاش یک خانه بزرگتر داشتم / می‌داشتم (*kāsh yek khāne-ye bozorg-tar dāshtam / mi-dāshtam*, I wish I had had a bigger house.)

کاش تو مادرم بودی / می‌بودی (*kāsh to mādar-am budi / mi-budi*, I wish you had been my Mom.)

کاش این را به همه نگفته باشد (*kāsh in rā be hame na-gofte bāshad*, I hope he hasn't told everyone about this.)

آرزو دارم که بچه‌هایم خوشبخت شوند (*ārezu dāram ke bach-che-hā-yam khosh-bakht shavand*, I have the wish that my children become / I hope they become happy.)

آرزو می‌کنم در آنجا زندگی بهتری داشته باشی (*ārezu mi-konam dar ānjā zendegi-ye behtari dāshte bāshi*, I hope you have / I wish you a better life there.)

کاش فردا برگشته باشد (*kāsh fardā bar-gashte bāshad*, I hope he / she has returned / will have returned by tomorrow.)

13.4 Adverb clauses with time expressions

13
Sentences:
from phrases
to complex

In Persian, adverb clauses with time expressions, also called *time clauses*, are usually the first clause in a complex sentence, followed by the *main clause*. The temporal relation between the two clauses can be of four kinds:

- 1 The action or state described in the *time clause* happens first (*when = after*):

وقتی که من آمدم، گلی رفت (*vaghti-ke man āmadam, goli raft*)
۲ ۱

(When I came, Goli left.)

1 2

- 2 The action or state described in the *main clause* happens first (*when = before*):

وقتی که من آمدم، گلی رفته بود (*vaghti-ke man āmadam, goli rafte bud*)
۲ ۱

(When I came, Goli had left.)

2 1

- 3 They both happen at the same time, one (the *time clause*) interrupting the other:

وقتی که من آمدم، گلی داشت می‌رفت (*vaghti-ke man āmadam, goli dāsht mi-raft*)
---۱--- ۱

(When I came, Goli was leaving.)

1 ---1---

or (here *when = while*):

وقتی که گلی داشت می‌رفت، من آمدم (*vaghti-ke goli dāsht mi-raft, man āmadam*)
۱ ---۱---

(When Goli was leaving, I came.)

---1 --- 1

- 4 They both happen at the same time, parallel to each other (*when = either while or whenever*):

وقتی که نامه می‌نوشتم، گلی غذا می‌خورد (*vaghti-ke nāme mi-neveshtam, goli ghazā mi-khord*)
---۱--- ---۱---

(When I was writing a letter, Goli was eating.)

---1--- - - 1 - -

or you can switch the clauses again (while keeping *وقتی که* at the beginning of the sentence).

What these examples further show is that *وقتی که* is the most common conjunction used in time clauses.

13.4.1 What tenses to use with وقتیکه (vaghti-ke, when)?

As the Tables 13.2 and 13.3 show, some combinations are more common than others, and the translations are sometimes only rough approximations.

Table 13.2 If this action occurred in the past, use:

<i>In the main clause</i>	<i>In the time clause</i>	<i>Example</i>
Simple past	Simple past	وقتیکه آمدم، او رفت (<i>vaghti-ke āmadam, u raft</i>) When I came, he went.
Past perfect		وقتیکه آمدم، او رفته بود (<i>vaghti-ke āmadam, u rafte bud</i>) When I came, he had gone.
Past progressive		وقتیکه آمدم، او داشت می‌رفت (<i>vaghti-ke āmadam, u dāsh t mi-raft</i>) When I came, he was going.
Past	Past progressive	وقتیکه می‌آمدم، او رفت (<i>vaghti-ke mi-āmadam, u raft</i>) When I was coming, he went.
Past perfect		وقتیکه می‌آمدم، او رفته بود (<i>vaghti-ke mi-āmadam, u rafte bud</i>) When I was coming, he had gone.
Past progressive		وقتیکه می‌آمدم، او می‌رفت (<i>vaghti-ke mi-āmadam, u mi-raft</i>) When I was coming, he was going. / Whenever I came, he went.
Past progressive	Past perfect	وقتیکه آمده بودم، او می‌رفت (<i>vaghti-ke āmade budam, u mi-raft</i>) When I had come, he was going.

Table 13.3 If it is about future, use:

<i>In the main clause</i>	<i>In the time clause</i>	<i>Example</i>
Future	Simple past ¹	وقتیکه خواهد رفت (<i>vaghti-ke āmadam, khāhad raft</i>) When I come, he'll go.
Simple present		وقتیکه می‌رود (<i>vaghti-ke āmadam, mi-ravad</i>) When I come, he goes.
Present perfect		وقتیکه آمده است (<i>vaghti-ke āmadam, rafte ast</i>) By the time I come, he's gone.
Imperative		وقتیکه کتاب را بده (<i>vaghti-ke āmadam, ketāb rā be-deh</i>) When I come, give (me) the book.

Table 13.3 (Continued)

<i>In the main clause</i>	<i>In the time clause</i>	<i>Example</i>
Future	Subjunctive	وقتیکه بیایم، خواهد رفت (<i>vaghti-ke biyāyam, khāhad raft</i>) When I come, he'll go.
Simple present		می رود وقتیکه بیایم، (<i>vaghti-ke biyāyam, mi-ravad</i>) When I come, he goes.
Present progressive		دارد می رود وقتیکه بیایم، (<i>vaghti-ke biyāyam, dārad mi-ravad</i>) When I come, he's going.
Present perfect		رفته است وقتیکه بیایم، (<i>vaghti-ke biyāyam, rafte ast</i>) By the time I come, he's gone.
Future	Perfect subjunctive	وقتیکه آمده باشم، خواهد رفت (<i>vaghti-ke āmade bāsham, khāhad raft</i>) After I come, he'll go.
Simple present		می رود وقتیکه آمده باشم، (<i>vaghti-ke āmade bāsham, mi-ravad</i>) After I come, he goes.
Present progressive		دارد می رود وقتیکه آمده باشم، (<i>vaghti-ke āmade bāsham, dārad mi-ravad</i>) When I come, he's going.
Present perfect		رفته است وقتیکه آمده باشم، (<i>vaghti-ke āmade bāsham, rafte ast</i>) By the time I come, he's gone.
Simple present	Simple present	می رود وقتیکه می آیم، (<i>vaghti-ke mi-āyam, mi-ravad</i>) When(ever) I come, he goes.
Present progressive		دارد می رود وقتیکه می آیم، (<i>vaghti-ke mi-āyam, dārad mi-ravad</i>) When I'm coming, he's going.
Present perfect		رفته است وقتیکه می آیم، (<i>vaghti-ke mi-āyam, rafte ast</i>) When I'm coming, he's gone.
Imperative		کناب را بده وقتیکه می آیم، (<i>vaghti-ke mi-āyam, ketāb rā be-deh</i>) When I come, give (me) the book.
Future	Present perfect	وقتیکه آمده ام، خواهد رفت (<i>vaghti-ke āmade'am, khāhad raft</i>) After I come, he'll go.
Simple present		می رود وقتیکه آمده ام، (<i>vaghti-ke āmade'am, mi-ravad</i>) After I come, he goes.
Present progressive		دارد می رود وقتیکه آمده ام، (<i>vaghti-ke āmade'am, dārad mi-ravad</i>) When I come, he's going.
Present perfect		رفته است وقتیکه آمده ام، (<i>vaghti-ke āmade'am, rafte ast</i>) By the time I have come, he's gone.
Imperative		کناب را بده وقتیکه آمده ام، (<i>vaghti-ke āmade'am, ketāb rā be-deh</i>) Once I have come, give (me) the book.

13.4.2 Dropping *vaghti* or *ke* – or both

- (a) Instead of *وقتیکه* (also written separately: *وقتی که*) it is possible to use *وقتی* and drop *که* :
- دعا کنید وقتی صبح شد، برف زیادی روی بام نباشد* (*do'ā konid vaghti sobh shod, barf-e ziyādi ru-ye bām na-bāshad*, Pray [to God] that when the morning comes, there won't be a lot of snow on the roof.)
- (b) It is also possible to drop *وقتی* and just keep *که* , but this version has its own rules:
- If the time clause is the first clause (as it normally is), you can drop *وقتی* and then place *که* in the middle of that clause, for instance after the subject or a time adverb (but not in the middle of two or more words that belong together). Consider a rather long time clause like this: *وقتیکه مینا دیروز صبح از خانه مادرش برمی گشت، بابک را در خیابان دید* (*vaghti-ke minā diruz-sobh az khāne-ye mādar-ash bar-mi-gasht, bābak rā dar khiyābān did*, As Mina was returning yesterday morning from her mother's home, she saw Bābak on the street.). In the clause, after dropping *وقتی*, one can place *که* in one of the following positions without any change in meaning:
 - مینا که دیروز صبح از خانه مادرش برمی گشت، بابک را در خیابان دید* (*minā ke diruz-sobh az khāne-ye mādar-ash bar-mi-gasht, . . .*)
 - مینا دیروز صبح که از خانه مادرش برمی گشت، بابک را در خیابان دید* (*minā diruz-sobh ke az khāne-ye mādar-ash bar-mi-gasht, . . .*)
 - مینا دیروز صبح از خانه مادرش که برمی گشت، بابک را در خیابان دید* (*minā diruz-sobh az khāne-ye mādar-ash ke bar-mi-gasht, . . .*)
 - It is also possible to place this *که* at the beginning of the second clause (the tense after this *که* usually limited to simple present and simple past). The previous sentence would then look like this (note that no comma is needed this time):
 - مینا دیروز صبح از خانه مادرش برمی گشت که بابک را در خیابان دید* (*minā diruz-sobh az khāne-ye mādar-ash bar-mi-gasht ke bābak rā dar khiyābān did*, Mina was returning yesterday morning from her mother's home when she saw Bābak on the street.)

However, this version would always require two actions, one in progress while the other one, usually the one mentioned in the 2nd clause, intercepts it.
- (c) *Vaghti-ke* ('when') is sometimes very close to *agar* ('if') and, like *agar*, it can sometimes be dropped in colloquial Persian (see Section 13.2 for examples with *agar*), with a change in intonation (i.e., raising the pitch of voice at the end of the first clause) taking its place. However, with certain tenses it would sometimes not be very clear whether *agar* has been dropped there or *vaghti-ke*. Some examples:

پدرم زنده بود، هر سال پائیز به اروپا می‌رفتیم (*pedar-am zende bud, har-sāl pā'iz be orupā mi-raftim*, When my father still lived, we used to go to Europe every autumn.) This could also mean: 'Had my father been alive, we would have gone to Europe every summer.' By adding a که after پدرم we can avoid such a confusion:

... پدرم که زنده بود

By the way, without the proper intonation showing the incompleteness and dependence of the first clause, these would simply be two unrelated sentences: 'My father was alive, we used to go to Europe every summer.'

باران می‌آید، آب از سقف چکه می‌کند (*bārān mi-āyad, āb az saghf chek.ke mi-konad*, When it rains, water drips from the ceiling.)

حقوقت را گرفتی، اول قرضه‌هایت را بده (*hoghugh-at rā gerefti, au.val gharz-hā-yat rā bedeh*, Once you get / receive your salary, first give / pay your debts.)

13.4.3 Before and after

بعد از آنکه (*ba'd-az ān-ke*, after [conj.]) or پس از آنکه (*pas-az ān-ke*, same meaning, but more formal) can be used with the same tenses as وقتیکه in the above examples, provided that the action in the main clause happens *after* that of the time clause.

پیش از آنکه (*pish az ān-ke*, before [conj.]) or قبل از آنکه (*ghabl az ān-ke*, same meaning) is always followed by the *subj.* in the *time clause*, which can be simple or perfect subjunctive – usually interchangeable, the perfect one putting more emphasis on the completion of the action and its pastness. The *main clause*, however, can have a variety of tenses. The following examples include some of the possible tense combinations.

Unlike وقتیکه (*vaghti-ke*), in these and many other conjunctions که cannot be dropped. Colloquial Persian would always prefer using اینکه (*in-ke*) to آنکه (*ān-ke*) in compound conjunctions.

دیروز بعد از آنکه به مدرسه رفتم، برف آمد (*diruz ba'd-az ān-ke be madrese raftam, barf āmad*, It snowed yesterday after I went to school.)

دیروز قبل از آنکه به مدرسه بروم، برف آمد (*diruz ghabl az ān-ke be madrese be-ravam, barf āmad*, It snowed yesterday before I went to school.)

فردا بعد از آنکه مینا بیاید، غذا می‌خوریم (*fardā ba'd-az ān-ke minā biyāyad, ghazā mi-khorim*, We'll eat tomorrow after Mina comes.)

فردا قبل از آنکه مینا بیاید، غذا می‌خوریم (*fardā ghabl az ān-ke minā biyāyad, ghazā mi-khorim*, We'll eat tomorrow before Mina comes.)

بعد از آنکه مهمانها آمدند، پرویز ناگهان در استخر افتاد (*ba'd-az ān-ke mehmān-hā āmadand, parviz nāgahān dar estakhr oftād*, After the guests came, Parviz suddenly fell in the pool.)

13.4.4 As soon as (همینکه)

همینکه (*hamin-ke*, 'as soon as'; compare with *tā*, Section 13.6) can also be used with different tense combinations; the following are the most common ones:

SIMPLE PAST + SIMPLE PAST:

همینکه در را باز کردم، یک مأمور پلیس پشتِ در دیدم (*hamin-ke dar rā bāz kardam, yek ma'mur-e polis posht-e dar didam*, As soon as I opened door, I saw a policeman behind the door.)

PAST PROGRESSIVE + PAST PROGRESSIVE:

همینکه عکس پسرش را می‌دید، گریه می‌کرد (*hamin-ke aks-e pesar-ash rā mi-did, gerye mi-kard*, As soon as she would see her son's picture, she would cry.)

PRESENT / SUBJUNCTIVE + PRESENT:

همینکه به خانه می‌آید، می‌نشیند جلو تلویزیون (*hamin-ke be khāne mi-āyad, mi-neshinad jelow-e televiziyon*, As soon as he comes home, he sits in front of the TV.)

همینکه بیاید، با او حرف می‌زنم (*hamin-ke biyāyad, bā u harf mi-zanam*, As soon as she comes, I'll talk to her.)

SUBJUNCTIVE + FUTURE:

همینکه او را ببینید، همه چیز را به یاد خواهید آورد (*hamin-ke u rā be-binid, hame-chiz rā be yād khāhid āvard*, As soon as you see him, you'll remember everything.)

PAST / SUBJUNCTIVE + IMPERATIVE:

همینکه آمد / بیاید، این کتاب را به او بده (*hamin-ke āmad / biyāyad, in ketāb rā be u bedeh*, As soon as she comes, give her this book.)

13.4.5 Whenever (هر وقت که)

هر وقت که (*har vaght ke*, whenever) is sometimes treated loosely as a synonym of وقتیکه (*vaghti-ke*) or همینکه (*hamin-ke*), especially when both clauses use the same tense.

When used more strictly in the sense of *every time that*, then its more appropriate synonym would be هر بار که (*har bār ke*).

With هر وقت که and هر بار که, it is possible to drop که .

Some examples:

هر وقت (که) هوا ابری می شود، افسرده می شوم (*har vaght [ke] havā abri mi-shavad, afsorde mi-shavam*, Whenever it becomes cloudy, I become depressed.)

هر بار (که) او را می بینم، پیرتر شده است (*har bār [ke] u rā mi-binam, pir-tar shode ast*, Every time I see him, he's become older.)

هر وقت (که) آمد، این کتاب را به او بده (*har vaght [ke] āmad, in ketāb rā be u bedeh*, Should she come / any time she should come, give her this book.)

13.4.6 A few more conjunctions for time

از وقتیکه (*az vaghti-ke*) = since, from the time that:

از وقتیکه ازدواج کرده (است) او را کمتر می بینم (*az vaghti-ke ezdevāj karde [ast] u rā kam-tar mi-binam*, I see her less often since she is / has married.)

تا / تا وقتیکه (*tā / tā vaghti-ke*) = (a) 'so long as,' (b) 'by the time that':

تا وقتیکه اینجا بود، ازدواج نکرده بود (*tā vaghti-ke injā bud, ezdevāj na-karde bud*, So long as she was here, she was / had not married.)

تا شما برسید، او رفته است (*tā shomā be-resid, u rafte ast*, By the time you come, he is gone.)

در حالیکه (*dar hāli-ke*) = (a) 'while,' 'as' (usually progressive), (b) 'whereas' (not temporal in this sense and usually introducing the second clause):

در حالیکه می خندید، از سفرش به ایران گفت (*dar hāli-ke mi-khandid, az safar-ash be irān goft*, While [he was] laughing, he said about his journey to Iran.)

در حالیکه شوهرم رانندگی می کرد، با او درباره مهمانی حرف می زدم (*dar hāli-ke showhar-am rānandegi mi-kard, bā u darbāre-ye mehmāni harf mi-zadam*, While my husband was driving, I was talking to him about the party.)

او را هیچوقت ندیده بودم، در حالیکه برادرش را خوب می‌شناختم (*u rā hich-vaght na-dide budam, dar hāli-ke barādar-ash rā khub mi-shenākhtam*, I had never seen him / her, whereas I knew his / her brother well.)

13.5 Temporal idioms 'had hardly / scarcely' and 'no sooner'

For the idiomatic 'had hardly (/ scarcely / barely) . . . when . . .' or 'had still not . . . when . . .' the most common construction in Persian would be:

hanuz (هنوز) + negative past perfect + *ke* (که)

This can have shorter versions also: sometimes no *hanuz*, and sometimes just a negative past participle instead of past perfect (as mentioned in Chapter 7, Section 7.11). But it works best when all ingredients are there:

hanuz be av.valin nāme-ash javāb na-dāde budam ke nāme-ye dov.vom-ash resid, I had still not responded to his first letter when his second letter arrived.)
hanuz ghes.se rā shoru' na-karde budam ke khāb-ash bord, I had hardly started the story when he fell asleep.)

For 'no sooner . . . than . . .' no negative is required, and *tāze* (تازه) is used instead of *هنوز*:

tāze (تازه) + past perfect + *ke* (که)

tāze ghes.se rā shoru' karde budam ke khāb-ash bord, No sooner had I started the story than he fell asleep.)

tāze dar rā bāz karde budam ke gorbe birun david, I had no sooner opened the door than the cat ran out.)

Compare with *همینکه* (*hamin-ke*) or with *تا* (*tā*):

hamin-ke dar rā bāz kardam, gorbe birun david, As soon as I opened the door, the cat ran out.)

= *tā dar rā bāz kardam, gorbe birun david*, same meaning)

13.6 A review of the omnipotent *tā* (*tā*)

13

Sentences:
from phrases
to complex

To use the word *tā* itself to describe it, one could say it is بی‌همتا (*bi-ham-tā*), meaning ‘matchless’ and ‘incomparable.’

(a) As a noun it means (among others) a ‘match’ and ‘a fold’ – with which the compound verb *tā kardan*, تا کردن (to fold) has been formed or the agent participle *tā-show*, تاشو (foldable, folding).

(b) As a numerative, *tā* is the most common counting word used after numbers, which, in certain cases, is indispensable – as when numbers are used as pronouns (see Section 5.9):

تو چهار برادر داری ولی من فقط دو تا دارم
(*to chahār barādar dāri vali man faghat do tā dāram*, You have four brothers, but I have only two.)

(c) As a preposition – both temporal and locational – it means ‘until / up to / as far as’ (see Section 9.1):

تا کنار رودخانه دویدم
(*tā kenār-e rud-khāne davidam*, I ran as far as the river.)
باید تا فردا بمانم
(*bāyad tā fardā be-mānam*, I must stay until tomorrow.)

(d) In comparative, it can function as *than* when placed after the verb (see Section 6.10.1):

از تو بیشتر می‌ترسد تا از من
(*az to bishtar mi-tarsad tā az man*, He is more afraid of you than me.)

(e) Most importantly, as a conjunction (see Section 13.9.1 also), *tā* has at least five different usages:

i It means ‘in order to’ (= برای اینکه, *barāye in-ke*) or ‘so that’ when introducing a subsequent clause and will always require the subjunctive:

عینک زدم تا بهتر ببینم
(*eynak zadam tā behtar be-binam*, I put on [my] glasses [in order] to see better / so that I [could] see better.)

بیشتر توضیح بدهید تا بفهمم
(*bishtar towzih be-dahid tā be-fahmam*, Explain more so that I [can] understand.)

ii It also means ‘until’ when introducing a subsequent clause, using the subjunctive if about future (or future in the past):

صبر می‌کنیم تا بیاید
(*sabr mi-konim tā biyāyad*, We’ll wait until he comes.)

صبر کردیم تا بیاید
(*sabr kardim tā biyāyad*, We waited for him to come.)

صبر کردیم تا آمد
(*sabr kardim tā āmad*, We waited until he came.)

iii Introducing the first clause, it can still mean ‘until’ / ‘for as long as’ with an affirmative verb:

تا هوا اینطور است (باید) نمی‌توانیم برویم
(*tā havā in-tour ast [i] bāshad] nemi-tavānim be-ravim*, So long as the weather is like this, we can’t go.)

بود *(tā u dar tehrān zendegi mi-kard pedar-ash zende bud*, So long as he lived in Tehran, his father was alive.)

The meaning changes to 'until' / 'by the time that' if the verb indicates the completion of an action (and not a state; no progressive tenses; and often a perfect tense in the main clause):

است *(tā in ketāb rā tamām konam mu-hā-yam sefid shode ast*, By the time I finish this book, my hair has turned white.)

بود *(tā u az safar bar-gasbt pedar-ash morde bud*, By the time he returned from the trip, his father had died.)

- iv Introducing the first clause (with negative), it means 'so long as' – or 'until' if you translate as affirmative. Use subjunctive if about future:

آورم *(tā ghazā-yat rā na-khori bastani rā nemi-āvaram*, I won't bring the ice-cream so long as you don't eat [= until you eat] your food.)

نداد *(tā ghazā-yam rā na-khordam be man bastani na-dād*, She didn't give me ice-cream so long as I hadn't eaten [= until I ate] my food.)

- v Finally, introducing the first clause, it can mean 'as soon as' (= همینه, *hamin-ke*), with the main stress on *tā*; see below the different tenses and moods:

فهمید *(tā dar rā bāz konad, hame-chiz rā khāhad fahmid*, As soon as he opens the door, he will understand everything.)

فهمید *(tā dar rā bāz kard, hame-chiz rā fahmid*, As soon as he opened the door, he realized everything.)

تلویزیون *(tā be khāne mi-āyad, mi-ravad jelowe televiziyon*, As soon as he comes home, he goes before the TV.)

کرد *(tā doktor rā mi-did farār mi-kard*, He used to run away as soon as he would see the doctor.)

کرد *(tā doktor rā did farār kard*, He ran away as soon as he saw the doctor.)

- vi Now obsolete / archaic, it was used as a sign of warning also, like 'Beware that you don't do this, . . .' etc. Example from the poet Saadi:

شوی *(ze sāheb-gharaz tā sokhan nashnavi / ke gar kār bandi pashimān shavi*, Beware that you don't listen to the [advice of] the ill-intentioned person, for if you do, you'll regret.)

13.7 Relative clauses

13

Sentences:
from phrases
to complex

All relative clauses in Persian use the omnipotent که (*ke*); *ke* is the single, unavoidable and irreplaceable actor for all sorts of relative clauses, standing for all *wh*-words (+ ‘that’) which introduce a relative clause in English.

13.7.1 Restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses

The relative clause is usually placed immediately after the word (or cluster of words) that it is supposed to modify – i.e., in the middle of the main clause. Sometimes this might lead to two verbs – each belonging to one of the clauses – coming together at the end of the sentence, making an awkward sentence. To avoid this, especially if the relative clause is rather long and what remains after it from the main clause is just a short verb, sometimes the whole relative clause is placed after the main clause.

A *non-restrictive* relative clause gives some unessential or superfluous information which can be left out without harming the meaning of the main clause. (This is the kind of clause usually separated in English from the rest of the sentence by two commas, but punctuation marks are not standardized in Persian and are not always used.) Example:

این کتاب، که پانصد صفحه دارد، خیلی سخت است
(*in ketāb, ke pānsad safhe dārad, kheyli sakht ast*, This book, which has 500 pages, is very difficult.)

بابک، که همسایهٔ ماست، پسر خیلی خوبی است
(*bābak, ke hamsāye-ye mā-st, pesar-e kheyli khubi ast*, Bābak, who is our neighbor, is a very nice boy.)

A *restrictive* relative clause – one that provides some essential information and cannot easily be left out without changing the meaning of the main clause – usually needs an unstressed *-i* suffix to be added to the word (or to the end of the cluster of words) being modified by the relative clause. Compare the following with the non-restrictive examples mentioned above:

این کتابی که پانصد صفحه دارد خیلی سخت است
(*in ketābi ke pānsad safhe dārad kheyli sakht ast*, This book / The book that has 500 pages is very difficult [= not those other books!].)

بابکی که همسایهٔ ماست پسر خیلی خوبی است
(*bābaki ke hamsāye-ye mā-st pesar-e kheyli khubi ast*, The Bābak who is our neighbor is a very nice boy [= not the other Bābak whom you also know!].)

Example of *-i* added to a cluster of words (also called an 'ezāfe string') like دختر زیبای جوان (*dokhtar-e zibā-ye javān*, beautiful young girl):

دختر زیبای جوانی که می‌بینید خواهرِ دوستم است (*dokhtar-e zibā-ye javāni ke mi-binid khāhar-e dust-am ast*, The beautiful young girl that you see is my friend's sister.)

Compare these two examples of *restrictive* and *non-restrictive* relative clauses:

Non-restrictive: به اتاقِ دیگر، که کمی کوچکتر بود، رفتیم (*be otāgh-e digar, ke kami kuchek-tar bud, raftim*, We went to the other room, which was a little smaller.)

Restrictive: به اتاقِ دیگری که کمی کوچکتر بود رفتیم (*be otāgh-e digari ke kami kuchek-tar bud raftim*, We went to another room which was a little smaller.)

Other examples:

شاعری که "بهشتِ گم‌شده" را نوشته بود در بهشت گم شد (*shā'eri ke behesht-e gom-shode rā neveshte bud dar behesht gom shod*, The poet who had written *Paradise Lost* was lost in paradise.)

آیا کسی را می‌شناسید که "داستان دو شهر" را خوانده باشد؟ (*āyā kasi rā mi-shenāsīd ke dāstān-e do shahr rā khānde bāshad?*, Do you know someone who has read *A Tale of Two Cities*?)

اگر چیزی (را) پیدا کنم که مالِ کس دیگری نیست، آیا آن چیز مالِ من است؟ (*agar chizi [rā] peydā konam ke māl-e kas-e digari nist, āyā ān chiz māl-e man ast?*, If I find something that does not belong to anyone else, does it belong to me?)

13.7.2

When not to use *-i* in restrictive relative clauses

When possessive pronouns (whether independent or suffixed) are attached to the words that are to be modified by the relative clause, the clause is often *non-restrictive*; but even if it is used as a *restrictive* clause, the *-i* suffix is not used. Examples:

Non-restrictive: برادرم، که سی ساله است، در مشهد است (*barādar-am, ke si sāle ast, dar mashhad ast*, My brother, who is 30 years old, is in Mashhad.) – He is apparently the only brother I have.

Restrictive: *آن برادرم که سی ساله است در مشهد است* (*ān barādar-am ke si sāle ast dar mashhad ast*, That brother of mine who is 30 years old is in Mashhad.) – I have other brothers also.

This would pertain to the other possessive version – *برادر من* (*barādar-e man*) – also.

Another case where *-i* is dropped – especially in spoken Persian and in less formal written Persian – is when the modified word, or the *antecedent*, ends already in *-i*. This is still more common when demonstrative adjectives are used.

Example with demonstrative adjective:

آن لباس آبی (= آبی‌ای) که خریدم کمی تنگ است (*ān lebās-e ābi [= ābi'i] ke kharidam kami tang ast*, That blue dress that I bought is a little tight.)

Example without demonstrative adjective:

قوری‌ای که روی میز بود شکست (*ghuri'i ke ru-ye miz bud shekast*, The teapot that was on the table broke.) – Here we are much less likely to drop *-i*, especially in the written version.

13.7.3 When and how to use را

See Section 3.4.3 for more details about را or what this book calls the *DDO*-marker – the marker for a *definite direct object*.

The noun (or pronoun) modified by the relative clause can be the subject or object of either the main verb (in the main clause) or the subordinate verb (in the relative clause), or of both; moreover, it can be definite or indefinite.

You will need a را (usually placed between *-i* and *ke*) if the modified noun is the *definite direct object* of the **main verb** (and not the subordinate verb!).

Compare the following complex sentences with relative clauses and see where and why you need را for the word قلم ('pen'):

قلمی که خیلی گران بود مال او بود (*ghalami ke kheyli gerān bud māl-e u bud*, The pen that was very expensive was his.) – قلم is subject of both verbs; no را.

قلمی که شما دیدید مال او بود (*ghalami ke shomā didid māl-e u bud*, The pen that you saw was his.) – قلم is the direct object of subordinate verb, but the subject of the main verb; no را.

از قلمی که دیدم خوشم نیامد (*az ghalami ke didam khosh-am nayāmad*, I didn't like the pen that I saw.) – قلم is the direct object of the subordinate verb, but *indirect* object of the main verb; still no را.

قلمی که خوب بنویسد ندیدم (*ghalami ke khub be-nevisad na-didam*, I didn't see a pen that writes well.) – قلم is the subject of the subordinate verb and *indefinite* direct object of the main verb; still no را.

قلمی را که خوب می نویسد ندیدم (*ghalami rā ke khub mi-nevisad na-didam*, I didn't see *the* pen that writes well.) – قلم is the subject of subordinate verb and *definite direct object* of main verb; now you need را.

قلمی را که خریده بودم اینجا نمی بینم (*ghalami rā ke kharide budam injā nemi-binam*, I don't see here *the* pen that I had bought.) – قلم is the object of both verbs and, more importantly, *definite direct object* of the main verb; you need را.

Note: In less careful, 'bad' Persian, sometimes this را is used wrongly – i.e., where it is actually not needed.

13.7.4

What happens to prepositions and antecedents in possessive case?

In these cases, Persian repeats a pronoun (referring to the antecedent) in the relative clause – what would be regarded as redundancy in English. 'The girl whose father . . .' would become in Persian 'the girl that *her* father. . . .' Similarly, 'the book about which we talked . . .' would become 'the book that we talked about *it*. . . .' Or 'the house where [= in which] we lived. . . .' would become 'the house that we lived in *it*. . . .' Examples:

بقالی که همیشه ماستش تُرش بود از این محله رفت (*bagh.ghāli ke hamishe māst-ash torsh bud az in mahal.le raft*, The grocer whose yogurt was always sour went from this neighborhood.)

دختری که پدرش را کشتند گریه می کرد (*dokhtari ke pedar-ash rā koshtand gerye mi-kard*, The girl whose father they killed [= was killed] was crying.)

کتابی را که درباره آن حرف می زدیم به فارسی ترجمه کن (*ketābi rā ke darbāre-ye ān harf mi-zadim be fārsi tarjome kon*, Translate into Persian the book about which we were talking.)

خانه ای را که در آن زندگی می کردیم فروختند (*khāne'i rā ke dar ān zendegi mi-kardim forukhtand*, They sold the house in which we used to live.)

سگی که دیروز از آن ترسیدید الآن جلو خانه شماس
al'ān jelow-e khāne-ye shomā-st, The dog of which you were afraid /
 the dog that scared you yesterday is right now in front of your house.)

13.8 Adverbial clauses of manner

To say in what manner something happened, adverbs can be used or adverbial phrases or even adverbial clauses. Examples:

Adverb: زلزله بشدت خانه را لرزاند (*zelzele be-shed.dat khāne rā larzānd*,
 The earthquake severely shook the house.)

Adverbial phrase: زلزله با شدتی غیر قابل تصور خانه را لرزاند (*zelzele bā shed.
 dati gheyre-ghābel-e tasav.vor khāne rā larzānd*, The earthquake
 shook the house with unimaginable severity.)

Adverbial clause: زلزله با شدتی که قابل تصور نبود خانه را لرزاند (*zelzele bā
 shed.dati ke ghābel-e tasav.vor na-bud khāne rā larzānd*, The earth-
 quake shook the house with severity that was beyond imagination.)

In many ways similar to relative clauses, adverbial clauses always need the conjunction که (*ke*) and it often cannot be dropped. (One exception: those functioning to say 'as if . . . / it seems that . . .' mentioned earlier [see Section 13.2], where *ke* can be dropped.)

As in English, some conjunctions used in *temporal* clauses (*as, while*) can be used for *manner* as well, like در حالیکه (*dar-hāli-ke*, 'while,' see Section 13.4.6) and همانطور که (*hamān-towr-ke*, as, in the same manner that), or the more formal / literary همچنانکه (*hamchenān-ke*, same meaning, see Section 13.10 / C):

در حالیکه دست همدیگر را گرفته بودند وارد خانه شدند (*dar hāli-ke dast-e ham-
 digar rā gerefte budand vāred-e khāne shodand*, They entered the
 house while holding each other's hands.)

همانطور که گریه می کرد از مرگ مادرش گفت (*hamān-towr ke gerye mi-kard
 az marg-e mādar-ash goft*, She said about her mother's death as she
 was crying.)

با (*bā*, with) + a noun + a relative clause is very common:

با صدائی که از عصبانیت می لرزید گفت از کارش استعفا می دهد (*bā sedā'i ke
 az asabāniyyat mi-larqid goft az kār-ash este'fā mi-dahad*, With a
 voice that was trembling from anger, he said that he would resign
 from his job.)

با سرعتی که انتظارش نمی‌رفت آن کتاب را ترجمه کرد (*bā sor'ati ke entezār-ash nemi-raft ān ketāb rā tarjome kard*, With a speed that was not expected / that was beyond expectations, he translated that book.)

بی آنکه (*bi ān-ke*, see also Section 13.11) or بدون آنکه (*bedun-e ān-ke*, same), both of which would require the subjunctive, could be the opposite of *bā* in this usage:²

بی آنکه حرفش را قطع کنم به ساعت نگاه کردم (*bi ān-ke harf-ash rā ghat' konam be sā'at-am negāh kardam*, I looked at my watch without interrupting him.)

Examples of adverbial clauses that show similarity (in fact fitting in the larger category of *relative clauses*):

مثل کسی که مار دیده باشد، سر جایش خشکش زد (*mesl-e kasi ke mār dide bāshad, sar-e jā-yash khoshk-ash zad*, He was stunned motionless, like someone who had seen a snake.)

مثل تریاکی ای که تریاکش دیر شده باشد خمیازه می کشید (*mesl-e taryāki'i ke taryāk-ash dir shode bāshad khamyāze mi-keshid*, He yawned like an opium addict waiting [too long] for his opium.)

13.9 More types of subordinate clauses using conjunctions

Coordinating and *correlative* conjunctions that were mentioned in Chapter 9 can also join clauses; see Sections 9.2.1 and 9.2.2 for examples. Here some other types of clauses and conjunctions are introduced.

13.9.1 Clauses of purpose, cause and effect

(A) To say 'He came here (in order) to see you,' you normally say in Persian:

به اینجا آمد که تو را ببیند (*be injā āmad ke to rā be-binad*)

The conjunction *که* in the above sentence can also be dropped or can be replaced by any of the following conjunctions:

تا (*tā*)

برای آنکه (*barāye ān-ke*)

به قصد آنکه / به این قصد که (*be ghasd-e ān-ke / bā in ghasd ke*)

به منظور آنکه / به این منظور که (*be manzur-e ān-ke / be in manzur ke*)
 به نیت آنکه / به این نیت که (*be niyyat-e ān-ke / be in niyyat ke*)
 به خاطر آنکه / به این خاطر که (*be khāter-e ān-ke / be in khāter ke*)
 با هدف آنکه / با این هدف که (*bā hadaf-e ān-ke / bā in hadaf ke*)

Here you can switch the two clauses; only, you can't use که nor تا (in this sense) at the beginning of the first clause:

برای آنکه تو را ببیند به اینجا آمد (*barāye ān-ke to rā be-binad be injā āmad*,
 He came here to see you.)

Another possibility would be using a preposition:

برای دیدن تو به اینجا آمد (*barāye didan-e to be injā āmad*, He came here
 for [/ with the purpose of] seeing you.)

Instead of برای in the above sentence, you can use any of the following:

به قصد (*be ghasd-e*)
 به منظور (*be manzur-e*)
 به نیت (*be niyyat-e*)
 به خاطر (*be khāter-e*)
 با هدف (*bā hadaf-e*)

(B) To say 'He came here because he wanted to see you,' you normally say
 in Persian:

به اینجا آمد چون می‌خواست تو را ببیند (*be injā āmad chon mi-khāst to rā
 be-binad*)

Instead of the conjunction چون in the above sentence you can use any
 of the following:

چونکه (*chon-ke*)
 زیرا (*zirā*)
 چرا که (*cherā-ke*)
 برای اینکه (*barāye in-ke*)
 به خاطر آنکه (*be khāter-e ān-ke*)
 به دلیل آنکه (*be dalil-e ān-ke*)
 به جهت آنکه (*be jahat-e ān-ke*)
 به سبب آنکه (*be sabab-e ān-ke*)

You can switch the two clauses again, only you can't use چراکه (*cherā-ke*)
 or زیرا (*zirā*) at the beginning of the sentence – and you can additionally
 use از آنجا که (*az ānjā-ke*) instead:

چون می‌خواست تو را ببیند به اینجا آمد (*chon mi-khāst to rā be-binad be
 injā āmad*, Because / since he wanted to see you, he came here.)

(C) To say ‘He wanted to see you; therefore, he came here,’ you normally say in Persian:

می‌خواست تو را ببیند، به همین دلیل به اینجا آمد
(*mi-khāst to rā be-binad, be hamin dalil be injā āmad*)

Instead of *به همین دلیل* in the above sentence you can use any of the following:

پس (*pas*)
بنا بر این (*banā-bar-in*)
برای همین (*barāye hamin*)
به همین قصد (*be hamin ghasd*)
به همین منظور (*be hamin mazur*)
به همین نیت (*be hamin niyyat*)
به همین خاطر (*be hamin khāter*)
به خاطر همین (*be khāter-e hamin*)
به همین جهت (*be hamin jahat*)
به همین سبب (*be hamin sabab*)
در نتیجه (*dar natije*)

Two notes:

- As clear above, *به خاطر* (*be khāter-e*) can both mean ‘for the purpose of’ (which is about future) and ‘because of’ (which is about past).
- As always, *اینکه* (*in-ke*) is more common than *آنکه* (*ān-ke*) in less formal Persian – while some expressions like *به سبب* (*be sabab-e*) and *به جهت* (*be jahat-e*) are more formal and for these *آنکه* would be a better fit.

13.9.2

Clauses of contrast / concession

Concessive statements are referring to some logical contrast between the two clauses and use words like *اگرچه* (*agar-che*, although).

(A) To say ‘Although it was raining, we waited,’ you normally say in Persian:

منتظر شدیم اگرچه باران می‌آمد، منتظر شدیم
(*agar-che bārān mi-āmad, montazer shodim*)

Instead of *اگرچه* (*agar-che*, although) in the above sentence you can use any of the following:

هرچند (*har-chand*)
با اینکه / با آنکه (*bā in-ke / bā ān-ke*)
با وجود اینکه (*bā vojūd-e in-ke*)

آنکه / به رغم آنکه (*alā-raghm-e ān-ke / be-raghm-e ān-ke*)

You can switch the two clauses, using the same conjunctions.

Sometimes in clauses of concession, two conjunctions are used for emphasis, each introducing one of the clauses. Though an obvious redundancy, this is not a rarity in Persian:

اگرچه باران خیلی تندى مى آمد، ولى باز هم منتظر شديدى
(*agar-che bārān-e kheyli tonḍi mi-āmad, vali bāz ham montazer shodim*, Although it was raining very hard, *but still* we waited.)

با وجود (*bā vojūd-e*), على رغم (*alā-raghm-e*) and به رغم (*be-raghm-e*) can be used as prepositions also:

با وجود باران، منتظر شديدى
(*bā vojūd-e bārān, montazer shodim*, In spite of the rain, we waited.)

(B) To say 'It was raining; nevertheless, we waited,' you normally say in Persian:

باران مى آمد، با اينهمه منتظر شديدى
(*bārān mi-āmad, bā in-hame montazer shodim*)

Instead of *bā in-hame*, however) in the above sentence you can use one of the following:

با وجود اين (*bā vojūd-e in*)

با اين وجود (*bā in vojūd*)

معهدا (*ma'a-hāzā*)

معذلك (*ma'a-zālek*)

على رغم آن (*alā-raghm-e ān*)

به رغم آن (*be raghm-e ān*)

13.9.3 Clauses of result (or consequence)

In *clauses of result* (or *consequence*), Persian usually uses different words in the first clause and begins the second clause with *که* (*ke*). The words used include:

- آنقدر / اينقدر / بقدرى / به اندازه اى (*ān-ghadr / in-ghadr / be-ghadri / be andāze'i*) all meaning 'so, so much, so many, to such an extent':

آنقدر خسته بود که فوراً خوابش بُرد
(*ān-ghadr khaste bud ke fowrān khāb-ash bord*, She was so tired that she immediately fell asleep.)

آنقدر پول دارد که نمى داند با آن چکار کند
(*ān-ghadr pul dārad ke nemi-dānad bā ān che-kār konad*, He has so much money that he doesn't know what to do with it.)

شد *ān-ghadr ketāb khānd ke kur shod*, He read so many books that he became blind.)

کرد *be-ghadri bā ajale raft ke kif-ash rā farāmush kard*, She left with such haste that she forgot her purse / bag.)

See Section 13.14 for more examples with *آنقدر* in a different sense.

Also note that "... که ... *آنقدر* ..." (*ān-ghadr . . . ke . . .*) differs from "... تا ... *آنقدر* ..." (*ān-ghadr . . . tā . . .*), the latter usually meaning 'keep doing *sth.* until. . .':

داد *ān-ghadr telefon zadam tā bel'akhare kasi javāb dād*, I kept calling until someone finally answered.)

- *به گونه‌ای* (*be gune'i*, [form. / lit.]), *چوری* (*juri*, [still more col.]), *به طوری* (*[be] towri* [col.]), all meaning 'in such a way':

است *towri rāh mi-raft ke ma'lum bud khaste ast*, He walked in such a way that it was obvious that he was tired.)

شد *be gune'i bimār bud ke bāyad be bimārestān borde mi-shod*, He was so sick that he had to be taken to the hospital.)

For "... که انگار ..." (*towri . . . ke engār . . .*, in such a way as if . . .) see Section 13.2.6.

- *چنان* (*chenān*, so, such [form. / lit.]):

بند *chenān zibā-st ke hame rā mi-faribad*, She is so beautiful that she spellbinds everybody.)

کرد *chenān zibā mi-khānd ke chandin bār jāyeze-ye av.val rā bord*, She sang so beautifully that several times she won the first prize.)

کرد *chenān kār-e sakhti rā dar yek hafte nemi-tavān tamām kard*, One cannot finish such a difficult task in one week.)

Note that "... چنان ... که گوئی ..." (*chenān . . . ke gu'i . . .*, in such a way as if . . .) is a form. / lit. version of "... که انگار ..." (*towri . . . ke engār . . .*, see Section 13.2.6):

گفت *chenān sokhan mi-goft ke gu'i mā kudakim*, He talked in such a way as if we were children.)

col.: *towri harf mi-zad [ke] engār mā bach.che'im*, same meaning.)

- *چندان* (*chandān*, so, so much, so many) (poet.):

بودند *chandān dir bud ke hamegān khoft budand*, It was so late that everybody had gone to bed.) Compare this with the informal / colloquial version:

آنقدر دیر بود که همه خوابیده بودند
(*ān-ghadr dir bud ke hame khābide budand*, same meaning.)

Another example:

چندان کتاب در آن خانه یافت که حیرت کرد
(*chandān ketāb dar ān khāne yāft ke beyrat kard*, He found so many books in that house that he was astounded.)

13.10 چنان (chandān) and چنان (chenān); more conjunctions

(A) چندان (*chandān*)

In its usage as *consecutive conjunction*, the word چندان was labeled above as *poetical*, which limited its usage. However, چندان can be used in colloquial Persian in the sense of ‘much / that much’ in negative sentences:

او را چندان نمی‌شناسم
(*u rā chandān nemi-shenāsam*, I don't know him much.)

این درس چندان سخت هم نبود
(*in dars chandān sakht ham na-bud*, This lesson was not that difficult.)

چندان (*na chandān*) means زیاد نه (*ziyād na*) = ‘not much’:

"غذا خورد؟" - "نه چندان؛ اشتها نداشت."
(*-ghazā khord? - na chandān; eshtehā na-dāsh*, [- ‘Did he eat?’ - ‘Not much; he had no appetite.’])

(B) چنان‌که (*chenān-ke*)

"چنان . . . که . . ." چنان‌که (*chenān-ke*, also written چنانکه) is different from " . . . که . . ." (*chenān . . . ke . . .*, so . . . that . . .) and means ‘as’ or ‘the way that’:

. . . چنان‌که می‌دانید (*chenān-ke*, As you know . . .)

. . . چنان‌که می‌بینید (*chenān-ke*, As you see . . .)

. . . چنان‌که به ما گفته‌اند (*chenān-ke*, As we have been told . . .)

چنان‌که (*chenān-ke*) is formal (like چنان [*chenān*] itself); a very common colloquial synonym is همان‌طور‌که (*hamān-tour-ke*, written also همان‌طور‌که):

همان‌طور‌که به شما گفته بودم . . .
(*hamān-tour-ke be shomā gofte budam* . . ., As I had told you . . .)

(C) همچنان‌که (*ham-chenān-ke*)

همچنان که (*ham-chenān-ke*, in the same way that) has two meanings and functions:

1 It can have the same meaning as چنانکه (see above), maybe even more formal:

. . . است . . . (همچنانکه اعلام شده است . . . , As it has been announced . . .)

2 It means در حالیکه (*dar hāli-ke*, the temporal ‘while / as’ or ‘at the same time that’):

همچنانکه غذایی را می خورد، به اخبار رادیو گوش می کرد (*ham-chenān-ke ghazā-yash rā mi-kbord, be akhbār-e rādiyo gush mi-kard*, At the same time that he was eating, he was listening to the news on the radio.)

Note 1: Used as adverb (and not conjunction), همچنان (*ham-chenān*) means ‘still’ (*form.*; its colloquial synonym being هنوز, *hanuz*), while همچنین (*ham-chenin*) means ‘also’ or, in the negative, ‘neither / nor’ (= نیز, *niz*, both of them *form.*; their colloquial synonym being همینطور, *hamin-tour*):

او همچنان (= هنوز) در مشهد کار می کند (*u ham-chenān [= hanuz] dar mashhad kār mi-konad*, He still works in Mashhad.)

ما همچنین (= همینطور) به یک ماشین بزرگتر احتیاج داریم (*mā ham-chenin [= hamin-tour] be yek māshin-e bozorg-tar ehtiyāj dārim*, We need a larger car also.)

تو نخوابیدی، من هم همینطور (*to na-khābidi, man ham hamin-tour*, You didn’t sleep, and neither did I.) – In more formal / literary language, the last part should have been من نیز همچنین (*man niz ham-chenin*).

(See Section 7.12 also.)

Note 2: There is no همچنین که (*ham-chenin-ke*) in contemporary Persian, although in colloquial / Tehrani accent you hear / همچنین که (*hamchin-ke / hamchi-ke*) used as a synonym for همینکه (*hamin-ke*, as soon as) – which is a temporal conjunction used in time clauses (see Section 13.4.4).

13.11 Conjunctions that need the subjunctive

Some conjunctions – like the conditional *if* (Section 13.2) and some of the conjunctions used in time clauses (Section 13.4) – *can* be followed by the subjunctive; but there are some that *always* require the use of the subjunctive,

like those meaning ‘before’ (از / پیش از; see Section 13.4.3) or those meaning ‘in order to’ (see Section 13.9.1). Here are a few more examples.

- (A) The prepositions بدون (*bedun-e*) and بی (*bi*, both meaning ‘without’) as well as بجای (*be-jā-ye*, instead of) can all be used as conjunctions by adding آنکه (*ān-ke*) – and then they would always need the subjunctive. Examples:

بدون غذا / بی غذا / او دو هفته بی غذا / *u do hafte bi ghazā / bedun-e ghazā zende mānd*, He stayed alive without food for two weeks.)

بدون آنکه غذا بخورد زنده ماند / او دو هفته بی آنکه / *u do hafte bi-ān-ke / bedun-e ān-ke ghazā be-khorad zende mānd*, He stayed alive for two weeks without eating food / while he ate no food.)

ما بجای تماشای فیلم جنگ و صلح، کتابش را خواندیم / *mā be-jā-ye tamāshā-ye film-e jang-o-solh, ketāb-ash rā khāndim*, We read the book *War and Peace* instead of watching its movie.)

ما بجای آنکه فیلم جنگ و صلح را تماشا کنیم، کتابش را خواندیم / *mā be-jā-ye ān-ke film-e jang-o-solh rā tamāshā konim, ketāb-ash rā khāndim*, same meaning while using a conjunction + clause)

- (B) The correlative conjunctions . . . خواه . . . خواه (*khāh . . . khāh . . .*) and . . . چه . . . چه (*che . . . che . . .*), both meaning ‘whether . . . or . . .,’ are often followed by the subjunctive when used for the future (or for what is going to happen next):

خواه شما بیائید خواه نیائید، ما فردا به مشهد خواهیم رفت / *khāh shomā biyā'id khāh nayā'id, mā fardā be mashhad khāhim raft*, Tomorrow we will go to Mashhad, whether you come or not.)

چه بخواهد چه نخواهد، باید با آن مرد پیر ازدواج کند / *che be-khāhad che na-khāhad, bāyad bā ān mard-e pir ezdevāj konad*, Whether she wants it or not, she has to marry that old man.)

- (C) The same applies to هر چه (*har-che [ke]*) or . . . هر قدر (*ke*) (*har-che-ghadr / har-ghadr [ke]*) and the more formal versions هر اندازه (*har-andāze-ke*) or هر آنچه که (*har-ān-che-ke*), all meaning ‘whatever’ / ‘no matter what / how’ or ‘however much that,’ when they are used for what is to happen next. Compare:

هر چه گفتی، من جوابی ندادم / *har-che goft, hich javābi na-dādam*, Whatever he said, I did not respond.) – No subjunctive here!

هر چه بگویی، من جوابم میدهم / *har-che be-gu'i, be u khāham goft*, Whatever you say, I'll tell him.) – Here subjunctive!

هر قدر بخواهی، دارم / *har-ghadr be-khāhi, dāram*, I have as much / as many as you want.)

13.12 Subjunctive in certain adjectival clauses

In adjectival clauses (which are essentially relative clauses), using the subjunctive is very common, especially with interrogative or negative general statements. Compare the following:

همهٔ بچه‌ها شیطانند (*hame-ye bach.che-hā sheytān-and*, All children are naughty.)

آیا بچه‌ای هست که شیطان نباشد؟ (*āyā bach.che'i hast ke sheytān na-bāshad?*,

Is there any child who isn't naughty?)

هیچ بچه‌ای نیست که شیطان نباشد (*hich bach.che'i nist ke sheytān na-bāshad*, There's no child who isn't naughty.)

دارم کتاب می‌خوانم (*dāram ketāb mi-khānam*, I'm reading a book.)

کتابی دارم که بخوانم (*ketābi dāram ke be-khānam*, I have a book to read.)

کتابی دارم که خیلی جالب است (*ketābi dāram ke kheyli jāleb ast*, I have a book which is very interesting.)

کتابی به من بدهید که جالبتر باشد (*ketābi be man be-dahid ke jāleb-tar bāshad*, Give me a book which is more interesting.)

13.13 Noun clauses: که (ke, that / which) versus اینکه (in-ke, [the fact] that)

If you begin a sentence with a noun clause, you would usually need / اینکه (in-ke) and not آنکه (*ān-ke*) at the beginning of the sentence. Such a noun clause may function:

- as the subject;
- as direct object, usually with *rā* (این را که); or
- as indirect object (a preposition + *in-ke*).

See how the conjunction *ke* (in the middle of the sentence) changes to *in-ke* (at the beginning) in the following examples:

SUBJECT:

از اوّل معلوم بود که با او ازدواج نخواهد کرد (*az av.val ma'lum bud ke bā u ezdevāj na-khāhad kard*, It was obvious from the beginning that she would not marry him.)

→ اینکه با او ازدواج نخواهد کرد از اوّل معلوم بود (*in-ke bā u ezdevāj na-khāhad kard az av.val ma'lum bud*, That she would not marry him was obvious from the beginning.)

DIRECT OBJECT:

همه می‌دانستند که با او ازدواج نخواهد کرد (*hame mi-dānestand ke bā u ezdevāj na-khāhad kard*, Everybody knew that she would not marry him.)

→ این را که با او ازدواج نخواهد کرد همه می‌دانستند (*in rā ke bā u ezdevāj na-khāhad kard hame mi-dānestand*, That she would not marry him [was something that] everybody knew.)

INDIRECT OBJECT:

هیچکس از این خوشش نیامد که او بلند می‌خندید (*hich-kas az in khosh-ash na-yāmad ke u boland mi-khandid*, Nobody liked the fact that he laughed loudly.)

→ از اینکه او بلند می‌خندید هیچکس خوشش نیامد (*az in ke u boland mi-khandid hich-kas khosh-ash na-yāmad*, That he laughed loudly nobody liked / was not liked by anyone.)

Sometimes the English translation of a sentence that starts with اینکه would have to start with *whether* or with some question word used as conjunction, as in the following examples:

اینکه او میداند یا نه زیاد مهم نیست (*in-ke u mi-dānad yā na ziyād mohem nist*, Whether he knows or not is not very important.)

اینکه آن شب کجا رفته بودند یک معمای بزرگ بود (*in-ke ān shab kojā rafte budand yek mo'am.mā-ye bozorg bud*, Where they had gone that night was a big mystery.)

اینکه این را چطور فهمیده بود نمیدانستیم (*in-ke in rā che-tour fahmide bud nemi-dānestim*, How he had realized that [was something that] we did not know.)

13.13.1 Other kinds of noun clauses

Noun clauses can start with other words also, and they are often similar to pre-positioned relative clauses. These include:

آنکه (*ān-ke*, the one who) or آن کسی که (*ān kasi ke*, the person who)
آنچه / آنچه که (*ān-che / ān-che ke*, what, the thing that) or آن چیزی که (*ān chizi ke*, same meaning)

هرآنچه / هرآنچه که (*har-che / har-che ke*) or هر آنچه / هرآنچه که (*har-ān-che / har-ān-che ke*) or هر چیزی که / هر آن چیزی که (*har chizi ke / har ān chizi ke*), all of them meaning 'whatever' or 'everything that'

هر قدر که (*har-ghadr-ke*), هر اندازه که (*har-andāze-ke*), هر چقدر که (*har-che-ghadr-ke*), هر چه که (*har-che-ke*), all meaning 'however much that' or 'as much as'
هر جا که (*har-jā ke*), هر جایی که (*har-jā'i ke*), هر آنجا که (*har-ānjā ke [lit.]*), all of them meaning 'wherever'

13.14 'Too ... to' and 'enough to'

- (a) For 'too ... to ...' in Persian, you need:
a comparative adj. / adv. + که ... آن (*a z ān ... ke*) + subj.

Examples:

او جوانتر از آن است که این چیزها را بفهمد (*u javān-tar az ān ast ke in chiz-hā rā be-fahmad*, He is too young to understand these things.)
او زرنگتر از آن است که چنین اشتباهی بکند (*u zerang-tar az ān ast ke chenin eshtebāhi be-konad*, He is too smart to make such a mistake.)
او بهتر از آن من را می‌شناسد که درباره‌ی من چنین فکری بکند (*u behtar az ān man rā mi-shenāsad ke darbāre-ye chenin fekri be-konad*, He knows me too well to think of me in such a way [I to have such thoughts about me].)
او بیش / بیشتر از آن درباره‌ی آن موضوع می‌داند که به پلیس نگوید (*u bish [/ bishtar] az ān darbāre-ye ān mowzu' mi-dānad ke be polis na-guyad*, He knows too much about that matter not to tell the police.)
این پرنده تندتر از آن پرواز می‌کند که بتوانم عکسش را بگیرم (*in parande tond-tar az ān parvāz mi-konad ke be-tavānam aks-ash rā be-giram*, This bird flies too fast for me to be able to take its picture.)

Note: In this structure, if you don't use *subj.*, the meaning would totally change: then in English translation, you would simply use a comparative adjective and no infinitive. Compare the following with the first two examples above:

او جوانتر از آن است که مادرش می‌گوید (*u javān-tar az ān ast ke mādar-ash mi-guyad*, He is younger than what his mother says.)
او زرنگتر از آن است که شما فکر می‌کنید (*u zerang-tar az ān ast ke shoma fekr mi-konid*, He is smarter than what you think.)

(b) For 'enough to . . .' in Persian, you need:

آنقدر (*ān-ghadr*) + adjective / adverb + a verb + که (*ke*).

Instead of آنقدر (*ān-ghadr*), it is possible to use آن اندازه (*ān andāze*) or به اندازهٔ (*be andāze-ye kāfi*, sufficiently, 'to the sufficient extent or amount').

In this structure, the verb takes the main stress, and that is why if you are using the verb 'to be,' you would need its longer, *hast* version (for emphasis; see Section 11.8.2). Without the stress on the verb, the meaning would change to 'so much that' or 'to the extent that' – and no *subj.* would then be necessary (nor the longer version of 'to be'). Compare:

او آنقدر زنگ است که همه چیز را می فهمد (*u ān-ghadr zerang ast ke hame-chiz rā mi-fahmad*, He is so smart that he understands everything.)

او آنقدر زنگ هست که این چیزها را بفهمد (*u ān-ghadr zerang hast ke in chiz-hā rā be-fahmad*, He is smart enough to understand these things.)

او آنقدر عاقل است که چنین اشتباهی نمی کند (*u ān-ghadr āghel ast ke chenin eshtebāhi nemi-konad*, He is so wise that he wouldn't make such a mistake.)

او آنقدر عاقل هست که چنین اشتباهی نکند (*u ān-ghadr āghel hast ke chenin eshtebāhi na-konad*, He is wise enough not to make such a mistake.)

شما آنقدر پول دارید که هر سال تابستان به سفر می روید (*shomā ān-ghadr pul dārid ke har-sāl tābestān be safar mi-ravid*, You have so much money that you travel in summer every year.)

شما آنقدر پول دارید که تابستان امسال به سفر بروید (*shomā ān-ghadr pul dārid ke tābestān-e emsāl be safar be-ravid*, You have enough money to travel this summer.)

13.15 Some idiomatic usages of exclamative *che*

- *Che + noun + ke + negative verb:*

This usually has a meaning similar to خیلی (*kheyli*, a lot) + an affirmative verb, and the English translation would probably require an affirmative verb too. Examples:

چه رشوه‌ها که نداد تا پسرش آزاد شود! (= خیلی رشوه داد تا پسرش آزاد شود) (*che reshve-hā ke na-dād tā pesar-ash āzād shavad!* [= *kheyli reshve dād tā pesar-ash āzād shavad*], What bribes he gave to have his son freed!)

چه حرفها که پشت سرش نمی‌زنند! (= خیلی پشت سرش حرف می‌زنند) (*che harf-hā ke posht-e sar-ash nemi-zanand!* [= *kheyli posht-e sar-ash harf mi-zanand*], What things they say behind his back!)

- چہ بسیار (*che besyār*) is used to emphasize the high frequency of the occurrence; a more colloquial synonym would be زیاد چقدر (*che-ghadr ziyād*, how much) or just چقدر (*che-ghadr*, how much):

چہ بسیار او را نصیحت کردند (*che besyār u rā nasihat kardand*, How much / how often they advised / warned him!)

آن روزها چہ بسیار او را می دیدم (*ān ruz-hā che besyār u rā mi-didam*, How often I saw him those days!)

- چہ بسا (*che basā*) is used for conjecture and speculation, when you are wondering: it is similar to ‘maybe’ (شاید, *shāyad*) or ‘could it be that . . .?’:

چہ بسا نمی دانند؟ (*che basā nemi-dānad?*, Maybe he doesn’t know?)

چہ بسا آمده و ما را پیدا نکرده
It’s possible that he has come and has not found us.)

- چہ رسد به (*[tā] che resad be*, with *resad* or *be-resad* being *subj.*) means ‘let alone / not to mention / much less’; often preceded by هم (in the sense of ‘even’) for more emphasis:

بچه هم ندارم، چہ رسد به نوه
(*bach.che ham na-dāram*, *che resad be nave*, I don’t even have children, let alone grandchildren.)

تا چہ برسد به اینکه دست بدهد
(*hat.tā salām ham na-goft*, *tā che be-resad be in-ke dast be-dahad*, He didn’t even say hello, let alone shaking hands.)

- به . . . چہ! (*be . . . che!*) – in its more complete form used with مربوط (است) (*marbut [ast]*) or ربطی دارد (*rabti dārad*, both meaning ‘is related’) – is a common but rather rude way of saying that *sth.* does not concern so., and it is originally an interrogative phrase turned exclamative. (You can use a question mark or an exclamation mark.)

به من چہ! (*be man che!*, I don’t care! / Why should I care?)

به من چہ مربوط (است)؟ (*be man che marbut [ast]?*, Why should it concern me? / Why should I care?)

به تو چہ! (*be to che!*, None of your business! / It doesn’t concern you!)

به پدرت چہ ربطی دارد؟ (*be pedar-at che rabti dārad?*, It’s none of your father’s business.)

13.16 Impersonal

Persian has some entirely impersonal constructions, some quasi-impersonal constructions and words like آدم (*ādam*) which function similar to the pronoun *one* in English.

13.16.1 Impersonal with آدم (ādam)

Ādam was mentioned earlier in this book as an indefinite pronoun along with some other words that could be considered as its less common synonyms, like انسان (*ensān*, one; human) or شخص (*shakhs*, one; person); see Section 5.2.2. The most common equivalent in Persian for the English impersonal ‘one’ is آدم (*ādam*, in literary Persian آدمی, *ādami* with stressed final *-i*), but Persian can get even *more impersonal* than this (see Section 13.16.2) – or much less (see Section 13.16.3). *Ādam* is used as a singular noun, functioning as subject or object of verbs. (When used as object, English might prefer to translate this آدم as *you* or *people* or use other pronouns.) Examples:

آدم باید خیلی مواظب باشد (*ādam bāyad kheyli movāzeb bāshad*, One must be very careful.)

آدم نمی‌داند چه بگوید (*ādam nemi-dānad che be-guyad*, One doesn't know what to say.)

آدم را می‌ترسانی (*ādam rā mi-tarsāni*, You scare one [/ me / people].)

آدم نمی‌گویند کجا بروند (*be ādam nemi-guyand kojā be-ravad*, They don't tell one [/ you / people] where to go.)

However, sometimes آدم is used simply in the sense of a person / a human, especially when accompanied by indefinite markers (*yek* or unstressed *-i*). If آدم is used in a plural sense, it simply means ‘people.’ Examples:

اتاق پر از آدم بود (*otāgh por az ādam bud*, The room was full of / filled with people.)

آیا هیچ آدم مطلعی پیدا نکردی؟ (*āyā hich ādam-e mot.tale'i peydā nakardi?*, Didn't you find any well-informed person?)

مثل آدم غذا بخور! (*mesl-e ādam ghazā be-khor!*, Eat like a human! / Watch how you eat!)

آدمها باید یاد بگیرند چطور مواظب طبیعت باشند (*ādam-hā bāyad yād begirand che-tour movāzeb-e tabi'at bāshand*, People must learn how to protect / care for nature.)

13.16.2 Entirely impersonal constructions

There are a few entirely impersonal constructions in Persian, all of which use the *Stem II* of the verb (also called *short infinitive*):

(a) باید (*bāyad*) + *past stem* = ‘one must . . .’ / ‘one has to . . .’

(b) می‌توان (*mi-tavān*) + *past stem* = ‘one can . . .’

- (c) می شود (*mi-shavad*) + *past stem* = 'one can / may . . .' / 'it is possible to . . .'
 (d) می شد (*mi-shod*) + *past stem* = 'one could (have) . . .' / 'it was possible to . . .'

می شود (a) and می توان (b) have no past tense in contemporary Persian, but می شود (c) changes to می شد (d) for the past, which can even be used as the past tense substitute of می توان (b).

The once past versions of باید – namely, بایست (*bāyest*), بایستی (*bāyesti*) or می بایست (*mi-bāyest*) and می بایستی (*mi-bāyesti*) – are now used loosely as less common synonyms of *bāyad* in present tense and can all be followed by *past stem* like باید in (a), with the same function and meaning.

If می توان ([b] and [c]) are preceded by something that requires the subjunctive, they change to بتوان (*be-tavān*) and بشود (*be-shavad*), but this wouldn't affect the *past stem*.

Examples:

شاید بتوان گفت که این سردترین شهر ایران است (*shāyad be-tavān goft ke in sard-tarin shahr-e irān ast*, Perhaps one can say that this is the coldest city in Iran.)

شاید نشود امروز به آنجا رفت (*shāyad na-shavad emruz be ānjā raft*, One might not be able to go there today.)

باید به آدمها آموزش داد که چطور طبیعت را حفظ کنند (*bāyad be ādam-hā āmuzesh dād ke che-tour tabi'at rā hefz konand*, One must educate / teach people how to preserve / protect nature.)

می توان گفت که بزرگترین کشتارهای تاریخ در قرن بیستم اتفاق افتاده است (*mi-tavān goft ke bozorg-tarin koshtār-hā-ye tārikh dar gharn-e bistom et.tefāgh oftāde ast*, One can say that the biggest massacres of history took place in the 20th Century.)

باید بتوان با او صحبت کرد (*bāyad be-tavān bā u sohbat kard*, One must be able to talk to him.)

این قرصها را نمی شود با هم خورد (*in ghors-hā rā nemi-shavad bā-ham khord*, One cannot take these pills together.)

چطور می شد آن اراجیف را باور کرد؟ (*che-tour mi-shod ān arājif rā bāvar kard?*, How could one believe that garbage?)

13.16.3 Some quasi-impersonal idioms

There are a variety of idioms in Persian using a construction that can hardly be called *impersonal*, because the *person* is clearly there – only not where you

normally expect it to be: not as the conjugational ending of the verb. In these constructions, the tense of the verb can change, but not its person: the verb always remains 3Sg. for all persons, and the ‘person’ – the real *subject* – is attached as a possessive / dative suffix to the word that can be said to be the ‘grammatical’ subject of the verb.

One very common way to say ‘I am 20 years old’ in Persian is saying من بیست سالم است (*man bist sāl-am ast*), the grammatical subject here being *sāl* (‘year’), which is always 3Sg., while the real subject is shown by the suffix *-am* attached to *sāl*. (See also Section 8.3.)

To better understand an idiom like سردم است (*sard-am ast*, I feel cold), we should analyze the phrase like this: ‘[For] *me* [it] is cold.’ (Compare this with the German dative version: *Mir ist kalt*.) Again, it can be said that the *grammatical subject* here is سرد – always 3Sg. – and the *real subject* (to be used in translation) is the personal suffix added to *sard*. Instead of changing the conjugational endings of the verb, it is this *-am* that should change: to say ‘they feel cold’ you say سردشان است (*sard-eshān ast*) and so on.

Similarly, بسّم است (*bas-am ast*; Tehrani: بَسْمَه, *bassame*) means ‘[For] me [it] is enough.’ (German: *Mir reicht’s*.)

The contemporary, colloquial phrase چه ات است؟ (*che-at ast?*; Tehrani: چه تّه؟ *che-te?*) has its older, dative version (now used in literary language only) as: تو را چه می شود؟, all meaning ‘What’s wrong with you?’ (German: *Was ist mit dir?*) To say ‘What’s wrong with *them*?’ you simply change ات to شان and say چه شان است؟ (Tehrani: چشونه؟, *cheshune*), while the verb remains the same.

See below some examples of the most common impersonal idioms, most of which deal with sensations, feelings and emotions. (An asterisk is used to show where you add the suffixes.)

آمدن خوش * از . . . (*az . . . khosh* āmadan*, to like):

از فیلم خوشت خواهد آمد (*az film khosh-at khāhad āmad*, You’re going to like the movie.)

از این کارش خوشم نیامد (*az in kār-ash khosh-am na-yāmad*, I didn’t like what he did [*lit.* ‘this deed of his’].)

آمدن بد * از . . . (*az . . . bad* āmadan*, to dislike or hate):

از این رنگ خیلی بدم می آید (*az in rang kheyli bad-am mi-āyad*, I really hate this color.)

زآبرهآ از آوبدش نمى آيد (*zāberan az to bad-ash nemi-āyad*, Apparently he likes you / has fallen for you.)

آمدن خواب* (*khāb* āmadan*, to feel / get sleepy):

هنوز هوا آاريك نشده، چطور خوابت مى آيد؟ (*hanuz havā tārik na-shode, che-tour khāb-at mi-āyad?*, It's not dark yet, how can you feel sleepy?)

بُردن خواب* (*khāb* bordan*, to fall asleep):

ما هنوز داشتيم حرف مى زديم كه او خوابش بُرد (*mā hanuz dāshtim harf mi-zadim ke u khāb-ash bord*, We were still talking when he fell asleep.)

شدن دير* (*dir* shodan*, to be late):

نمى توانم بيشتر از اين صبر كنم، ديرم شده (*nemi-tavānam bishtar az in sabr konam, dir-am shode*, I can't wait more / longer than this; I'm late.)

گرفتن خنده* / گريه* (*khānde* / gerye* gereftan*, to have to or to start to laugh / cry):

سريع از اتاق بيرون رفتم چون خنده ام گرفته بود (*sari' az otāgh birun raftam chon khānde'am gerefte bud*, I left the room quickly because I had to laugh.)

وقتى دربارهٔ مادرش پرسيديم، گريه اش گرفت (*vaghti darbāre-ye mādar-ash porsidim, gerye-ash gereft*, When we asked about her mother, she started to cry.)

دل خواستن (*del* khāstan*, to wish / want):

بچه ها دلشان مى خواهد اين فيلم را ببينند (*bach.che-hā del-eshān mi-khāhad in film rā be-binand*, The children want to watch this movie.)

آمدن ياد* ([be] yād* āmadan, to remember):

يادم نمى آيد چطور به آنجا رفتيم (*yād-am nemi-āyad che-tour be ānjā raftim*, I don't remember how we went there.)

بودن ياد* ([be] yād* budan, to remember):

يادت هست آن را كجا خريديم؟ (*yād-at hast ān rā kojā kharidim?*, Do you remember where we bought it?)

رفتن ياد* ([az] yād* raftan, to forget):

يادم رفته بود كه پنجره را ببندم (*yād-am rafte bud ke panjare rā be-bandam*, I had forgotten to close the window.)

Some of the idioms mentioned earlier for wearing clothes (see Section 12.6 / B for more) use quasi-impersonal forms, like:

بودن *([be] tan* / sar* / pā* budan, to be wearing):*
 چه لباسی تنت بود؟ (*che lebāsi tan-at bud?*, What were you wearing?)

In some cases, it is possible in such idioms to use a noun or an independent pronoun also (instead of using the suffixed possessive pronoun), as with these verbs:

دل * تنگ شدن (برای) *(del* tang shodan [barāye], to miss):*
 خیلی دلم برای آن روزها تنگ شده *(kheyli del-am barāye ān ruz-hā tang shode, I really miss those days.)* – here *del-am* can change to *del-e man*.

دل * سوختن (برای / به حال) *(del* sukhtan [barāye / be hāl-e], to feel pity for or take pity on):*
 دلت به حال سگ و گربه می‌سوزد ولی به حال این بچه نه *(del-at be hāl-e sag va gorbe mi-suzad vali be hāl-e in bach.che na, You feel pity [I show compassion] for dogs and cats but not for this child.)*

خوش گذشتن (به*) *(khosh gozashtan [be*], to have a good time; to enjoy one's time):*
 تازه دوستش مرده، چطور انتظار داری به او (/ به مریم) خوش بگذرد؟ *(tāze dust-ash morde, che-tour entezār dāri be u [I be maryam] khosh be-gozarad?, Her friend has recently died, how do you expect her / Maryam to have a good time?)*

بد گذشتن (به*) *(bad gozashtan [be*], to have a bad time)*
 در آن دو سال خیلی به ما (/ به من و همسرم) بد گذشت *(dar ān do sāl kheyli be mā [I be man va hamsar-am] bad gozasht, In those two years, we [I my spouse and I] had a very bad time.)*

The last two (بد گذشتن and خوش گذشتن) become totally impersonal when no pronoun or noun is mentioned for the person who has a good or bad time:

دیشب خیلی خوش گذشت *(dishab kheyli khosh gozasht, Last night it was hilarious.)*

با پروین خیلی خوش می‌گذرد *(bā parvin kheyli khosh mi-gozarad, It's a lot of fun with Parvin.)*

Note: Some verbs may belong to this group in one of their senses only. Example:

(به) بر خوردن (*bar-khordan [be]*, to encounter, to come across) = a normal verb, conjugated for all persons:

در خیابان به مینا برخورددم (*dar kheyābān be minā bar-khordam*, I bumped into Mina on the street.)

به مقالهٔ جدیدی برخوردند (*be maghāle-ye jadidi bar-khordand*, They came across a new article.)

(به*) بر خوردن (*bar-khordan [be*]*, to be offended) = quasi-impersonal, conjugated always for 3Sg.:

خیلی به من برخورد (*kheyli be man bar-khord*, I was really offended.)

امیدوارم به شما برخورد (*omidvāram be shomā bar-na-khorad*, I hope you won't take offense.)

13.17 Indirect (or reported) speech

Indirect (or reported) speech in Persian has a golden rule: it is not how the sentence starts (i.e., the tense of the 'reporting verb') that determines what tense you should use – it is rather the tense of the verb in the *original* sentence, as you think it was *originally* said.

After the reporting verb, you need که (*ke*, that), which, as in English, can be dropped.

Similar to English, though not as strictly observed, there can be changes in adverbs – like the change from اینجا (*here*) to آنجا (*there*) and the like.

13.17.1 Reporting present tense statements

When reporting some statement that was originally in present tense, don't change the tense at all, even if the sentence starts with a past verb like 'she said' What needs to be changed is the *person* (if you are not citing yourself) and, if necessary, some adverbs of time and place, and occasionally changing verbs like 'come / bring' to 'go / take.'

Examples:

Direct speech:

"فردا به خانهات خواهم آمد." (*mahin [be man]: "fardā be khāne-at khāham āmad"*, Mahin [to me]: 'I'll come tomorrow to your house.')

Reported speech (when cited by me):

مهین می گوید (که) فردا به خانه ام خواهد آمد (*mahin mi-guyad [ke] fardā be khāne-am khāham āmad*, Mahin says [that] she will come tomorrow to my house.)

مهین گفت / گفته بود (که) فردا به خانه ام خواهد آمد (*mahin goft / gofte bud [ke] fardā be khāne-am khāham āmad*, Mahin said / had said [that] she would come to my house the next day.) – The translation given here followed the rules of English grammar, but note that Persian still uses خواهد آمد [‘will come’] despite the past reporting verbs گفت or گفته بود.

13.17.2 Reporting past tense statements

When reporting statements that originally used past tense, then not a *back-shift* of tenses (as in English), but a *change* of tenses would be necessary – and this again regardless of the tense of the reporting verb that starts the sentence. Persian has some straightforward and easy rules here; some of the tenses used may have been developed specifically for this function and are rarely seen outside of indirect speech.

The Persian *present perfect* tense has traditionally been called ماضی نقلی (*māzi-ye naqli*, narrative past), a fact that shows how closely this tense is related to reported or indirect speech. Apart from this tense and its progressive form, which are used independently also as tenses, there are one or two tenses used almost exclusively in reported speech: these are the narrative forms of past perfect (and past perfect progressive – a tense scarcely used), in which the past participle of the main verb is followed by the present perfect tense of the verb بودن (*budan* [to be], the auxiliary used to form perfect tenses). Table 13.4 shows what changes occur when reporting a past statement.

13.17.3 An understandable exception

Sometimes Persian uses past tense in subordinate clauses (mainly *time clauses* and conditional *if clauses*) in a present sense. Example:

"فردا وقتی مادرم آمد از او خواهیم پرسید." (*fardā vaghti mādar-am āmad az u khāham porsid*), ‘I’ll ask my mother tomorrow when she comes.’)

Here آمد (‘came’) is not really functioning as *past* tense but rather is the same as present subjunctive بیاید (*biyāyad*), and for this same reason is treated as

such: in indirect speech, the tense does not need to change to *narrative past*, and you only change the person:

مینا گفت که وقتی فردا مادرش آمد، از او خواهد پرسید (*minā goft ke vaghti fardā mādar-ash āmad az u khāhad porsid*, Mina said that she would ask her mother the next day when she came.)

So are past progressive or past perfect tenses when used in *conditional* (اگر) or *wish* (کاش) sentences. (See examples under Sections 13.2.2 and 13.3.)

Table 13.4 Reporting a past statement

Direct speech	→ Indirect speech
<p>Simple past مینا: "به آنجا رفتم." (<i>minā: "be ānjā raftam."</i>) Mina: 'I went there.'</p>	<p>→ Present perfect (= 'narrative past') مینا می گوید / گفت (که) به آنجا رفته (است) (<i>minā mi-guyad / goft [ke] be ānjā rafte [ast]</i>) Mina says / said (that) she had gone there. (In Persian: 'has gone'!)</p>
<p>Past progressive مینا: "به آنجا می رفتم." (<i>minā: "be ānjā mi-raftam."</i>) Mina: 'I was going / used to go there.' مینا: "داشتم به آنجا می رفتم." (<i>minā: "dāshtam be ānjā mi-raftam."</i>) Mina: 'I was going there.'</p>	<p>→ Present perfect progressive مینا می گوید / گفت (که) به آنجا می رفته (است) (<i>minā mi-guyad / goft [ke] be ānjā mi-rafte [ast]</i>) Mina says / said (that) she had been going there. مینا می گوید / گفت (که) داشته (است) به آنجا می رفته (است) (<i>minā mi-guyad / goft [ke] dāshte [ast] be ānjā mi-rafte [ast]</i>) Mina says / said (that) she had been going there.³</p>
<p>Past perfect مینا: "به آنجا رفته بودم." (<i>minā: "be ānjā rafte budam."</i>) Mina: 'I had gone there.'</p>	<p>→ Narrative past perfect⁴ مینا می گوید / گفت (که) به آنجا رفته بوده (است) (<i>minā mi-guyad / goft [ke] be ānjā rafte bude [ast]</i>) Mina says / said (that) she had gone there. (This tense is used in Indirect Speech only)</p>
<p>Past perfect progressive مینا: "می توانسته بودم با کس دیگری ازدواج کنم." (<i>minā: "mi-tavānešte budam bā kas-e digari ezdevāj konam."</i>) Mina: 'I could have married someone else.' (Not a very common tense; usually past progressive is used instead.)</p>	<p>→ Narrative past perfect progressive مینا می گوید / گفت (که) می توانسته بوده (است) با کس دیگری ازدواج کند (<i>minā mi-guyad / goft [ke] mi-tavānešte bude ast bā kas-e digari ezdevāj konad</i>) Mina says / said (that) she could have married someone else. (A tense possible in Indirect Speech only.)</p>

13.17.4 Questions

Reporting verbs for indirect questions are either پرسیدن (*porsidan*) and سؤال کردن (*so'āl kardan*, both meaning 'to ask') or simply verbs like گفتن (*goftan*, to say, tell) and the like.

Be careful when translating 'if' in indirect questions: the word اگر (*agar*) in Persian is used only in the sense of conditional *if* and not for indirect questions. For *if* (= *whether*) in indirect questions use the word آیا (*āyā*), the universal word that can introduce all questions (less common, though, when a question word is present).

The word که (*ke*, that) can still be used in indirect questions after the reporting verb, as in indirect statements, with or without آیا, or can be dropped. Therefore, you might have که or آیا or (less commonly) both – or neither of them.

Examples:

"(آیا) کجا می‌روی؟" (*minā [be parviz]: "[āyā] kojā mi-ravi?"*, Mina [to Parviz]: 'Where are you going?')

→ مینا از پرویز می‌پرسد / پرسید (که) (آیا) او کجا می‌رود. (*minā az parviz mi-porsad / porsid [ke] [āyā] u kojā mi-ravad*, Mina asks / asked Parviz where he is / was going.)

"(آیا) به آنجا رفتی؟" (*minā [be dārā]: "[āyā] be ānjā rafti?"*, Mina [to Dara]: 'Did you go there?')

→ مینا از دارا می‌پرسد / پرسید (که) (آیا) به آنجا رفته (است). (*minā az dārā mi-porsad / porsid [ke] [āyā] u be ānjā rafte ast*, Mina asks / asked Parviz if he has / had gone there.)

13.17.5 Imperative and subjunctive, conditionals and wishes

- *Imperative* is only in *direct speech* possible; in reported speech, it has to change to the subjunctive.
- *Subjunctive* has no tense to change; it remains unchanged.
- No change of tense required for *conditionals* and *wishes*.

Of course, other necessary changes (person, time adverb) have to be made. The reporting verb can be گفتن (*goftan*, to say, to tell) or verbs like (از کسی) خواستن (*[az kasi] khāstan*, to ask [*so. to do sth.*]), خواهش کردن (*khāhesh kardan*, to request), دستور دادن (*dastur dādan*, to order), and the like.

As the following examples show, the tense of the reporting verb plays no role:

- "روی این کاغذ ننویس!": زری (به من): (*zari [be man]*): "ru-ye in kāghaz na-nevis!", Zari [to me]: 'Don't write on this paper!')
- زری به من گفت / زری از من خواست (که) روی آن کاغذ ننویسم (*zari be man goft / zari az man khāst [ke] ru-ye ān kāghaz na-nevisam*, Zari told / asked me not to write on that paper.)
- "لطفاً تکرار کنید!": زری (به معلم): (*zari [be mo'al.lem]*): "lotfan tekrār konid!", Zari [to the teacher]: 'Please repeat!')
- زری از معلم خواست / زری از معلم خواهش کرد (که) تکرار کند (*zari az mo'al.lem khāst / zari az mo'al.lem khāhesh kard [ke] tekrār konad*, Zari asked / requested the teacher to repeat.)
- "می‌توانی امشب به اینجا بیایی.": زری (به بابک): (*zari [be bābak]*): "mi-tavāni emshab be injā biyā'i", Zari [to Bābak]: 'You can come here tonight.')
- زری به بابک گفت که می‌تواند آن شب به آنجا برود (*zari be bābak goft ke mi-tavānad ān shab be ānjā be-ravad*, Zari told Bābak that he could go there that night.)
- "کاش این را زودتر به من گفته بودی!": زری (به پدرش): (*zari [be pedar-ash]*): "kāsh in rā zud-tar be man gofte bud!", Zari [to her father]: 'I wish you had told me this sooner.')
- زری به پدرش گفت کاش این را زودتر به او گفته بود (*zari be pedar-ash goft kāsh in rā zud-tar be u gofte bud*, Zari told her father that she wished he had told her this sooner.)

13.17.6 Statements understood and treated as reported speech

Many verbs that deal with knowing, perceiving, realizing, assuming, claiming and so on are understood as verbs that introduce some reported speech and are treated as such; the above rules apply to all of them.

Consider a sentence like: 'When the car drew near, I noticed that there were four people inside.' Persian does not care about the verb *noticed* (past tense) and wants to know what passed your mind at the time of perception. At that time, you certainly said to yourself: 'There are four people inside the car.' Since that verb was originally in present tense, Persian does not change it:

وقتی ماشین نزدیک شد، متوجه شدم که چهار نفر در آن هستند
(*vaghti māshin nazdik shod, motevaj.jeh shodam ke chahār nafar dar ān hastand*)

Other examples:

در خیابان دیدم پلیس دارد یک نفر را دستگیر می کند (*dar khīyābān didam polis dārad yek nafar rā dastgir mi-konad*, I saw that the police were arresting someone on the street.)

او فکر می کرد من کمتر از هجده سال دارم (*u fekr mi-kard man kam-tar az hejdah sāl dāram*, He thought that I was younger than 18.)

اَدْعَا می کرد که هرگز به ایران نرفته است (*ed.de'ā mi-kard ke hargez be irān na-rafte ast*, He claimed that he had never been to Iran.)

13.17.7 Implied reported speech

The 'narrative' tenses used in indirect speech are sometimes used in Persian merely for a distanced narration of a story ('as it is said . . .', 'as far as we know . . .') or to show that you are not entirely certain about some past event. What you say then, using the narrative form, could carry a neutral to slightly 'disclaimerish' meaning:

- by saying "مهدی دیروز آمد" (*mehdi diruz āmad*, Mehdi came yesterday.), you are simply stating a fact;
- by saying "مهدی دیروز آمده است" (*mehdi diruz āmade ast*, Mehdi has come yesterday.), you are saying the same thing in Persian with some distance, like something you just heard.

13.17.8 Subject: keep it or drop it?

If the subject of the reporting verb (the person who *says*) is the same as the subject of the sentence that immediately follows, the second one is usually dropped – especially in the third person. Keeping it would usually imply a change of subject (from one third person to another). Compare:

گلرخ گفت نخواهد آمد (*golrokh goft na-khāhad āmad*, Golrokh said she wouldn't come.) – Here 'she' is usually understood as Golrokh herself.

گلرخ گفت او نخواهد آمد (*golrokh goft u na-khāhad āmad*, Golrokh said he / she wouldn't come.) – Here او is more likely to be understood as not Golrokh, but someone else.

13.17.9 How to translate certain tenses used in indirect speech?

Consider this sentence in English: 'Pari said that she had written the letter.'

Based on this sentence, Pari originally could have said:

- (a) 'I wrote the letter,'
- (b) 'I have written the letter,' or
- (c) 'I had written the letter.'

And based on the rules for indirect speech in Persian, the Persian translation for both (a) and (b) would be:

پری گفت که نامه را نوشته است (*pari goft ke nāme rā neveshte ast*)

and for (c), it would be:

پری گفت که نامه را نوشته بوده است (*pari goft ke nāme rā neveshte bude ast*)

Or consider this sentence: 'We listened to his story, but we knew that he was lying.' You must have been saying to yourselves at the time: 'He is lying!' So the Persian translation should use a present tense:

به داستانش گوش کردیم، ولی می دانستیم که (دارد) دروغ می گوید (*be dāstān-ash gush kardim, vali mi-dānestim ke [dārad] dorugh mi-guyad*)

13.17.10 Some examples of longer sentences with multiple verbs, or reporting reported speech

Only the translation for the sentence in direct speech will be given here:

علی: "وقتی او را دیدم، خیلی مریض به نظر می آمد." (*ali: vaghti u rā didam kheyli mariz be nazar mi-āmad*, Ali: 'She looked very ill when I saw her.')

علی گفت که وقتی او را دیده است، او خیلی مریض به نظر می آمده است. (*ali goft ke vaghti u rā dide ast, u kheyli mariz be nazar mi-āmade ast*)

اکبر: "ناصر می گفت شما را اصلاً نمی شناسد." (*akbar: nāser mi-goft shomā rā aslan nemi-shenāsad*, Akbar: 'Nāser said he doesn't know you at all.')

اکبر گفت ناصر می گفته است مرا اصلاً نمی شناسد. (*akbar goft nāser mi-gofte ast marā aslan nemi-shenāsad*)

پرویز: "به من گفتند کتابی را که دیروز گم کرده بودم پیدا کرده اند." (*parviz: be man goftand ketābi rā ke diruz gom karde budam peydā karde'and*, Parviz: 'They told me that they had found the book that I had lost yesterday.')

→ پرویز گفت به او گفته‌اند کتابی را که دیروز گم کرده بوده است پیدا کرده‌اند.
(*parviz goft be u gofte'and ketābi rā ke diruz gom karde bude ast peydā karde'and*)

"پویان: (*puyān: ali goft kāsh be mādar-ash na-gofte budim ke dir mi-āyad*, Puyān: 'Ali said he wished we hadn't told his mother that he would be coming late.')

→ پویان گفت علی گفته است کاش به مادرش نگفته بودیم که دیر می‌آید.
(*puyān goft ali gofte ast kāsh be mādar-ash na-gofte budim ke dir mi-āyad*)

مریم: "اگر به من خبر داده بودید که امروز می‌آئید خانه را تمیز می‌کردم."
(*maryam: agar be man khabar dāde budid ke emruz mi-ā'id khāne rā tamiz mi-kardam*, Maryam: 'If you had let me know that you were coming today, I would have cleaned the house.')

→ مریم گفت اگر به او خبر داده بودیم که امروز می‌آئیم خانه را تمیز می‌کرد.
(*maryam goft agar be u khabar dāde budid ke emruz mi-ā'im khāne rā tamiz mi-kard*)

13.18 Past participle replacing a finite verb

In present perfect tense, if the auxiliary است (*ast*, from the verb 'to be') is dropped in 3Sg. – as it is always dropped in colloquial Persian and quite often in formal Persian too – then you have only the past participle left, functioning as the verb:

چرا پرویز نیامده؟ (*cherā parviz na-yāmade?*, Why hasn't Parviz come?)
نامه را به چه آدرسی پست کرده؟ (*nāme rā be che ādresi post karde?*, To what address has he mailed the letter?)

This is quite common; nothing wrong with that.

However, in written Persian, especially in official / administrative language, you often come across another usage of past participle as verb (sometimes referred to as *participial absolute*), a practice disliked and avoided by writers of 'good' Persian.

In its most acceptable (or least detested) version, the rule is to change one or more verbs (of the same tense) in a longer sentence to past participles and only keep the verb at the end of the sentence in its finite form – which will also

determine the tense and person of the past participle(s). It is recommended to drop the conjunction *and* when a verb changes to a past participle – what is often neglected to make things worse. Example:

Normal sentence:

به خانه برگشتیم و غذا خوردیم (*be khāne bar-gashtim va ghazā khordim*, We returned home and ate.)

After the change (not recommended!):

به خانه برگشته غذا خوردیم (*be khāne bar-gashte ghazā khordim*, same meaning; here خوردیم is what shows the tense and person of برگشته.)

Still worse would be keeping the conjunction:

به خانه برگشته و غذا خوردیم (*be khāne bar-gashte va ghazā khordim*)

And still worse would be using this form when verbs are not of the same tense and / or person, which can be confusing as well.

13.19 Deleting a similar verb

Here also the main verb is usually kept at the end of the sentence and the verb(s) before it in longer sentences are somehow ‘shortened’ or deleted, which is done in two ways: deleting similar auxiliary verbs and deleting similar verbal parts of compound verbs. Deleting other verbs, or the verb at the end of the sentence, is much less common, and deleting verbs that are not similar is considered a grammatical mistake.

This is also a feature common in written Persian only – and not much loved even there.

Examples (with deleted verbs in brackets):

او خیلی زودتر از ما آمده (بود) و غذا خورده بود (*u kheyli zud-tar az mā āmade [bud] va ghazā khorde bud*, He had come and eaten much earlier than us.)
آن نامه نوشته (شده است) و برای آنها فرستاده شده است (*ān nāme neveshte [shode ast] va barāye ānhā ferestāde shode ast*, That letter has been written and sent to them.)

آنها با همه صحبت (کردند) و دربارهٔ مشکلات تحقیق کردند (*ānhā bā hame sobbat [kardand] va dar-bāre-ye moshkelāt tahghigh kardand*, They talked to everyone and investigated about the problems.)

بعداً پنجره‌ها باز (شدند) و اتاقها تمیز شدند (*ba'dan panjare-hā bāz [shodand] va otāgh-hā tamiz shodand*, The windows were later opened and the rooms were cleaned.)

پدرم به اصفهان (رفت) و از آنجا به شیراز رفت (*pedar-am be esfahān [raft] va az ānjā be shirāz raft*, My father went to Isfahan and from there to Shiraz.)

او به جنوب فرانسه رفت و از آنجا به ایتالیا (رفت) (*u be jonub-e farānse raft va az ānjā be itāliyā [raft]*, He went to the South of France and from there to Italy.)

13.20 Redundancy at the service of clarity

Redundancy in Persian may not always be at the service of clarity – sometimes you just use two adjectives that are synonyms to describe something, maybe for more emphasis. Some synonyms in this way have come to form bonds and are often used together. But here some other kind of redundancy will be addressed which involves possessive constructions.

At a colloquial level, some other languages (like German) also share this feature. Imagine saying ‘John his father died last year’ instead of ‘John’s father . . .’. Here what is important to you is *John*, and you want to give some information about John; his father has thus secondary importance. This is something very common in Persian (called sometimes a *resumptive construction*). Compare:

برادرم خانه اش را دو سال پیش خرید (*barādar-am khāne-ash rā do sāl pish kharid*, My brother bought his house two years ago.) – Normal and standard use of possessive.

برادرم خانه اش خیلی از اینجا دور نیست (*barādar-am khāne-ash kheyli az injā dur nist*, My brother his house is not very far from here.) – Here the subject is ‘his house’ and not ‘my brother’; the more standard way of saying it would be خانهٔ برادرم (*khāne-ye barādar-am*, my brother’s house).

Sometimes you begin your sentence and then notice that the person (or thing) mentioned cannot be the subject of your verb, and you resort to this structure:

I3

Sentences:
from phrases
to complex

رستورانی که دیشب رفتیم، غذایش از آنچه که انتظار داشتیم بهتر بود
(*restorāni ke dishab raftim, ghazā-yash az ān-che ke entezār dāshtam behtar bud*,
The restaurant we went to last night, its food was better than what I
expected.)

Notes

- 1 Note that here the simple past is used for the future; see Section 12.4.
- 2 And not the opposite of با آنکه (*bā ān-ke*), which means ‘although’; see Section 13.9.2 / A.
- 3 Here داشتیم, though part of the progressive structure, has been regarded as ‘simple past’ (for lack of می), and the tense has changed to present perfect (داشته است).
- 4 Also called *pluperfect* or *non-witnessed past*.

Punctuation

Punctuation marks as known and used in European languages do not have a long tradition in Persian language, and even now, in spite of the attempts made to introduce them, are not quite standardized. Old Persian manuscripts usually did not use them, although some manuscripts show that certain scribes had invented a few marks to facilitate reading. However, these were short-lived, local traditions that differed from those of other scribes in other locations or at other times. The closer a scribe's style came to calligraphy, the more likely he was to even ignore the dots needed to distinguish the letters of alphabet from each other, putting the dots at will and more for aesthetical reasons.

Familiarity with European languages (French before the others¹) and translations, print and newspapers led to the introduction and adoption of some of, and later most of, the punctuation marks common in European languages – with slight differences, though, and never quite standardized except in recent academic publications or in publications by major publishers that can afford to have a team of editors.

As a result, if you follow the same rules for punctuation marks as commonly used in European languages, you will be okay. And here only some major differences that you may encounter are mentioned.

14.1 Hyphenated words; word breaks; spaces

As in English, a hyphen is used to show that two independent words are connected and should be treated as one compound or closely related concept. Some examples:

امکانات سمعی- بصری (*emkānāt-e sam'i-basari*, audio-visual facilities)
قطار تهران- تبریز (*ghatār-e tehrān-tabriz*, Tehran-Tabriz train)

جناح ملی-مذهبی اپوزیسیون (*jenāh-e mel.li-maz.habi-ye opozisiyon*, the national-religious wing of the opposition)

This happens also in more recent words coined as equivalents of Western concepts, appearing between words and affixes:

بیگانه-هراسی (*bigāne-harāsi*, xenophobia)
خود-ویرانگری (*khod-virāngari*, self-destructiveness)

Word breaks at the end of lines are not much common or favored in Persian, and if they are used, it occurs only where the main body of a word is separated from a prefix or suffix, but never in the middle of the main body of a word, so you don't need to learn a set of rules for permissible positions of word breaks as in English.

You normally expect to have a space between two words. In printed texts, however, when not carefully edited, some spaces might go missing, especially when a word ends in a non-connecting letter, and that can make reading difficult, as in رضادرر باز کرد which in fact should be written (with spaces added to separate words) as رضا در را باز کرد (*rezā dar rā bāz kard*, Reza opened the door.).

14.2 Periods and commas

A period marks the end of a sentence in Persian and is hardly different in usage from English; it is also used in abbreviations, as in ه.ق. – in this particular case usually the non-abbreviated version is pronounced, namely, هجری قمری (*hejri-ye ghamari*, which literally means 'lunar Hijra,' used for the Islamic lunar year).

What is worth mentioning here is the similarity in shape between a period and the zero in writing, which can sometimes cause confusion. The solution found in print is writing the zero slightly larger and at a slightly higher position; it is even sometimes written in certain fonts in the form of a small circle. Examples of period and zero in one sentence:

میزان آلودگی به ۱۰٫۸ رسید. (*mizān-e āludegi be dah-momay.yez-hasht [dah-o-hasht-dahom] resid*, The degree of pollution reached 10,8.)

A comma in Persian, when used properly as recommended by academic guidelines or those of editors, is not different from the English comma (except

that it is written inverted, flipped both horizontally and vertically). However, when used less carefully, it only seems to represent a pause in the sentence or sometimes just to show where no *ezāfe* should be used between two words, which can lead to its being used in odd positions where English would not use a comma, like after the subject of a sentence. On the other hand, it can be dropped between two clauses or in certain other cases that would always use a comma in English. Examples:

زن، دوستم را نمی شناخت (*zan, dust-am rā nemi-shenākht*, The woman did not know my friend.) – Here without the comma, it would be *possible* to read *zan* as *zan-e* also, which would then totally change the meaning: ‘He / she did not know my friend’s wife.’

آوردی علی برادر حسن را به یاد می آوردی؟ (*ali barādar-e hasan rā be yād mi-āvarid?*, Do you remember Ali, Hasan’s brother?) – Here the appositive *barādar-e hasan* should ideally be separated from the rest of the sentence by two commas before and after it. Apart from carelessness, in this case, it should also be noted that Persian does not like to have a comma before *rā*!

14.3 Quotation marks; direct speech

Quotation marks, called گیومه in Persian (*giyome*, guillemets [*Fr.*] or duck-foot quotes), usually look like this: « » (or preferably round, without edges: « »), and their function is similar to quotation marks in English. Influenced by typewriters and, in recent times, computers, the English version of quotation marks also has become common, though still not much in print.

One major difference appears in direct speech, though: Persian always mentions the speaker first (and a reporting verb), followed by a colon, and then the quotation starts. The information is never broken up to mention who the speaker is, nor is the speaker mentioned at the end.

محسن گفت: "خوشحالم که این مقاله تمام شد." (*mohsen goft: "khosh-hāl-am ke in maghāle tamām shod"*, Mohsen said: ‘I’m glad that this article is / was finished.’)

Regarding the rules of using other punctuation marks (like period, comma, question mark, etc.) inside or outside the quotation marks, different approaches and practices can be seen in Persian.

I4.4 Question marks

Unlike English, question mark in Persian (in its flipped form) *may* be kept and used in indirect speech also, whether question words or the word آیا (*āyā*) are used or not:

انگار با نگاهش داشت از من می پرسید که با بچه چکار کند؟ (*engār bā negāh-ash dāsh-t az man mi-porsid ke bā bach-che che-kār konad?*, [It seemed] as if she was asking me with her look what she was to do with the child.)

I4.5 Colons, semicolons and other punctuation marks

Other marks are usually employed in Persian in the same way as they are in English, and they do not need to be addressed here.

Note

- 1 A fact which explains why the names of some of them are French, like ویرگول (*virgul*, a ‘virgule’ or comma).

Colloquial Persian and polite Persian

Colloquial Persian and polite Persian should not be seen as opposites. What is meant here by *colloquial* Persian is *spoken* Persian, which can have its own degrees of formality and politeness – or lack thereof.

15.1 Colloquial Persian (or Tehrani accent)

Although Persian speakers in each corner of Iran have their own accent, which is easily recognizable and betrays exactly where they come from when they talk, what is meant by colloquial Persian in a more general sense is Tehrani, i.e., Persian as spoken in Tehran, the capital. This accent is not only understood all over Iran – and beyond – thanks to the media, but threatens to assimilate all local vernaculars in the course of time. Attempts have been underway by linguists to at least research and record as many of these accents as they can before they disappear.

This chapter is about some of the major differences between formal, standard Persian (or written Persian) and the colloquial (or spoken) Persian, the Tehrani accent, and how the pronunciation changes from standard to Tehrani. These changes only occur if the words are common enough at the colloquial level. It is also to be noted that the spoken Persian was not meant to be written, and, therefore, the way Tehrani accent should be written orthographically has not been standardized. In the past few decades, only the dialogs in stories or plays used this accent, and each author has used a different method in writing, but in more recent times using this accent on the internet or in texting and tweeting has become more common, resulting in total orthographical chaos.

Question: Does one need to learn this Tehrani accent?

Answer: If you want to *talk* (and don't want to be the only kid in a U.S. school saying 'I am going to be late' when everybody else around you is saying 'I'm gonna be late'), yes!

15.1.1

**From standard to Tehrani – some of the changes
in pronunciation**

(For changes in verbs see Section 15.1.2.)

(A) Personal pronouns

1st and 2nd persons, *sg.* / *pl.*: no change! (من / تو / ما / شما) remain unchanged.)

There are changes in 3rd person:

او (he / she) and آن (it / that) both change to اون (*un*, he / she / it / that)
 آنها (they / those) changes to اونها (*unā*)
 ایشان (he / they in polite language) changes to ایشون (*ishun*)

(B) *ān* → *un* (and occasionally *ām* → *um*)

As some of the changes in (A) show, *ān* changes to *un* (in آنها / ایشان), something very common in Tehrani accent, but this change happens only in the most common words.

Examples of words that change:

ایران (*irān*, Iran) → ایرون (*irun*)
 تهران (*tehrān*, Tehran) → تهرون (*tehrun*)
 خیابان (*khīyābān*, street) → خیابون (*khīyābun*)
 خانه (*khāne*, house) → خونه (*khune*)
 تابستان (*tābestān*, summer) → تابستون (*tābestun*)

Examples of words that do not change:

امکان (*emkān*, possibility)
 داستان (*dāstān*, story)
 امتحان (*emtehān*, test)
 سوزان (*suzān*, burning)
 آلمان (*ālmān*, Germany – foreign names don't change!)

The more formal plural suffix *-ān* (which is not common in colloquial Persian) does not usually change to *-un*; the only exception here might be آقایون because آقایون خانوما و آقایون (*khānumā-wo-āghāyūn*), the Tehrani version of آقایان و خانمها (*khānom-hā va āghā-yān*, 'ladies and gentlemen'), is common at a colloquial level also.

In certain words you can see the change from *ām* to *um*:

تمام (*tamām*, complete) → تموم (*tamum*)
 کدام (*kodām*, which?) → کدوم (*kodum*)

بادام (*bādām*, almond) → بادوم (*bādum*)
آرام (*ārām*, quiet) → آروم (*ārum*)

(C) *-hā* → *-ā*

As آنها (in [A]) and خانمها (in [B]) show, the plural suffix *-hā* is usually reduced to just *-ā*, except after the vowels *-e* and *-ā* (or when some emphasis is needed). Other examples:

میزها (*miz-hā*, tables) → میزا (*mizā*)
کتابها (*ketāb-hā*, books) → کتابا (*ketābā*)
ایرانیها (*irāni-hā*, Iranians) → ایرونیایا (*iruniyā*)

No change in بچه‌ها (*bach.che-hā*) or آقاها (*āghā-hā*), however.

(D) *ham* → *-am*

The consonant *h* is pronounced softly and often tends to disappear in spoken Persian, unless it is in initial position or when more clarity / emphasis is needed. One good example is هم (*ham*, also) which is usually pronounced *-am* when it immediately follows the word it modifies:

من هم (*man ham*, me too) → منم (*man-am*) (compare with منم = 'I am'!)

(E) Change of *-ar* to *-e* in a few common words

دیگر (*digar*), اگر (*agar*) and مگر (*magar*) change to دیگه (*dige*), اگه (*age*) and مگه (*mage*). همدیگر (*ham-digar*) also changes to همدیگه (*ham-dige*), but the more formal یکدیگر (*yek-digar*) does not change.

آخر (*ākhar*) changes to آخه (*ākhe*), but only when used as some filler to justify a situation (as 'but / because'; see Section 13.2.4.1 / A), not when it means 'last' or 'lastly.'

(F) Change of the DDO-marker *rā* to *ro* / *-o*

را changes to either *-o* (attached to the previous word) or to *ro* (especially after words ending in *-ā* or *-e*, where it cannot be attached as *-o*): کتاب را (*ketāb rā*) becomes *ketāb-o* or *ketāb-ro*, whereas for words like آقا and بچه there is only the *ro* option.

Important reminder: the conjunction و (*va*, and) is also pronounced often as *-o* and attached to the previous word (see Section 9.2.1), so 'ketābo' can be both 'ketāb rā' and 'ketāb va.'

(G) Revival of the old final *-a* when using enclitics

The final *-a* sound has almost disappeared from contemporary Persian and changed to *-e* – except for the word نه (*na*, no) and the conjunction

وَ (*va*, and). However, when certain enclitics (like personal suffixes) are added to the words ending in *-e*, the old pronunciation may come back to life in Tehrani accent. If you change *را بچه* (*bach.che rā*; see [F] above) to its colloquial / Tehrani form, it is not just *rā* that changes to *ro*: you should say *bach.cha-ro*. Or *را همه* (*hame rā*) changes to *رو همه* (*hama-ro*). The same happens with *هم* (*ham*, also) as well as *است* (*ast*, is): *خانه هم* (*khāne ham*) → *م خونه* (*khuná-m*); *او بچه است* (*u bach.che ast*, He's a child.) → *اون بچه س* (*un bach.chas*). See (H) below for a similar change when adding personal suffixes.

(H) Personal suffixes

Table 15.1 shows the changes in personal suffixes.

Table 15.1 How personal suffixes change from standard to Tehrani

Formal / standard	Tehrani		
	After consonants	After vowels (except <i>-e</i>)	After the vowel <i>-e</i> (silent <i>hé</i>)
<i>-am</i> دستم، پایم، گونه‌ام (<i>dástam, pāyam, guné'am</i>)	<i>-am</i> دستم (<i>dástam</i>)	<i>-m</i> پام (<i>pām</i>)	(<i>-e</i> → <i>-a</i> +) <i>-m</i> گونه م (<i>gunám</i>)
<i>-at</i> دستت، پایت، گونه‌ات (<i>dástat, pāyat, guné'at</i>)	<i>-et</i> دستت (<i>dástet</i>)	<i>-t</i> پات (<i>pāt</i>)	(<i>-e</i> → <i>-a</i> +) <i>-t</i> گونه ت (<i>gunát</i>)
<i>-ash</i> دستش، پایش، گونه‌اش (<i>dástash, pāyash, guné'ash</i>)	<i>-esh</i> دستش (<i>dástesh</i>)	<i>-sh</i> پاش (<i>pāsh</i>)	(<i>-e</i> → <i>-a</i> +) <i>-sh</i> گونه ش (<i>gunásh</i>)
<i>-emān</i> دستم‌ان، پایمان، گونه‌مان (<i>dástemān, pāyemān, guné[e]mān</i>)	<i>-emun</i> دستمون (<i>dástemun</i>)	<i>-mun</i> پامون (<i>pāmun</i>)	(<i>-e</i> → <i>-a</i> +) <i>-mun</i> گونه مون (<i>gunámun</i>)
<i>-etān</i> دستتان، پایتان، گونه‌تان (<i>dástetān, pāyetān, guné[e]tān</i>)	<i>-etun</i> دستتون (<i>dástetun</i>)	<i>-tun</i> پاتون (<i>pātun</i>)	(<i>-e</i> → <i>-a</i> +) <i>-tun</i> گونه تون (<i>gunátun</i>)
<i>-eshān</i> دستشان، پایشان، گونه‌شان (<i>dásteshān, pāyeshān, guné[e]shān</i>)	<i>-eshun</i> دستشون (<i>dásteshun</i>)	<i>-shun</i> پاشون (<i>pāshun</i>)	(<i>-e</i> → <i>-a</i> +) <i>-shun</i> گونه شون (<i>gunáshun</i>)

Table 15.2 Note the differences in writing and pronunciation when *-ash* is added

	<i>Standard / formal</i>	<i>Tehrani</i>
دست (<i>dast</i> , hand)	دستش (<i>dástash</i> , his hand)	دستش (<i>dástesh</i> , his hand)
دسته (<i>dasté</i> , handle)	دسته اش (<i>dasté-ash</i> , its handle)	دسته ش (<i>dastásh</i> , its handle)
لب (<i>lab</i> , lip)	لبش (<i>lábash</i> , his lip)	لبش (<i>lábesh</i> , his lip)
لبه (<i>labé</i> , edge)	لبه اش (<i>labé-ash</i> , its edge)	لبه ش (<i>labásh</i> , its edge)

Since this is about spoken Persian and it is usually in less serious texts (as on weblogs) that less careful, ordinary people *write* in Tehrani style, the spelling rules have not been standardized, and you might see different styles; for instance, some might drop the *silent hé* (in Table 15.1, right column) in writing and join the personal suffixes, which can lead to even more confusion in reading. Moreover, there is also a difference in stress that can help in spoken Persian but cannot be rendered in writing; see the examples in Table 15.2.

As one can see here (in the Romanization), just a shift in stress can change the formal *his lip* to the Tehrani *its edge*, and keeping that *silent hé* while dropping the *alef* could be some help in reading.

(I) Definite marker *-e*

There is a definite marker in colloquial Tehrani which is not considered very polite when used for people; it is a stressed *-e* suffix (*-he* after *-ā*):

Formal: آن مرد هنوز هم آنجا نشسته است (*ān mard hanuz ham ānjā neshaste ast*)

Tehrani: مرده هنوزم اونجا نشسته ([*un*] *marde hanuz-am unjā neshaste*)

They both mean ‘The / that man is still sitting there.’

Or the formal sentence آن آقا خیلی مهربان بود (*ān āghā kheyli mehrabān bud*) changes to آقاهه خیلی مهربون بود (*āghāhe kheyli mehrabun bud*), both meaning ‘The gentleman was very kind,’ but you certainly wouldn’t want the ‘gentleman’ himself to overhear you as you refer to him as *āghāhe!*

This *-e* also changes to *-a* when followed by *ro* (= *rā*) or *-am* (= *ham*), etc. کتابه رو خریدی؟ (*ketābā-ro kharidi?*, Did you buy the book?) – here pronounced *ketābā-ro*, whereas it is normally *ketābé*.

(J) Other changes

Changes are usually made in spoken language to make pronunciation easier, and that is why some sounds (vowels and consonants alike) disappear or alter. What happens to verbs has been explained below (Section 15.1.2), but here you see some examples of other changes:

$n \rightarrow m$ (when before $b / m / p$): شنبه (*shanbe*, Saturday) pronounced *shambe*

هیچ چیزی / هیچ چیز \rightarrow هیچی (*hich.chi*)

هیچکس / هیچ کسی \rightarrow هیشکی (*hish.ki*)

لامذهب (*lā maz.hab*, non-believer) \rightarrow لامصّب (*lā mas.sab*, damned [used as interjection or *adj.* to show anger or disappointment])

15.1.2 Alterations and contractions in verbs

We should first see what happens to the conjugational suffixes as a general rule, and Table 15.3 shows the changes.

Here by verbs that end in *-āh-* or *-āy-*, we basically mean خواه / خواستن (*khāstan / khāh*), آمدن / آ (*āmadan / ā*), زادن / ز (*zādan / zā* , to bear a child) and maybe a few verbs common in slang Tehrani, but verbs like / کاستن / کاه (*kāstan / kāh*, to decrease) and گشودن / گشا (*goshudan / goshā*, to open) do not belong to the colloquial level: you neither say می گشایه / می گشاه nor می کاد / می گشاد – you simply don't use them in spoken Persian!

Table 15.3 Changes in present tense conjugational suffixes

	Standard / formal	Tehrani
1Sg.	-am if ending in <i>-āham</i> or <i>-āyam</i>	-am -ām
2Sg.	-i if ending in <i>-āhi</i> or <i>-ā'i</i>	-i -āy
3Sg.	-ad (also <i>ast</i> of 'to be,' except after <i>silent hé</i>) if ending in <i>-āhad</i> or <i>-āyad</i>	-e -ād
1Pl.	-im if ending in <i>-āhim</i> or <i>-ā'im</i>	-im -āym
2Pl.	-id if ending in <i>-āhid</i> or <i>-ā'id</i>	-in -āyn
3Pl.	-and if ending in <i>-āhand</i> or <i>-āyand</i>	-an -ān

The same is true of all other verbs that do not belong to the colloquial level. A verb like *ستردن* (*setordan*, to eliminate or erase) has no place in spoken / Tehrani, and you know how to conjugate and use it in formal / written language – where it belongs.

Apart from changes in conjugational suffixes, there are some changes also in some very common verbs that are most frequently used, changes that make them shorter and easier to pronounce. The following are only five of the verbs that undergo such changes (conjugation in Tehrani for present and past given):

آمدن	present: <i>miyām, miyāy, miyād, miyāym, miyāyn, miyān</i> (neg.: <i>nemiyām, . . .</i>) past: <i>umadam, umadi, umad, umadim, umadin, umadan</i> (neg.: <i>nayumadam, . . .</i>)
رفتن	present: <i>miram, miri, mire, mirim, mirin, miran</i> (neg.: <i>nemiram, . . .</i>) past: <i>raftam, rafti, raf, raftim, raftin, raftan,</i> (neg.: <i>naraftam, . . .</i>)
گفتن	present: <i>migam, migi, mige, migim, migin, migān</i> (neg.: <i>nemigam, . . .</i>) past: <i>goftam, gofti, gof, goftim, goftin, goftan,</i> (neg.: <i>nagoftam, . . .</i>)
توانستن	present: <i>mitunam, mituni, mitune, mitunim, mitunin, mitunan</i> (neg.: <i>nemitunam, . . .</i>) past: <i>tunestam, tunesti, tunes, tunestim, tunestin, tunestan</i> (neg.: <i>natunestam, . . .</i>)
گذاشتن	present: <i>mi(g)zāram, mi(g)zāri, mi(g)zāre, mi(g)zārim, mi(g)zārin, mi(g)zāran</i> (neg.: <i>nemi[g]zāram, . . .</i>) past: <i>gozāshdam, gozāshdi, gozāsh, gozāshdim, gozāshdin, gozāshdan,</i> (neg.: <i>na[g]zāshdam, . . .</i>)

15.1.3 The special case of the present perfect tense

In the present perfect tense, in its formal version, you have the *-e* of the past participle followed by the *a- / i-* of the verb ‘to be.’ The Tehrani accent tries to get rid of one of the two vowels. To make it easier to understand, we can say that it is the final *-e* which disappears, while its stress is kept and given to the *-a- / -i-*.

The result is that this Tehrani *present perfect tense* sounds very much like *simple past tense* (for several of the persons) except for a shift in stress. Table 15.4 compares the two tenses (with Tehrani occupying the two middle columns).

Note: In the negative, where the prefix *na-* takes the main stress, there will be no difference in pronunciation and even the stress will not help.

Table 15.4 Present perfect versus simple past – the verb رفتن

Simple past (formal)	Simple past (Tehrani)	Present perfect (Tehrani)	Present perfect (formal)
<i>rāftam</i>	<i>rāftam</i>	<i>raftám</i>	<i>rafté'am</i>
<i>rāfti</i>	<i>rāfti</i>	<i>raftí</i>	<i>rafté'i</i>
<i>rāft</i>	<i>rāf(t)</i>	<i>rafté</i>	<i>rafté (ast)</i>
<i>rāftim</i>	<i>rāftim</i>	<i>raftím</i>	<i>rafté'im</i>
<i>rāftid</i>	<i>rāftin</i>	<i>raftín</i>	<i>rafté'id</i>
<i>rāftand</i>	<i>rāftan</i>	<i>raftán</i>	<i>rafté'and</i>

15.1.4 Prepositions

One preposition that you hear a lot in spoken Persian and don't encounter as often in written Persian is *توی / تو* (*tu / tu-ye*) meaning 'inside':

تو خواب را میره (*tu khāb rā[h] mire*) = *form.* در خواب راه می‌رود (*dar khāb rāh mi-ravad*) = He walks in sleep.

توپ را در آب (*tup-o andākh[t] tu[-ye] āb*) = *form.* توپ را در آب انداخت (*tup rā dar āb andākht*) = He threw the ball in the water.

In formal Persian, objective pronouns can be added to only some prepositions (Section 5.2.3); the Tehrani dialect makes this possible for the prepositions

Table 15.5 Prepositions + objective pronouns

از (az, from)	به (be, to)	با (bā, with)	توی (tu-ye, inside)	برای (barāye, for)
ازم <i>azam / azem</i>	بهم <i>behem</i>	باهام <i>bāhām</i>	توم <i>tum</i>	برام <i>barām</i>
ازت <i>azat / azet</i>	بهت <i>behet</i>	باهات <i>bāhāt</i>	توت <i>tut</i>	برات <i>barāt</i>
ازش <i>azash / azesh</i>	بهش <i>behesh</i>	باهش <i>bāhāsh</i>	توش <i>tush</i>	براش <i>barāsh</i>
ازمون <i>azamun / azemun</i>	بهمون <i>behemun</i>	باهامون <i>bāhāmun</i>	تومون <i>tumun</i>	برامون <i>barāmun</i>
ازتون <i>azatun / azetun</i>	بهتون <i>behetun</i>	باهاتون <i>bāhātun</i>	توتون <i>tutun</i>	براتون <i>barātun</i>
ازشون <i>azashun / azeshun</i>	بهشون <i>beheshun</i>	باهشون <i>bāhāshun</i>	توشون <i>tushun</i>	براشون <i>barāshun</i>

از and به and با also – something not acceptable in formal Persian. (In the case of به and با, a consonantal *h* is added as a glide, which is quite unusual.) Table 15.5 shows how some of these prepositions are pronounced when joined with objective pronouns.

Examples:

Tehrani: اگه دیدیش ازش بپرس (*age didish azash be-pors*); formal: اگر او را دیدی از او بپرس (*agar u rā didi az u be-pors*) = Ask him if you see him.
Tehrani: صندلی کوچیکه رو برام میاره (*sandali kuchika-ro barām miyāre*); formal: آن صندلی کوچک را برایم می آورد (*ān sandali-ye kuchek rā barāyam mi-āvarad*) = He brings me the / that small chair.

15.2 Language of politeness and courtesy

What is تعارف (*ta'ārof*)?

The word تعارف (*ta'ārof*, in colloquial Tehrani *tārof*) includes the whole range of social behaviors meant to show courtesy and good manners, most importantly through deference, using words and idioms that have become cliché and should not be taken literally or seriously. If someone tells you قربان شما (*ghorbān-e shomā*) in Iran, he simply means ‘Thank you!’ or ‘You are welcome!’ not that he is really going to sacrifice himself for you!

The younger generation is observing these formalities less often, but if you want to use them occasionally, you should make sure that you are using the correct form in order to avoid embarrassing blunders.

15.2.1 Plural means polite

In Chapter 5, which covered pronouns in some detail, it was mentioned how a plural pronoun used instead of singular is common in polite language – used sometimes even for 3rd person in absentia; see Section 5.1.4 for more details and examples.

15.2.2 فرمودن (*farmudan*)

The original meaning of فرمودن (*farmudan*) is ‘to give a *farmān*’ (فرمان, command). In polite language, however, it is used either as (a) an ameliorating / elevating companion of other verbs or (b) a substitute. In the latter case, the

context should tell you what verb has been substituted by *farmudan*. These verbs are about activities (especially locomotion), not passive states.

Examples for (a):

بفرمائید جمله بعد را هم بخوانید (*befarmā'id jomle-ye ba'd rā ham be-khānid*, Please [go ahead and] read the next sentence also.)
بفرمائید روی این صندلی بنشینید (*befarmā'id ru-ye in sandali beneshinid*, Please [come and] sit on this chair.) – In a sentence like this, بفرمائید could be just making نشستن (*neshastan*, to sit) more polite, or – what is more likely – it could have replaced the verb آمدن (*āmadan*, to come).

Examples for (b):

از این طرف بفرمائید (*az in taraf befarmā'id*, Please come this way.)
بفرمائید تو (*befarmā'id tu*, Please come in.) – Here تو (*tu*) means inside in colloquial / Tehrani.
بفرمائید کی برخواهید گشت؟ (*befarmā'id key bar-khāhid gasht?*, Say, please, when are you going to return?)
یک چیزی بفرمائید (*yek chizi befarmā'id*) – Based on the context and situation, this could mean 'Please say something' or – if a guest is being offered something – 'Please help yourself / have something.'

With compound verbs using کردن (*kardan*), the verb کردن can almost always be replaced by فرمودن to make it sound more polite (only if politeness makes sense!):

پنجره را باز کن / کنید (*panjare rā bāz kon / konid*, Open the window [sg. / pl.].)

→ پنجره را باز بفرمائید (*panjare rā bāz befarmā'id*, Please open the window.) – Always plural.

توجه کنید که زیاد وقت نداریم (*tavaj.joh konid ke ziyād vaght na-dārim*, Note that we do not have much time.)

→ توجه بفرمائید که زیاد وقت نداریم (*tavaj.joh befarmā'id ke ziyād vaght na-dārim*, Please be aware that we do not have much time.)

However, it is obvious that in certain compounds with کردن (*kardan*) that are inglorious in meaning and lack respect, substituting فرمودن with فرمودن would not be any help: if you say فرار فرمودن (*farār farmudan*) instead of فرار کردن (*farār*

kardan, to run away) or ادعا فرمودن (*ed.de'ā farmudan*) instead of ادعا کردن (*ed.de'ā kardan*, to claim), the effect can only be funny or maliciously ironical.

15.2.3 عرض کردن (*arz kardan*) versus فرمودن (*farmudan*)

It is very important to remember that, when you are using polite expressions – like *farmudan* – you always use them for the addressee, for the other person, not for yourself! Using *farmudan* for oneself would be as embarrassing a blunder as using عرض کردن (*arz kardan*) for the addressee.

As mentioned above, *farmudan* can be used as a substitute for verbs like گفتن ('to say') – and when used in this sense, it has a corresponding version for the speaker also: عرض کردن (*arz kardan*):

شما فرمودید که احتیاجی به آن نیست (*shomā farmudid ke ehtiyāji be ān nist*, You said that it was not needed.)
 [بنده] عرض کرده بودم که امروز بانک تعطیل است (*[bande] arz karde budam ke emruz bānk ta'til ast*, I had said that the bank is closed today.)

به عرض کسی رسیدن (*be arz-e kasi residan*, to be informed) and its transitive version به عرض کسی رساندن (*be arz-e kasi resāndan*, to inform so.) are used respectively for the addressee and the speaker:

همانطور که به عرض شما رسیده است . . . (*hamān-tour ke be arz-e shomā reside ast . . .*, As it's been brought to your attention . . .)
 باید به عرضتان برسانم که . . . (*bāyad be arz-etān beresānam ke . . .*, I must let you know that . . .)

Some of the words used in polite language are as follows, and you will see that even a word like شما (*shomā*, you) has still more respectful substitutes:

من (*man*, I) → بنده (*bande*, servant or slave), حقیر (*haghīr*, lowly)
 تو / شما (*to / shomā*, thou / you) → سرکار (*sarkār*, originally meaning 'over-seer'), جنابعالی (*jenāb[e]'āli*, Your Excellency), حضرتعالی (*hazrat[e]'āli*, Your Eminence) – Don't take the last two very seriously; you can use them for any person to show high respect!
 او / آنها (*u / ānhā*, he / she / they) → ایشان (*ishān*)
 خوردن (*khordan*, to eat) → میل کردن (*meyl kardan*) or میل فرمودن (*meyl farmudan*)
 خواستن (*khāstan*, to want) → میل داشتن (*meyl dāshtan*)

'To be' in presence of a person you respect: در خدمت بودن (*dar khed.mat budan*, to be at service)

'To go' to a person you respect: خدمت رسیدن (*khed.mat residan*, to come to service)

'To leave' a person you respect: (از خدمت) مرخص شدن (*[az khedmat] mo.rakh.khas shodan*, to take leave from service)

'To visit' a person you respect: زیارت کردن (*ziyārat kardan*, lit. to make a pilgrimage to)

And these are the verbs you use for the addressee:

بودن (*budan*, to be) → تشریف داشتن (*tashrif dāshtan*)

دیدن (*didan*, to see) → ملاحظه کردن (*molāheze kardan*)

آمدن (*āmadan*, to come) → تشریف آوردن (*tashrif āvardan*)

رفتن (*raftan*, to go) → تشریف بردن (*tashrif bordan*)

استحضار → دانستن / دانستن (اطلاع داشتن / دانستن (*dānestan / et.telā' dāshtan*, to know) → استحضار داشتن (*estehzār dāshtan*) or مستحضر بودن (*mostahzar budan*)

Examples:

کجا میل دارید تشریف ببرید؟ (*kojā meyl dārid tashrif be-barid?*, Where do you want to go?)

تشریف بیاورید غذا میل بفرمائید (*tashrif biyāvarid ghazā meyl befarmā'id*, Please come have food.)

میل دارید آن نامه را برایتان بیاورم؟ (*meyl dārid ān nāme rā barāyetān biyāvaram?*, Do you want me to bring you that letter?)

حتماً استحضار دارید (/ مستحضر هستید) که آقای سفیر هم تشریف خواهند آورد (*hatman estehzār dārid [/ mostahzar hastid] ke āghā-ye safir ham tashrif khāhand āvard*, You certainly know that the ambassador will come too.)

حقیر از جنابعالی سؤالی کرده بودم (*haghir az jenāb-e-'āli so'āli karde budam*, I had asked you a question.)

بنده دیروز خدمت رسیدم ولی حضرتعالی تشریف نداشتید (*bande diruz khedmat residam vali hazrat-e-'āli tashrif na-dāshtid*, I came yesterday but you were not there.)

(The last two or three examples are using especially outmoded language, though still used by the older generation.)

15.2.3.1 عرضه (arze)

عرضه (*arze*) means ‘presentation’ (or ‘supply’ in economics), and عرضه کردن (*arze kardan*) is ‘to present / supply’; it does not have the usage limitations of عرض and can be used for both the speaker and the addressee:

آیا برنامه جدیدی عرضه خواهید کرد؟ (*āyā barnāme-ye jadidi arze khāhid kard?*, Will you present a new program?)

اگر تقاضا زیاد باشد، بیشتر عرضه خواهیم کرد (*agar taghāzā ziyād bāshad, bishtar arze khāhim kard*, Should there be more demand, we’ll increase the supply.)

Contemporary remnants of archaic features

This book is about contemporary Persian, not about usage that can be considered archaic and obsolete. Those uses should be of interest to those interested in classical Persian literature – more than a thousand years old but still read and understood and enjoyed by Iranians and by Persian speakers in neighboring countries. The reason for some of those features being introduced here is that they are not quite separable from contemporary – even colloquial – Persian. Iranians like to support or prove their point by citing a line of classical poetry, and certain idioms or proverbs are remnants and carriers of old usages. For instance, such a common, everyday expression as هرچه بادا باد! (*har-che bādā bād*, ‘Come what may!’ or ‘Que sera sera!’) is using the *optative* mood, which can be said to be an obsolete feature now.

If you ask a person to help you with something while he himself has the same problem and knows no solution, he would cite this proverb (which has the form of a couplet):

کل اگر طبیب بودی / سر خود دوا نمودی
(*kal agar tabib budi / sar-e khod
davā nomudi*, If the baldhead had been a physician, he would have
cured his own head.)

Despite being a very common proverb, some features of early modern Persian are to be found here, like using بودی for 3Sg. – and not 2Sg.

In this chapter, only certain archaic features that might still be encountered with relative frequency will be mentioned, although they are seen now only in citations and proverbs.

16.1 The conditional / habitual *-i* suffix

The verb *بودی* in the proverb mentioned above can be a good start. This *-i* suffix had the effect of a *mi*-prefix when added to past tense (usually added to 1Sg. and 3Sg. / 3Pl. only), used for counterfactual conditionals (where you would use past progressive now) and for habitual past ('used to'). Thus, *بودی* is the same as *می بود* (*mi-bud*) just as *نمودی* in that couplet is the same as *می نمود* (*mi-nomud* = *می کرد*, *mi-kard*). Since this usage was not common for second person, the same verb (*بودی*) could be understood as 2Sg. also (if no subject mentioned).

To simply convey the continuous sense, *mi-* or *hami-* was used: *می رفت* / *همی رفت* (*mi-raft* / *hami-raft*, he was going / kept going).

16.2 The prohibitive *ma*-prefix

For *prohibitive* mood (= negative imperative), early modern Persian used the prefix *ma-* instead of *na-* (still common in poetical language). A couplet by Hāfez:

سوئی من لب چه می گزی که: "مگوی" / لب لعلی گزیده ام که می پرس!
man lab che mi-gazi ke ma-guy? / lab-e la'li gazide'am ke ma-pors!,
 Why are you biting the lip at me, [saying] 'Don't tell'? / I have bitten
 [= kissed] ruby lips that . . . – don't ask!

In today's standard Persian, *مگوی!* (*ma-guy*) and *می پرس!* (*ma-pors*) would be *نگو!* (*na-gu*, Don't say / tell!) and *نپرس!* (*na-pors*, Don't ask!)

In still more poetical language, sometimes the prefix *be-* was kept before this *ma-*, like *بمگو* (*be-ma-gu*, don't say).

Apart from poetical language, you can still find this *ma-* in many idioms and proverbs:

اسرارِ مگو (*asrār-e magú*, unspeakable secrets)

Compare this with اسرار را نگو (*asrār rā nāgu*, ‘Don’t tell the secrets.’ – with the normal stress on the negative *ná*-).

Even the common word کشمکش (*kesh-ma-kesh*, struggle or scuffle) has this *ma*- in the middle, added to کشیدن (here ‘to pull’).

16.3 Verbs and the *mi-* / *be-* prefixes

Now only possible in poetical language imitating classical times, early modern Persian does not seem to have observed the rules governing the use of verbal *mi-* or *be-* prefixes as they are known and practiced now. They might be missing sometimes where contemporary usage finds them indispensable or might be used with no justification according to contemporary grammar. Whether we call it *poetic license* or not, some of the rules explained in this book regarding where and how to use the *mi-* and *be-* prefixes with verbs do not always apply to past / archaic usage.

If you want to tell someone, ‘You are accusing me of this because that’s exactly how you yourself are,’ you would normally cite this proverb (again in meters):

کافر همه را به کیش خود پندارد
(*kāfar hame rā be kish-e khod pendārad*,
A heretic / non-believer thinks that all [other people] are of the same
faith as he.)

Here پندارد (which has neither *mi-* nor *be-*) is in fact می پندارد (*mi-pendārad*), but the *mi-* is missing.

On the other hand, sometimes *mi-* was used in poetical language for singular imperative (affirmative) instead of *be-*, for instance می خوان (*mi-khān!*, read!); می باش (*mi-bāsh!*, be!); and کار می کن (*kār mi-kon!*, work!) instead of بخوان, باش and کار کن respectively.

As for *be-* (in imperative and subjunctive), it should likewise be known that this prefix is sometimes called, very aptly indeed, بَاءِ زینت (*bā’e zinat*, ‘ornamental *be*’), treated in the past like some ornament that could have been worn or left out at will. Sometimes you see that it has been used even for past tense (او رفت instead of او برفت), and sometimes it is missing where you expect it to be used. Another couplet by Hāfez:

اگر غم لشکر انگیزد که خون عاشقان ریزد (*agar gham lashkar angizad ke khun-e āshgehān rizad*, If grief moves an army to shed the blood of lovers, /)
من و ساقی بهم سازیم و بنیادش براندازیم (*man-o sāghi be-ham sāzim-o bonyād-ash bar-andāzim*, the cup-bearer and I will join forces and uproot it.)

A paraphrased, contemporary version would read:

اگر غم لشکری بیانگیزد که خون عاشقان را بریزد (*agar gham lashkari biyangizad ke khun-e āshgehān rā be-rizad*)
من و ساقی باهم می‌سازیم و بنیادش را بر می‌اندازیم (*man-o sāghi bā-ham mi-sāzim-o bonyād-ash rā bar-mi-andāzim*)

As can be seen here, *biyangizad* needs *be-* (because of the conditional *agar*), and *berizad* also needs *be-* (because of the ‘final’ *ke* [= in order to]), both missing in the original couplet. Similarly, *mi-* is missing in both *mi-sāzim* and *bar-mi-andāzim*.

16.4 The fate of *rā*

In the couplet by Hāfez cited above, the DDO-marker *rā* was missing twice. If you do the same now, it wouldn’t be considered a *poetic license*, but an obvious mistake.

On the other hand, there are cases where you wouldn’t normally expect a *rā* now, but it is used in poetical / archaic language. Some verbs that need prepositions now (for indirect object) used to take direct objects + *rā*. Example: *او را گفتم* (*u rā goftam*) instead of the contemporary version *به او گفتم* (*be u goftam*, I told / said to him / her.). The older version may still be seen now in contemporary poetry.

Additionally, *rā* + the verb ‘to be’ used to convey possession (now possible only in poetical language imitating archaic usage):

او را غلامی بود (*u rā gholāmi bud*) = *او غلامی داشت* (*u gholāmi dāsht*, He had a slave.)
او را مادری است (*u rā mādari ast*) → *برای او مادری است* (*barāye u mādari ast*) = *او مادری دارد* (*u mādari dārad*, He has a mother.)

16.5 آن (*ān-e*) or از آن (*az ān-e*) = 'that of'

As possessive pronoun, you would normally use مال (*māl-e*) + some noun / name in contemporary Persian:

این مال من نیست (*in māl-e man nist*, This is not mine.)

این مال صمد است؛ آن یکی مال کیست؟ (*in māl-e samad ast; ān-yeki māl-e kist?*, This is Samad's; whose is that one?)

In formal / literary language, however, it is still possible to use the older version آن (*ān-e*, that of), often preceded by the preposition از (*az*):

گرانترین اسب جهان از آن کیست؟ (*gerān-tarin asb-e jahān az ān-e kist?*, Whose is [= Who owns] the most expensive horse in the world?)

خوشبختی واقعی از آن کسی است که ارزش زندگی را می‌شناسد (*khosh-bakhti-ye vāghe'i az ān-e kasi ast ke arzesh-e zendegi rā mi-shenāsad*, Real happiness belongs to [= 'is that of'] the person who knows the value of life.)

16.6 Contractions

Contractions of words used to be very common in classical Persian poetry, but they are much less common now (even in poetry). The word خاموش (*khāmush* [according to traditional scansion *long + very long*], silent or quenched) could thus change to خامش (*khāmsh* [*long + long*]), خموش (*khamush* [*short + very long*]) or خُمش (*khamosh* [*short + long*]), depending on the poet's need.

Contraction of اگر (*agar*, if) could be گر (*gar*) or just ار (*ar*), and it could be combined with other words: thus وَر (*var*) is و + اگر (= 'and if').

Contraction of از (*az*, from) was ز (*ze*, or just *z* when followed by vowels):

وَز (*vaz*) = و از (*va az*)

کَز (*kaz*) = که از (*ke az*)

زَان (*zān*) = از آن (*az ān*)

کَزَان (*kazān*) = که از آن (*ke az ān*) and so on.

Sometimes contractions with *az* are combined with other contractions in poetry, resulting in weird and (for those not familiar) puzzling results, like

زوت (*zut*), a contraction of از اویت (*az u-yat*), meaning از او تو را (*az u to rā*, for you from him / her / it).

16.7 Comparison of adjectives – a few exceptions

As remnants of earlier times, the adjectives به (*beh*, good); مه (*meh*, big); که (*keh*, small); بیش (*bish*, much / many); and کم (*kam*, little / few) can be used (now only in poetry) as comparative adjectives without adding the *-tar* suffix, although they can be used with *-tar* also; of these, using بیش از (*bish az*) instead of بیشتر از (*bishtar az*, more than) is quite common (see Section 6.10.4).

For their superlative also, older usage allowed adding just *-in* instead of *-tarin*, giving بهین (*behin*) instead of بهترین (*beh-tarin*, best), etc.

پیش (*pish*, front, before) and پس (*pas*, back, after), now usually used as the compound prepositions followed by *az* (از پیش and از پس), meaning respectively ‘before’ and ‘after,’ may also have belonged to this category, and in more literary usage, we have the forms پیشین (*pishin*, former, previous, old, ancient) and پسین (*pasin*, last, latest, posterior) also.

16.8 The verb بودن (‘to be’)

For some variants of the verb ‘to be’ that are now obsolete, see Section 11.8.4.

'Good' and 'bad' Persian?

Languages are constantly changing, and there can never be a general consensus on what is good or bad usage in a language like Persian – just as in English, some would find the word 'general' redundant before 'consensus,' and for others, it is okay.

In the previous chapters of this book, however, there have occasionally been references to *bad* or *careless* Persian. Here you will see what exactly was meant by that.

17.1 Administrative / journalistic¹ Persian

Careless or bad Persian can be encountered in formal / written Persian only. The way different people speak can differ, based on the social milieu in which they grew up, but you cannot blame anyone for the way he speaks. And don't forget that here we are only talking about the contemporary standard Persian of Iran, not about Persian as it is used in other countries, nor as it used to be in the past – even quite recent past!

The worst, or ugliest, Persian is what is neither used by ordinary people when they are talking nor by good writers when they are writing. Compare the following:

Formal: این بیماری خطرناک است. (*in bimāri khatarnāk ast*, This disease is dangerous.)

Colloquial / Tehrani: این مریضی (بیماری) خطرناکه. (*in marizi [l bimāri] khatarnāke*) – Note here the change from *ast* to *-e*.

Awkward: این بیماری خطرناک می‌باشد. (*in bimāri khatarnāk mi-bāshad*)

Table 17.1 Substitutes to avoid

Used in spoken + 'good' Persian	Substitutes often used in written administrative / journalistic Persian
بودن (<i>budan</i> , to be)	باشیدن (<i>bāshidan</i>)
کردن (<i>kardan</i> , to do)	نمودن / ساختن / گرداندن (گردانیدن) (<i>nomudan / sākhtan / gardāndan</i> [<i>gardānidan</i>])
شدن (<i>shodan</i> , to become)	گشتن / گردیدن (<i>gashtan / gardidan</i>)

either. Conjugating the verb 'to be' as *mi-bāsham*, *mi-bāshi*, etc. is something you will never hear in spoken Persian, and all writers known for their 'good' Persian will avoid it as well, but in the press or in administrative language, you will find this on every page by the dozen.

It needs to be made clear that, in Table 17.1, all of the 'substitute verbs' on the right column (except *bāshidan*) have their own independent meanings, and it is quite okay if they are used in their proper sense and not as substitutes for the verbs on the left column. For instance, there's nothing wrong in using *nomudan* in the sense of 'to appear / to show' or *sākhtan* in the sense of 'to make / to build.'

The substitutes for کردن and شدن (on the right column) are especially common with compound verbs. You can find these 'awkward substitutes' in written Persian almost everywhere – except in the writings of those known to be the models of 'good Persian.' Example:

هر نماینده . . . حق دارد در همهٔ مسائل داخلی و خارجی کشور اظهار نظر نماید (*har namāyande . . . haqh dārad dar hame-ye masā'el-e dākheli va khāreji-ye keshvar ez.hār-e nazar nomāyad*, Every representative . . . shall be entitled to express his views on all internal and external matters of the country.) – From Iran's Constitution, §84, here, نماید (from the verb *nomudan*) has replaced کند (from the verb *kardan*).

Careless, journalistic Persian is marked by the influence of bad translations from other languages, using passive where Persian would normally seek other alternatives (see Section 12.13.1), using the DDO-marker when it is not needed or placing it at the end of a relative clause (see Section 13.7.3), or deleting a verb without justification (see Section 13.19), etc. Example for deleting a verb:

او در تهران دستگیر و پس از چهارده روز حبس، در زندان درگذشت (*u dar tehrān dastgir va pas-az chahārdah ruz habs dar zendān dar-gozasht*, She [was]

arrest[ed] in Tehran and passed away in prison after 14 days.) – Here you should say دستگیر شد (*dastgir shod*, was arrested), and the verb cannot be omitted.

17.2 Persian purists and what they hate most

There has been a Persian purism movement among Iranian intellectuals, writers and linguists since early 20th Century with ups and downs at different stages – a movement with very little effect on the ordinary people and the way they use the language, no matter to what extent they share the nationalistic sentiments fueling this movement.

Here we won't discuss the more extremist views of those who want to cleanse Persian of all foreign words (which would be like cleansing English of all words of French / Latin origin) and will just mention a few of the objections of the more moderate scholars / linguists. The main point of this group is: if we cannot get rid of all foreign words, we should at least not allow certain grammatical features of foreign languages (read: Arabic) be used in Persian. Some examples of their recommendations:

- Don't use Arabic broken plurals when you can use Persian plurals, but especially don't use Arabic plurals for Persian words – some of which are rather common, like پیشنهادات (*pishnahādāt*) instead of پیشنهادها (*pishnahād-hā*, proposals) or گزارشات (*gozāreshāt*) instead of گزارشها (*gozāresh-hā*, reports); and some seem unavoidable, like سبزیجات (*sabzijāt*, the collective noun for 'vegetables').
- Don't use the Arabic *tanwin* for Persian words to make adverbs, like ناچاراً (*nāchār-an*) instead of ناچار / به ناچار ([*be*] *nāchār*, inevitably or perforce) or گاهاً (*gāh-an*) instead of گاهی (*gāhi*, sometimes).
- Don't use or even make new Arabic compounds like فارغ التحصیل (*fāregh-ot-tahsil*, graduate) and use Persian words instead (like دانش‌آموخته [*dānesh-āmukhte*]).

17.3 Common mistakes among learners of Persian

We cannot provide more than a few examples here, but you will certainly find these very helpful. These are some of the most common ones.

Don't say *nemi-dānam agar u mi-dānad yā na* when you want to say 'I don't know if he knows or not.' – Yes, *agar* means 'if,' but only in conditionals, not in indirect questions! (See Section 13.17.4.)

Say instead: . . . *که / آیا / که آیا* (نمی دانم)

Note that you can still say:

nemi-dānam agar u bedānad che khāhad kard, I don't know what he's going to do if he finds out.) – This is the conditional 'if'!

Don't say *این یک داستان غمگین است* (*in yek dāstān-e ghamgin ast*) when you want to say 'This is a sad story.' In Persian, only a *person* can be sad, happy, wise, clever and so on – you need a different word for *things*. (See Section 6.11.)

Say instead: *این یک داستان غم انگیز است* (*in yek dāstān-e gham-angiz ast*)

Don't say *من آن را جالب پیدا می کنم* (*man ān rā jāleb peydā mi-konam*) when you want to say 'I find that interesting.' *پیدا کردن* (*peydā kardan*, to find) is only the opposite of *گم کردن* (*gom kardan*, to lose). The verb *یافتن* (*yāftan*) can be used in both of these senses, but then it is a verb used in formal / literary language only.

Say instead (*col.*): *به نظرم جالب است* (*be nazaram jāleb ast* / *mi-āyad*), It seems interesting to me.)

Or (*form. / lit.*): *آن را جالب می یابم* (*ān rā jāleb mi-yābam*, I find that interesting.)

Don't say *باور می کنم که آنها می دانند* (*bāvar mi-konam ke ānhā mi-dānand*) when you want to say 'I believe that they know [it].' Use *باور کردن* (*bāvar kardan*) only to show that you believe someone's words (that he is not lying) – as in *حرفت را باور می کنم* (*harfat rā būvar mi-konam*, I believe you / what you say).

Say instead: *فکر* (*fekr* / *tasavvor* / *gaman*) *می کنم که آنها می دانند* (*mi-konam ke ānhā mi-dānand*)

Similarly, don't say *من در خدا باور می کنم* (*man dar khodā būvar mi-konam*) when you want to say 'I believe in God.'

Say instead (*col.*): *من به خدا اعتقاد دارم* (*man be khodā e'teghād dāram*)

Or (*form. / lit.*): *من به خدا باور دارم* (*man be khodā būvar dāram*)

Table 17.2 The verb 'to take'

<i>To take</i>	<i>Persian equivalent</i>	<i>Opposite in Persian</i>
as the opposite of 'to give'	گرفتن (<i>gereftan</i>)	دادن (<i>dādan</i>)
as the opposite of 'to bring'	بُردن (<i>bordan</i>)	آوردن (<i>āvardan</i>)
as the opposite of 'to put'	برداشتن (<i>bar-dāshtan</i>)	گذاشتن (<i>gozāshtan</i>)

And don't forget that پرسیدن (*porsidan*) is always used for *asking a question* not for asking someone to do something! For the latter, you need to check indirect speech forms for requests (Section 13.17.5).

When an English word has different meanings or usages, you can be sure that you would need a different word in Persian for each of those meanings / usages, as shown in Table 17.2 for the verb 'to take.'

Examples:

او کتاب را داد و من آن را گرفتم (*u ketāb rā dād va man ān rā gereftam*, He gave the book, and I took it.)

غذایش را آوردم و او آن را به اتاقش بُرد (*ghazā-yash rā āvardam va u ān rā be otāgh-ash bord*, I brought her food, and she took it to her room.)

نامه را روی میز گذاشت و من آن را از روی میز برداشتم (*nāme rā ru-ye miz gozāsht va man ān rā az ru-ye miz bar-dāshtam*, He put the letter on the table, and I took it [I picked it up] from the table.)

17.4 The words *fārs* – *fārsi* – *iran* – *irani*

To avoid using the terms incorrectly, make sure that you know that:

ایران (*irān*) is the name of the country; pronounced as *ee-raan*

ایرانی (*irāni*) is Iranian and it is about nationality

فارسی (*fārsi*) is the name of the language, the Arabicized but common version of original پارسی (*pārsi*)

فارس (*fārs*; originally پارس *pārs*) is a southern province in Iran, and it can also be used for (a) a person from that province, (b) a Persian speaker in Iran, as opposed to other Iranians whose mother tongue is not Persian (and that amounts to ca. half of the population).

Examples for correct use of these words:

کشور ایران (*keshtar-e irān*, the country of Iran)
 مردم ایران (*mardom-e irān*, the people of Iran)
 تاریخ ایران (*tārikh-e irān*, the history of Iran)
 شهرهای ایران (*shahr-hā-ye irān*, the cities of Iran)
 زبانهای ایرانی (*zabān-hā-ye irāni*, Iranian languages)
 افسانه‌های ایرانی (*osture-hā-ye irāni*, Iranian myths)
 اقوام ایرانی (*aghvām-e irāni*, Iranian ethnic groups)
 نویسنده ایرانی (*nevisande-ye irāni*, Iranian writer)
 زبان فارسی (*zabān-e fārsi*, Persian language)
 ادبیات فارسی (*adabiyāt-e fārsi*, Persian literature)
 شعر فارسی (*she'r-e fārsi*, Persian poetry)
 کتاب فارسی (*ketāb-e fārsi*, Persian book)
 استان فارس (*ostān-e fārs*, Fars Province)
 مردم فارس (*mardom-e fārs*, people of Fars, or Persian speakers inside Iran)
 قوم فارس (*ghowm-e fārs*, Persians as ethnic group)
 خلیج فارس (*khaliy-e fārs*, Persian Gulf)

For products from Iran or its cultural heritage, use ایران, not ایرانی, as in:

معماری ایران (*me'māri-ye irān*, architecture of Iran = Iranian architecture)
 سینمای ایران (*sinemā-ye irān*, cinema of Iran = Iranian cinema)
 But: موسیقی ایرانی (*musighi-ye irāni*, Iranian music, as opposed to Western or foreign music)
 فیلم فارسی (*film-e fārsi*) is a movie in Persian language and, of course, produced in Iran, whereas
 فیلم ایرانی (*film-ye irāni*) says what country the movie comes from.

Note

1 By 'journalistic Persian' (فارسی ژورنالیستی), Iranian writers mean bad or careless Persian.

Arabic to Persian – Arabic in Persian

The influence of Arabic language on Persian, which can be compared to the influence of French on English after the Norman Conquest (1066 CE), has had different phases and forms. After reaching its height of influence in the 10th Century CE (with almost 50% Arabic loan words in the adorned and rhymed Persian prose, though far less in spoken Persian), the early 20th Century witnessed a Persian purist movement, not quite free of nationalist, even anti-Semitic, sentiments. This trend has continued, in more subtle ways, until the present time, in spite of the 1979 Revolution, which seemed to introduce a new wave of Arabic loan words, soon to stop with the outbreak of hostilities between Iran and her Arab neighbors.

The Arabic loan words in Persian have been Persianized (by change of pronunciation, meaning or both) to the extent that they are now as much *Persian* as words of French or Latin origin (like *delicious* or *promise*) are now *English*.

18.1 Change of sounds and / or spelling from Arabic to Persian

- (a) Changes in vowels / diphthongs in borrowings from Arabic (Arabic long vowels here followed by a colon; only the spelling and meaning in contemporary Persian given):

a → a (no change) as in وزن (*vazn*, weight)
a: → ā as in آدم (*a: dam* → *ādam*, Adam)
i → e as in اسلام (*isla: m* → *eslām*, Islam)
i: → i as in دین (*di: n* → *din*, religion)
u → o as in اُمّت (*umma[t]* → *ommat*, people)
u: → u as in موسى (*mu: sa:* → *musā*, Moses)

aw → ow as in خوف (*khawf* → *khowf*, fear)

ay → ey as in خير (*khayr* → *kheyr*, good)

final a → final e as in فاطمه (*fa: tima* → *fāteme*, a girls' name)

- (b) Changes in consonants (in spelling or pronunciation; only the spelling and meaning in contemporary Persian given):

ة → ت or final e (sometimes both forms but with different meanings), as in

ارادة → 1) ارادت (*erādat*, cordiality); 2) اراده (*erāde*, will)

ة → تاً as in دفعتاً (*daf'atan*, suddenly) or عادتاً (*ādatan*, habitually)

ع pronunciation changes to → ا ('hamza') as in علي (Ali)

ح pronunciation changes to → ه as in محمد (Mohammad)

ق pronunciation changes to → غ as in قول (*qawl* → *ghowl*, saying, promise)

ط pronunciation changes to → ت as in طوطى (*tuti*, parrot)

ث, ص pronunciation changes to → س as in مثال (*mesāl*, example) or صورت (*surat*, face)

ذ, ض, ظ pronunciation changes to → ز as in لذيذ (*laziz*, delicious), ضرر (*zarar*, loss), ظهر (*zohr*, noon)

- (c) Stress: In Persian, the stress is *usually* on the last syllable (see Section 2.1.4). Arabic has its own rules and patterns for stress.
- (d) Certain patterns of vowels in Arabic are usually changed and modified in Persian, one example being words starting with *muta-* in Arabic (from *تَفَعَّل* [*tafa'. 'ul*] or *تَفَاعَلَ* [*tafa:.'ul*]), Persian pronunciation usually changing it to *mote-*. In the following examples, only the Persian pronunciation is given:

متأسف (*mote'as.sef*, sorry)

متأثر (*mote'as.ser*, sad, touched, influenced)

مترقى (*moteragh.ghi*, progressive)

متخصص (*motekhas.ses*, specialist)

متداول (*motedāvel*, common)

متقاعد (*moteghā'ed*, convinced)

متقابل (*moteghābel*, reciprocal)

متناسب (*motenāseb*, proportionate)

- (e) With consonantal clusters at the end of syllables, Persian tends to extend the length of the preceding vowel in order to avoid adding

a half-vowel between the consonants (as common in Arabic and Turkish).

18.2 Arabic in Persian

Apart from a large number of loan words, Persianized in different ways and adjusted and absorbed, it's hard to see any major Arabic influence – almost none in syntax.

One thing which cannot be ignored is Arabic plurals (whether 'broken' or following one of the several plural forms considered 'regular' in Arabic) that came along with the loan words, although the Persian plural is possible for all of them and is even much more common.

Broken plurals in Arabic are formed by changes in internal vowels (compare with English 'woman / women' or 'foot / feet'). And not always these broken plurals used in Persian are those common in modern Arabic, nor are they used always in the same sense. The 'regular' Arabic plurals – which to Persian speakers are still irregular because they are different from Persian plurals – only add suffixes to the noun, like *-āt* (in original Arabic usually used for feminine nouns), *-un* (much less common in Persian, used for some words ending in *-iyy*), *-in* (used in Persian more for professions or categories of people) or *-eyn* (for Arabic dual plural, only a few words common in Persian). You can see Sections 3.3.4–3.3.6 for more details and examples; a few examples will be given here also, but it should be remembered that, in all of these examples, the Persian plural is not only possible, but often more common and preferred:

Broken plural: فکر (*fekr*, thought) → افکار (*afkār*, thoughts); مرحله (*marhale*, stage) → مراحل (*marāhel*, stages); اصل (*asl*, principle) → اصول (*osul*, principles)

Suffix *-āt*: احساس (*ehsās*, feeling) → احساسات (*ehsāsāt*, feelings); تدارک (*tadārok*, preparation) → تدارکات (*tadārokāt*, preparations); مشکل (*moshkel*, difficult, difficulty, problem) → مشکلات (*moshkelāt*, difficulties, problems)

Suffix *-un*: روحانی (*ruhāni*, spiritual, a mullah) → روحانیون (*ruhāni[y]yun*, the mullahs); انقلابی (*enghelābi*, revolutionary [*adj.* / *n.*]) → انقلابیون (*enghelābi[y]yun*, revolutionaries); مادی (*mād.dī*, material, materialist) → مادیون (*mād.diy.yun*, materialists)

Suffix *-in*: معلم (*mo'al.lem*, teacher) → معلمين (*mo'al.lemīn*, teachers); مشاور (*moshāver*, advisor) → مشاورين (*moshāverīn*, advisors); مسئول (*mas'ul*, responsible, in charge) → مسئولين (*mas'ulīn*, those responsible or in charge)

Dual suffix *-eyn*: طرف (*taraf*, side) → طرفين (*tarafeyn*, the two sides [e.g., of a dispute]); زوج / زوجه (*zowj / zowje*, husband / wife [singular outmoded in Persian]) → زوجين (*zowjeyn*, husband and wife [outmoded in Persian]); والد/والده (*vāled / vālede*, father / mother [as singular not common in Persian]) → والدين (*vāledeyn*, parents; father and mother)

Never a common practice except to some extent in administrative language and official letters, the Arabic use of feminine ending used to be seen in Persian, sometimes even for Persian nouns that have no gender, and this practice has been discouraged and almost abandoned in the past century. See Section 3.1 on nouns and Section 6.15 on adjectives for examples.

For the use of some Arabic comparative / superlative adjectives in Persian (mostly within phrases that have become fixed clichés or used as names) see Section 6.10.5.

The Arabic definite article *al* is known and used in Persian as a connector of two words (noun-noun or adjective-noun) to make compounds, always in the middle and usually pronounced as *-ol-* (regardless of the original Arabic pronunciation) or, if the second word starts with certain consonants, it is pronounced as *-o-* (dropping the *l*) while the first consonant of the second word is pronounced with *tashdid* (doubled). The letters that make this treatment (i.e., dropping the *l*) necessary are:

ت - ث - د - ذ - ر - ز - س - ش - ص - ض - ط - ظ - ل - ن

Many compounds used in Iran are not known or common in the Arab world.

Examples of compounds in Persian with *-ol-* pronunciation:

سريع الهضم (*sari'-ol-hazm*, easily digested)
 عام المنفعة (*ām.m-ol-manfa'e*, charitable)
 صريح اللهجه (*sarih-ol-lahje*, outspoken)
 دارالمجانين (*dār-ol-majānīn*, lunatic asylum)
 فوق العاده (*fowgh-ol-'ādeh*, extraordinary)

Examples of compounds in Persian with -o + C- pronunciation (with C standing for the doubled consonant of the second word):

سريع السَّير (*sari'-os-seyr*, express [as train])
فارغ التحصيل (*fāregh-ot-tahsil*, graduate)
بين النهرين (*beyn-on-nahreyn*, Mesopotamia)
ملك الشعراء (*malek-osh-sho'ara*, poet laureate)
فوق الذكر (*fowgh-oz-zekr*, above-mentioned)

Glossary of grammatical terms

absolute form of noun	A noun not accompanied by any determiners (for number, definite / indefinite, etc.).
abstract noun	Not referring to concrete objects or persons; words like ‘wisdom,’ ‘sight’ or ‘speed’ are abstract nouns.
active participle	Verb derivatives showing some capability or active potential. In English it is usually the <i>present participle</i> that has this active function (like <i>convincing</i>); in Persian usually derivatives using the suffixes <i>-ā</i> , <i>-ān</i> or <i>-ande</i> .
adjective	A word or a group of words used to describe a noun.
adverb	Adverbs usually modify the verb, an adjective, another adverb, different parts of a sentence or a whole clause; there are many categories of adverbs (temporal, locational, adverbs of manner and the like).
affirmative	Not <i>negative</i> .
affix	A <i>prefix</i> or a <i>suffix</i> .
agent	Subject or <i>doer</i> of the action expressed by the verb.
agent participle	An English <i>agent participle</i> usually uses the suffix <i>-er</i> (or <i>-or</i>) as in <i>singer</i> , <i>driver</i> , <i>advisor</i> ; in Persian usually the suffix <i>-ande</i> is used (as <i>rānande</i> , driver).
agreement	The agreement between subject and verb in person and number.
antecedent	A word in the sentence to which later words (usually pronouns) are referring.
archaic	Belonging to an older stage of a language, no more used in contemporary language (except occasionally in poetical language imitating older, archaic usage).

- aspect** Verb forms are usually said to have four *aspects*: simple, progressive, perfect and perfect progressive.
- attributive
attributive adjective** Having a modifying or qualifying function.
An adjective standing together with the noun that it modifies, in the same part of the sentence (regarding subject / predicate).
- auxiliary verb** A verb is called auxiliary when it is used not independently as the main verb but as an auxiliary verb helping the main verb to form a certain aspect, mood, etc., like when ‘to have’ is used in English to form the *perfect* aspect of other verbs (*present perfect*, *past perfect* and so on). Persian has four verbs that, apart from their independent meanings and functions, can have this auxiliary function also: بودن (*budan*, used to form *perfect* tenses and constructions); خواستن (*khāstan*, used to form the *future* tense); شدن (*shodan*, used to form the *passive* voice); and داشتن (*dāshdan*, used to form a partially developed variant of *progressive* for present and past).
- base verb** See *main verb*.
- broken plural** Irregular plurals used for Arabic loan words (similar to some Latin plurals used in English); not a feature of Persian language.
- cardinal number
case** Basic numerals like one, two, three and so on.
In other languages, *case* is about the syntactic function of a noun or pronoun, which can be *subjective* (*nominative*), *objective* (*accusative / dative*) or *possessive* (*genitive*), but the simplified Modern Persian has no inflection and makes no distinction between the cases: the same noun or pronoun can be used for both genders in all cases without any change.
- causative form of verbs** This relatively productive verbal formation in Persian (achieved by adding the suffix *-āndan* to *Stem I*) adds a transitive sense of ‘causing to do or be’ to an otherwise usually intransitive verb. (Also called *factive* by some grammarians.)
- clause** A clause is part of a longer sentence that usually consists of a *main clause* and a *subordinate clause* (see the entry for each of these terms).

collective noun	Nouns that are singular in form but plural in meaning, like گروه (<i>goruh</i> , group) or خانواده (<i>khānevāde</i> , family).
colloquial	In this book, used in the sense of less formal Persian, but not necessarily the Tehrani accent (contemporary standard for spoken Persian).
comparative	The form of an adjective or adverb used to compare one thing (or person or group) with another, like بهتر (<i>behtar</i> , better).
comparison of adjectives	For the three forms of comparison of adjectives see <i>comparative</i> , <i>superlative</i> and <i>equal comparison</i> .
complement	What completes, usually what completes the verb (the predicate), without which the sentence would appear incomplete – for instance, ‘He seems’ would be incomplete as a sentence. (See also the entry for <i>intransitive verb</i> .)
compound	Consisting of two or more parts.
compound preposition	A preposition that is not <i>primary</i> or <i>simple</i> (i.e., just one word and no <i>ezāfe</i>), but rather is <i>derived</i> and formed usually by adding the connector <i>ezāfe</i> to nouns or adverbs or by adding some other word to a primary preposition.
compound tense	A tense that needs the use of an auxiliary verb in addition to the main verb.
compound verb	In Persian compound verbs, a verbal part is preceded by a non-verbal part, which can be a noun, an adjective or a prefix. (The prefix can often be otherwise used as a preposition.)
concessive	A concessive clause uses words like <i>although</i> to show some logical contrast between two clauses.
conditional	A conditional sentence is an <i>if-then</i> statement consisting of an <i>if-clause</i> (the <i>condition</i>) and a main clause (the <i>result clause</i>).
conjugation	Adding verbal / conjugational suffixes to verbs to show the <i>person</i> (like 1st person singular, 2nd person . . . , etc.).
conjunction	A word used to join other words, phrases, clauses or sentences. The three kinds of conjunctions are <i>correlative</i> , <i>coordinating</i> and <i>subordinating</i> (see the entry for each).

connector <i>ezāfe</i>	See <i>ezāfe</i> .
consonant	<i>Consonants</i> are speech sounds in a language that are not <i>vowels</i> ; the word is also used for the letters that represent such sounds: <i>b</i> , <i>m</i> and <i>v</i> are examples of consonants while <i>a</i> , <i>i</i> and <i>o</i> are examples of vowels. To produce the sound of a consonant, the flow of the breath must be at least partly obstructed.
continuous contraction	See <i>progressive</i> . Shortened version of a word, whether in written or spoken language (like <i>'tis</i> / <i>it's</i> and <i>can't</i> instead of <i>it is</i> and <i>can not</i> in English).
coordinating conjunction	Coordinating conjunctions join words or groups of words that can be said to be of equal rank and importance, like the conjunctions <i>and</i> and <i>or</i> .
copula	The term sometimes used when referring to the verb بودن (<i>budan</i> , to be) in Persian, especially its shorter or suffixed version in present tense.
correlative conjunction	Conjunctions that work in pairs, like <i>both . . . and . . .</i> in English.
counterfactual	Assumptions that are contrary to facts, also called <i>irrealis</i> . Used for types of conditional statements or wishes that cannot be realized.
count word	Also called <i>counting word</i> or <i>measure word</i> , refers to words used in combination with numerals to indicate amounts. Persian numerals cannot be used alone (as pronouns) without a count / measure word.
dative	Dative case applies loosely to the indirect object of a verb; in Persian always preceded by a preposition.
DDO	Abbreviation used in this book for <i>definite direct object</i> .
DDO-marker	A post-positioned _۲ (<i>rā</i>) is the DDO-marker in Persian.
declension	See <i>inflection</i> .
defective	A <i>defective</i> ('imperfect') verb is one that cannot be conjugated for all persons or in all tenses like a normal verb, like <i>must</i> in English, which has no past tense.
definite	A noun is considered <i>definite</i> when it is a proper noun or when it refers to a particular member of a group or class.

definite determiner	See <i>DDO-marker</i> .
definite marker	See <i>DDO-marker</i> .
demonstrative	Words used for pointing out or distinguishing, like <i>this</i> and <i>these</i> in English.
derivative	A word derived from another word.
diminutive	A noun with suffixes added to show smallness (associated with either affection or contempt).
diphthong	In contemporary Persian, a combination of the vowels <i>o / e</i> and a semi-consonantal <i>w / y</i> , giving the two diphthongs <i>ow</i> and <i>ey</i> .
direct object	The object of a transitive verb when no preposition is needed (also known as <i>accusative</i>).
direct question	A question asked directly, not as cited or reported.
direct speech	Reproducing a statement exactly as it was said directly without making changes or adjustments.
distributive	Words like هر (<i>har</i> , each, every) are distributive adjectives.
double negative	Some negative adverbs in Persian (words that mean ‘never,’ ‘nobody,’ etc.) usually need a negative verb too, but the effect would be equal to a single negative in English.
dual plural	Plural for two. Not a feature of Persian language; it is found only in a few loan words from Arabic.
enclitic	A word that is closely connected in pronunciation with the preceding word and is unstressed, like certain personal suffixes in Persian or the indefinite marker <i>-i</i> suffix and the like.
equal comparison	A comparison of equality (in English using <i>as . . . as . . .</i>) shows that the things compared are equal.
exclamative form	Exclamative or exclamatory statements are about sudden emotions, as when in English you would use ‘What a . . . !’ or ‘How . . . !’
<i>ezāfe</i>	A final unstressed <i>-e</i> added to a word in Persian with the function of connecting that word to the next.
factitive	See <i>causative</i> .
finite verb	In Persian, a verb that is complete in itself and can be used independently as the main verb in a sentence or a main clause.

- future tense** Used for actions that happen in future (like *he will go* in English); this tense is formed in Persian by conjugating the verb خواستن (*khāstan*) in the present tense (but without the *mi*-prefix) as auxiliary and then adding the past stem (short infinitive) of the main verb.
- gender** Persian has no gender, i.e., it makes no distinction between masculine and feminine.
- generic** Non-specific; of or relating to a whole group or class. In Persian a noun in its absolute form (i.e., not accompanied by any determiners) can be used in a generic sense.
- genitive case** Modern Persian does not have a ‘case’ as *genitive* (see *case*), but just a set of pronouns and *possessive* suffixes.
- gerund** In English the *-ing* form when used as noun; in Persian often the *infinitive* functions as the noun form of the verb in a way similar to the English *gerund* (for instance after prepositions).
- glide** A glide is a phoneme (usually a *-y-* sound in Persian) added between two adjacent vowels to make the flow of pronunciation from one vowel to the next more smooth.
- glottal stop** The sound made by the flow of air through vocal cords when they are released after being rapidly closed. A glottal stop is normally what makes the pronunciation of an initial vowel or diphthong possible, but in some languages like Persian, it may be used like other consonants in middle and final positions as well.
- habitual past** A tense used to express what *used to* happen in the past; in Persian it uses the same form as *past progressive* (a past tense preceded by the *mi*-prefix, but no auxiliary).
- hamze** One of the forms a *glottal stop* can have in orthography (see *glottal stop*).
- imperative** A grammatical mood used to express a command; in Persian it has a singular (2*Sl.*) and a plural (2*Pl.*) form.

impersonal construction	A verb construction used for an unspecified agent; in Persian it has different degrees and forms, from totally impersonal to quasi-impersonal.
indefinite	Not definite, non-specific.
indefinite determiner	Or <i>indefinite marker</i> . In English known as <i>indefinite article</i> (<i>a, an</i>); in Persian may use یک (<i>yek</i>) or the unstressed suffix ی (<i>-i</i>).
indicative	The grammatical mood used to make a statement or ask a question. (See <i>mood</i> .)
indirect command	A command as cited in reported / indirect speech.
indirect object	In Persian, the object that requires a preposition.
indirect question	A question as cited in reported / indirect speech.
indirect speech	Citing or reporting a statement while making changes or adjustments (in person, tense, etc.) to show that you are citing it.
infinitive	The basic form of a verb without any markers for person, tense, etc.
inflection	<i>Inflection</i> or <i>declension</i> is a change in the form of a word to show grammatical features. Persian words undergo no internal inflection, and apart from a simple set of conjugational suffixes (verb endings) that show the person of the verb, there is no change in the form of nouns, adjectives and other word categories.
interjection	Grammatically independent utterances used to express some feeling, like <i>Wow!</i>
interrogative	The term used for the <i>question form</i> and the words related to this form, like <i>interrogative adverbs</i> , <i>interrogative conjunctions</i> , <i>interrogative pronouns</i> and the like.
intransitive verb	A verb that does not need an object. (The <i>complement</i> of a verb in the predicate should not be confused with an <i>object</i> : in a sentence like <i>He went home</i> , ‘home’ is not the object because it answers the question <i>where?</i> and not <i>what?</i> – You cannot ask here <i>What did he go?</i> Whereas in a sentence like <i>He saw a man</i> , you can ask <i>What did he see?</i> , and <i>man</i> is the object.)

- inversion** Inversion is reversing the position as it happens, for instance, in English questions (by changing *he is . . . to is he . . . ?* and so on); it does not happen in Persian and has no function in Persian grammar. (The change that may occur in the position of adjectives in relation to nouns should be seen as optional and a variant usage.)
- irrealis** See *counterfactual*.
- lexicalized** A term (usually a compound word) that through usage has acquired the status of an independent lexical item.
- linking verb** Verbs like ‘to be’ or ‘to seem’ that connect the subject to the predicate and involve no action.
- locational** Of or relating to location, used for some adverbs or adverbial phrases that give information about the location.
- long vowel** A term used for the vowels *ā*, *u* and *i*; this designation could be correct when applied to Arabic language and its vowel system, while it could be a misnomer and misleading when used for the Persian sound system.
- main clause** An independent clause with subject and predicate that can stand alone even without another (subordinate) clause.
- main verb** Also called *base verb* or *principal verb*, the verb in a compound tense that is not an *auxiliary*, like the past participle in the past perfect tense.
- masculine** Of the male sex or gender; not *feminine*. Not an issue in Persian language, where there is no gender.
- mass noun** An uncountable noun, like آب (*āb*, water).
- measure word** See *count word*.
- modal verb** A modal verb is usually used before another verb (often in the subjunctive) to add some sense of necessity or possibility, like *must* or *can* in English (that are used before an *infinitive [without to]* – functioning similar to the Persian subjunctive).
- modifier** A word used to modify or describe another word or group of words, like an adjective that modifies a noun.

mood	<i>Indicative, imperative</i> and <i>subjunctive</i> are usually referred to as the three moods in grammar, reflecting the speaker's attitude towards the action expressed by the verb.
morpheme	The smallest grammatical unit in a language that can convey a meaning.
negation	Using the negative form.
negative	Opposite of <i>affirmative</i> .
nominal	As a noun; used as or functioning like a noun.
nominative	The case of the words used for or as the subject of the verb.
noun	Usually the largest word class in any language, nouns are generic names given to people, things, places and abstract concepts.
noun clause	A clause that assumes the role of a noun and can thus be used as the subject or object of the verb.
number	When used for verbs and conjugation, it refers to the <i>person</i> ; see <i>person</i> .
numbers / numerals	Words used for counting. See <i>cardinal</i> and <i>ordinal</i> numbers.
object	Receiver of the action of a transitive verb; see <i>direct object</i> and <i>indirect object</i> .
optative	A form used for prayer, now abandoned in contemporary Persian and considered archaic.
ordinal number	Numerals that indicate the order, like <i>first</i> , <i>second</i> and so on.
orthography	Spelling system.
participial absolute	A term used sometimes when referring to a practice in Persian grammar where a past participle is used instead of a finite verb.
participial formations	A term used for verb derivatives.
participle	May be used for different verb derivatives, most importantly <i>present participle</i> and <i>past participle</i> .
particle	A particle is a word with some grammatical function but not fitting into the categories of words known as the main parts of speech.
parts of speech	The main categories into which the words in a language are usually divided. Most common categories

passive	referred to are <i>noun, pronoun, adjective, adverb, verb, preposition</i> and <i>conjunction</i> . Not <i>active</i> ; in passive the focus is shifted to the <i>object</i> of an active sentence, which now becomes the <i>subject</i> of the passive sentence. Persian forms the passive by using the <i>past participle</i> of the main verb + the verb شدن (<i>shodan</i> , to become, to get) as auxiliary.
past and present stems	See <i>Stem I / II</i> .
past participle	<i>Written, forgiven</i> or <i>drawn</i> are examples of <i>past participle</i> in English. In Persian formed by adding an <i>-e</i> suffix to <i>Stem II</i> of the verb (regular for all verbs).
perfect tenses and formations	All <i>perfect</i> tenses (aspects) and constructions in Persian use the past participle (as they do in English), but the auxiliary that Persian uses is the verb بودن (<i>budan</i> , to be).
person (in verb / sentence)	As in English and most of other languages, Persian distinguishes between <i>first</i> (speaker), <i>second</i> (addressee) and <i>third</i> (absent) persons, each having a singular and a plural form.
personal pronouns	The pronouns used for the persons <i>1Sg.</i> to <i>3Pl.</i> (See <i>person</i> .)
phoneme	Smallest unit in a language's sound system.
phrase	Two or more words arranged to perform some grammatical function but, unlike a clause, lacking a subject and predicate.
possessive adjectives	<i>My, your, and her</i> are examples of <i>possessive adjectives</i> in English.
possessive pronouns	<i>Mine, yours, hers</i> are examples of <i>possessive pronouns</i> in English.
post-position	Placed or positioned after.
predicate	That part of a sentence that includes a finite verb and all of its complements (e.g., objects) and modifiers (e.g., adverbs).
predicative	Of or relating to the predicate.
prefix	A prefix is an affix added to the front of a word, usually qualifying and adding something to the meaning.

preposition	Called <i>pre-position</i> because they are always placed before some noun or pronoun and inform about their relation to other words in a sentence.
prepositional phrase	A phrase that starts with a preposition and forms a grammatical unit that can have different adverbial or adjectival functions.
pre-positioned	Placed or positioned before.
present participle	In Persian formed by adding an <i>-ān</i> suffix to <i>Stem I</i> of the verb.
primary preposition	Also called <i>simple preposition</i> , one that consists of one word only and does not need the connector <i>ezāfe</i> .
productive	The rules in grammar that can still be used by speakers to make new words are called productive.
progressive	Also called <i>continuous</i> , one of the <i>aspects</i> of verb forms that shows continuation or the process of being performed.
pronominal	Of or relating to pronouns; functioning like pronouns.
pronoun	One of the main parts of speech used as a substitute for a noun.
proper noun	A noun which is the <i>name</i> of some specific person (e.g., Jesus), location (e.g., Iran), occasion (e.g., Christmas), etc.
quasi-impersonal	Certain phrasal verb constructions in Persian always conjugated for 3Sg. while the real agent (or semantic subject) appears as suffixed or attached to the noun that has assumed the role of the grammatical subject.
question words	All of the <i>wh</i> -words in English (<i>who</i> , <i>what</i> , <i>where</i> . . .) + <i>how</i> . Based on their function they may be referred to as <i>interrogative adverbs</i> , <i>interrogative conjunctions</i> , <i>interrogative pronouns</i> and the like.
<i>rā</i>	See DDO-marker.
reduplication	Repeating an adjective or adverb for emphasis, exaggeration, etc., often creating in this way fixed and lexicalized compounds.
reflexive	Used for pronouns like <i>myself</i> , <i>himself</i> , etc.

- relative clause** A subordinate clause used to modify a word (usually a noun) in the main clause.
- reported speech** See *indirect speech*.
- resumptive** A certain practice found occasionally in Persian possessive constructions that involves some unnecessary repetition or redundancy, like saying 'John his father' instead of 'John's father.'
- root (of verb)** See *Stem I / II*.
- semantic** Pertaining to context and meaning.
- sentence** A complete and independent syntactic unit that has its own subject and predicate.
- short infinitive** In Persian *Stem II* of the verb can sometimes function as *short infinitive* and be used as a noun.
- short vowel** A term used for the vowels *a*, *e* and *o*; this designation could be correct when applied to Arabic language and its vowel system, while it could be a misnomer and misleading when used for the Persian sound system.
- simple preposition** See *primary preposition*.
- state verbs** This is about a group of verbs in Persian *when* they are used to describe in what *state* someone is (rather than what he or she *does*), like the verb 'to sit' used to say that someone is in a *seated* position (= *is sitting*).
- Stem I / II** The verbs (infinitives) in Persian have two stems, each used to form certain tenses or verb formations. *Stem I* is the *present stem* (which can be irregular; used to form the present tense, the imperative and subjunctive, some verbal derivatives) and *Stem II* is the *past stem* (always regular, used to form all other tenses and verb formations).
- stress** In Persian usually on the last syllable of a word (but not on conjugational or possessive suffixes).
- subject** Each sentence or clause wants to give some information about the subject; the subject is the doer of the action expressed by the verb (in an active sentence).
- subjunctive (mood)** In Persian used not just in *if-clauses* and to show doubt and uncertainty, but in most of the cases where English would use the infinitive as the second verb in the sentence.

subordinate clause	Not the main clause; subordinate clauses can have many different types and functions.
subordinating conjunction	The conjunction that introduces a subordinate clause.
suffix	An affix / particle added to the end of a word to make a new lexical concept or change and qualify the meaning.
superlative	A form in comparison of adjectives that shows how something compares to all other members of its class.
syllabification	Marking the boundary between syllables.
syllable	a single unit of speech that consists of either a whole word or one of the parts into which a word can be separated when spoken.
syntax	Study of how words or groups of words are joined to make phrases, clauses and sentences.
temporal	Of or relating to <i>time</i> ; as in temporal adverbs, temporal clauses (time clauses) and so on.
tense	Verb forms that show the time and duration of the action or state expressed by the verb.
time clause	Also called temporal clause, a type of subordinate clause that functions like a temporal adverb for the main clause.
transitive	A verb that needs an object.
uncountable noun	See <i>mass noun</i> .
unstressed	Having no stress.
verb	The most important part, and sometimes the only word, in the predicate; it is the part of speech that informs about the action or state of the subject.
verbal noun	Noun made from a verb.
verb derivative	Words made from verb stems.
vocative	The form used to address someone.
vowel	See <i>consonant</i> .



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Index

- adjectival clauses (and subjunctive) 302;
adjectival phrases 94
- adjectives 82–105; abstractions with *-i*
suffix 154–5; with *-āne* suffix 101–2;
and definite/indefinite markers 87–8;
and nouns 82–5; as nouns 103–4;
better/best and more/most 98–9;
comparative 95–7; compound 94;
demonstrative 89; distributive 91–3;
equal comparison 99–101; order 85–7;
possessive 89–90
- adverbial clauses, of manner 293–4; *see*
also subordinate clauses; time clauses
- adverbs 106–22; with *-āne* 109–10;
comparison of adverbs 114; position
106; reduplication 111–13; with *tanvin*
110
- affixes *see* prefixes; suffixes
- agar* (if) 268; substitutes 271–2
- age 130–1
- agent (of verb, in passive) 263–4
- agent participle *see* participial formations
- agreement (between subject and verb) 178;
and collective nouns 33; and plural used
to show respect 62–3
- alphabet 10–24; *see also* consonants;
diphthongs; vowels
- āne* with adjectives 101–2; with adverbs
109–10
- archaic (remnants) 38–9, 45–6, 59, 73,
133, 145, 172, 192, 248, 258, 288,
340–5
- arz kardan* 337; *arz versus arze* 339
- as . . . as . . . 97, 99–100
- aspect *see* perfect; progressive; verbs
- attributive *-i* suffix 154–6
- auxiliary verbs 70, 174–5, 185, 186, 188,
192, 227–30, 237–8, 244, 255, 258–9,
313, 319–20
- to be (*budan*) 183–8; imperative form 247;
subjunctive form 249–50, 256
- to be able to (*tavānestan*) 190–1; in
impersonal constructions 307–8; simple
past *versus* past progressive 235
- be-* as inflectional prefix for imperative
245–8; archaic / poetic treatment
342–3; for subjunctive 248–9
- cardinal numbers *see* numbers
- causative form of verbs 180–1
- che* exclamative 46–7; idiomatic usages
305–6; interrogative 71–2, 93
- cherā* interrogative 74; affirmative answer
to negative question 175–6; *cherā ke*
295
- clothes (putting on, taking off) 239–42
- collective nouns 33
- colloquial (Tehrāni) 44, 46, 59, 62, 65,
103–4, 300, 309, 327–35
- colors 102
- common mistakes 348–51
- comparative 95–8, 114; Arabic
borrowings 98–9; with *tā* 96
- comparison of adjectives and adverbs
see comparative; equal comparison;
superlative
- compound verbs 178–80; with *dāshtan*
(‘to have’) 189; separability 179–80
- concessive clauses 296–7
- conditionals 268–72; indicative 268–9;
irrealis or counter-factual 269–71;
poetical / archaic 341
- conjugation 223–4; *see also different*
tenses
- conjugational suffixes 224; for past tense
231
- conjunctions 138–41; in adverbial
subordinate clauses 293–300; in time
clauses 279–86; subjunctive needed
300–1; *see also agar*; coordinating
conjunctions; correlative conjunctions;
ke; *magar*; *tā*; *va*; *va-gar-na*
- connector *ezāfe see ezāfe*

- consonants 5–7
 continuous *see* progressive
 contractions 41, 70–1, 332–3, 344–5
 coordinating conjunctions 138–9
 copula (suffixed form of *to be*) 183–6; and stress 9
 correlative conjunctions 120, 138, 140–1; and subjunctive 301
 counter-factual (or irrealis) *see* conditionals; wishes
 count words (or measure words) 73, 79–80, 123, 125
- dative (remnants or comparisons) 177, 309
 days of the week 129–30
 DDO *rā*
 declension (or lack thereof) 2, 54, 85; from Arabic 105
 defective verbs *see* modal verbs
 definite and indefinite 33–43; absence of determiners 34–5; DDO-marker [DDO = definite direct object] 40–3; definite determiner in colloquial 44–5, 331; indefinite determiners 35–40, 46–7; definite and indefinite determiners used together 41–2; not with *ezāfe* 36, 38, 52, 88; *see also* *rā*
 demonstrative adjectives 89
 demonstrative pronouns 69
 derivatives (of infinitive) 164–73
digar 116–19; *ham-digar* / *yek-digar* 78; as pronoun 77–8
 diminutives 43–5
 diphthongs 4–5, 16–17, 20–3
 distributives 86, 91–3
 double negative 75–6
 double plural 32–3
 dual plural 32, 354
- el-i* with quantifiers 156–7
 enough to . . . 304–5
 equal comparison 99–101
-e suffix 153–4
 exclamative form 46–7
ezāfe 36, 38, 48–51; and adjectives 82–7, 95–7; and definite / indefinite markers 87–8; and *hamze* 20–1, 24; and infinitive 161–3; and *khod* 65–8, 90–1; and possessive 41; and prepositions 132; and reduplication 111–12; and silent *be* 22–3; and stress 9; and time 128–9
- factitive *see* causative
faghat versus tanhā 122
farmudan 337
- Fārsi versus Irāni* 350–1
 few / little 115–16
 future tense 229–31
- gender (lack thereof) 2, 25, 54, 85; influence of Arabic 105, 355
 genitive case *see* possessive [pronouns]
 gerund (English), similarity to Persian infinitive 137, 160–1, 250
 glides 19, 20–1, 23, 24, 27–8, 37–8, 43, 46, 49, 50, 59, 75, 82, 112, 131, 155, 167, 174, 184–5, 225–6, 231, 245, 248–9, 335
 glottal stop 5–7, 11–14, 16, 19–24, 37, 238
- habitual past *see* past progressive
ham 119–21; in Tehrāni 329
hamin-ke 284
hamze 11–14, 19–20; and [silent] *hé* 20–1
hanuz 116–17
 to have (*dāsbtan*) 188–9; as auxiliary for progressive 227–8, 237; in compound verbs 189; imperative form 247; subjunctive form 250, 256–8
be (e) as final vowel *see* silent *be*
- i* (stressed) 154–6, 102, 103, 104–5, 115, 154, 164, 167, 307; and *digar* 78; and equal comparison 99–100
-i (unstressed) 38–40, 155; as conjugational suffix 183–5; as indefinite determiner 36–40; in relative clauses 289 as if 276
 imperative 158, 170, 179, 224–5, 244–8, 251, 253; in conditionals 269; imperative of *to be* 186–7, 247; imperative of *to have* 188, 247; negative with *ma-* and other archaic remnants 175, 341–2; in reported speech 315–16
 impersonal constructions 306–12; quasi-impersonal 308–12
 impersonal pronouns 58
 indefinite and indefinite determiners 35–8; definite and indefinite determiners used together 41–3
 indicative conditionals 268–9; indicative wishes 277–8
 indirect command 315–16; *see also* indirect speech
 indirect object 40, 56, 59, 70–1, 136, 161, 176–7, 292, 302–3, 343
 indirect speech 312–19
 infinitive 136–7, 158–64; derivatives 164–73; passive infinitive 264; short infinitive 164, 171
 inflection *see* declension

- interjection 46–7
- interrogative 70–4, 75–6, 91, 98, 175, 267; affirmative and negative answers to questions 176; question tags 176, 274
- intransitive 40, 176, 180–1, 260–1
- inversion (lack thereof) 70, 175, 267
- Iran / Irāni* 350–1
- Irrealis (or counter-factual) in conditionals 269–71; in wishes 277–8; *see also* conditionals; wishes
- ke* as emphasizing particle 273–5; *in-ke* and *ān-ke* used to make conjunctions 137–8; noun clauses (*ke versus in-ke*) 302–3; in relative clauses 289; replacing *vaghti-ke* in time clauses 382–3
- to know (*dānestan*) 235–6
- linking verbs 162, 176
- magar* 272–5
- measure words *see* count words
- modal verbs 189–93; English modals compared 193–8
- mood *see* imperative; indicative; subjunctive
- much too / too much 115
- negative 9, 75, 114–15, 117; affirmative and negative answers to questions 176; *to be* 183; double negative 75–6, 92, 141; of infinitive 160; of verbs 174–5, 179
- no* and *yes* 175–6
- nouns 25–47; collective nouns 33; noun clause 302–4; plural of 26–33; verbal noun 169–70
- numbers 123–31; cardinal numbers 123–5; with nouns and as pronouns 123; ordinal numbers and fractions 125–8
- old usage *see* archaic
- optative 258
- ordinal numbers *see* numbers
- orthography *see* alphabet
- participial absolute 319–20
- participial formations 164–73; (active) 167–8; agent participle 166–7; participle of potential 168; past participle 172; present participle (passive) 164–5; short infinitive 171–2; verbal noun 169–70
- passive 258–64
- past and present stems *see* Stem I / II
- past participle 172, 198–9, 319–20
- past perfect progressive tense 244
- past perfect tense 244
- past progressive tense 233; with certain verbs 234–6; with *dāshtan* as auxiliary 237
- past stem *see* Stem I / II
- past tense *see* past perfect; past progressive; simple past
- perfect tenses and formations *see* present perfect tense; *separate entries for each person* (of verb) *see* agreement
- personal pronouns 54–6, 60–5; used as possessive adjective 89–90
- plural (of nouns) 26–33; with *-ān* 26–7; broken plural 30–2; in compound nouns 29–30; dual plural 32; with *-hā* 27–9; (in Tehrāni); plural used for politeness 61–3
- possessive adjectives 89–90; comparison of the two possessive types 90; possessive suffixes 89; in relative clauses 292
- possessive pronouns 55–7; *ān-e* (lit.) 57; *māl-e* 56–7
- prefixes 142–6
- prepositions 132–8; in relative clauses 292–3; in Tehrāni 334–5
- present participle (*-ān* suffix) 167–8; *see also* participial formations
- present perfect progressive tense 243–4
- present perfect tense 238–42; in indirect speech 313; and state verbs 239–42
- present progressive tense 224; with *dāshtan* as auxiliary 227–9
- present stem *see* Stem I / II
- present tense *see* present perfect; present progressive; simple present
- progressive or continuous *see* past progressive; past perfect progressive; present perfect progressive; present progressive
- pronouns 54–81; demonstrative 69; interrogative 70–4; objective 58–60, 334; possessive 56–7; reflexive 65–9
- quantifiers *see* distributives
- quasi-impersonal *see* impersonal
- question tags 176, 274; *see also* interrogative
- question words 70–4, 93, 175, 267, 303, 315; *see also* interrogative
- rā* (را), the DDO-marker [DDO = definite direct object] 40–3; archaic 343; in Tehrāni 331; *see also* definite
- reduplication 111–13
- reflexive 65–9
- relative clauses 289–93
- reported speech *see* indirect speech
- resemblance (equal comparison) 99–101

- resumptive construction 321–2
 root (of verb) *see* Stem I / II
- self *see* reflexive
 short infinitive *see* infinitive
 silent *be* 17, 22–3, 25, 153–5, 167, 172, 198; as Arabic feminine ending 25, 105; and careless mistakes 49; and comparative / superlative suffixes 95; and diminutives 43; and *ezāfe* 50; and indefinite suffix 37; and plural suffixes 27–8; as suffix with quantities and time expressions 156–7; in Tehrāni 329–32; and verb *to be* (copula) 184–5, 238–9
- simple past tense 231–2
 simple present tense 224–9
sokun 24
 as soon as 97, 284
 state verbs 239–42
Stem I (present stem) of verbs 158–9; derivatives from 166–71
Stem II (past stem or ‘short infinitive’) of verbs 158; derivatives from 171–3
 stress 2, 8–9, 22–3, 26, 35–6, 38, 43, 45–6, 47, 59, 73, 77–8, 90, 115, 122, 130, 154–6, 175, 198, 225, 229–30, 238, 255, 305, 331, 333, 353
 subject-verb agreement *see* agreement
 subjunctive, perfect (or past) 255–8
 subjunctive, simple (or present) 248–54
 subordinate clauses, of contrast / concession 296–7; of purpose / cause / effect 294–6; of result / consequence 297–9
 subordinating conjunctions *see* relative clauses; subordinate clauses; time clauses
 substitutes for *to be*, *to do* (not recommended) 346–7
 suffixes 147–57; *see also* participial formations
 superlative 97–8, 114
 syllabic structure 7–8
tā (ت) 287–8; as conjunction 287–8; as count word 79–81, 287; as preposition 134, 287
ta’ārof 335–8
tanhā versus faghat 122
tanvīn 23–4
tashdid 23–4
 Tehrāni *see* colloquial
 telling the time 128–9
 temporal adverbs, position of 106
 tenses, an overview 223–4; *see also* entries for each tense in Index; Chapter 12
 time clauses 279–88
 times of day 129
 too . . . to . . . 304–5
 to take 350
 to want (*kbāstan*) 234–5; as auxiliary 229–30
 to wear / to be wearing 240–2
va (conj.) 21–2, 86–8, 125, 141, 170, 329–30
va-gar-na (otherwise) 275–6
 verbal noun 169–70
 verb derivatives *see* participial formations
 verbs in Persian 174; affirmative and negative 174–5; causative form of verbs 180–1; change from irregular to regular 158, 182–3; changes in Tehrāni 332–4; compound verbs 178–80; deleting a verb 320–1; interrogative 175; modal verbs 189–93; position 265–6; state verbs 239–42; transitive and intransitive, objects and complements 176–7; verbal agreement 178; *see also* list of Persian simple verbs (199–222) or entries for different tenses, moods and aspects
 vocative 45–6
 vowels 5, 16–17, 21–3
 wishes 277–8
 ‘yes’ and ‘no’ 175–6