RUDIMENTARY FARSI PHONETICS AND SYNTAX

FOR ESL INSTRUCTORS

THESIS

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This study is a very basic handbook of Farsi phonetics and syntax for use by English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors who have had little or no contact with the structure of the Persian language. Emphasis is placed on presenting an inventory of selected phonological and syntactic items which are problems for native Farsi speakers who want to learn English.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Anyone who teaches English to speakers of other languages ought to know as much as possible about each student's mother tongue. Such information enables a teacher to develop insights into the problems that his students are likely to encounter as the result of differences between English and their native language. This study is an attempt to provide a broad outline of critical phonological and syntactic differences between General American English as spoken in the continental United States and Farsi as spoken in the capital city of Iran. A review of the literature reveals that such a study is currently lacking.

The second chapter of this work addresses itself to a somewhat rough inventory of systematic phones directly and a pragmatic system of transliteration indirectly. Some attention is given to major areas of phonological interference between the two languages.

The third and largest chapter attempts to outline some of the major syntactic features of Farsi toward the end of providing target areas that an ESL instructor might want to focus on for the purpose of insuring a basic analytic grasp of idiomatic English syntax.

The descriptive approach is that suggested by Noam Chomsky in his Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (1965) and Noam Chomsky and Morris Halle in their monolithic work, The Sound Pattern of English (1968) especially as adapted and extended by Martin and Rulon in The English Language: Yesterday and Today (1973), and Griggs and Rulon in English Verb Inflection: A Generative View (1974).

Considerable indebtedness is owed and acknowledged to Rastorgueva's 1964 reference grammar of Tajik Farsi, a closely related language spoken in the U. S. S. R. Many of his tables and much of his organization and general plan have been freely adapted, along with some primary data.

Farsi is an Indo-European language with a surface order of Subject + Object + Verb. It is conventionally written in Arabic script, with the addition of four signs for consonants lacking in Arabic. Therefore, the Farsi alphabet numbers thirty-two signs, and the direction of the line of writing is from right to left. Individual Farsi graphs or characters have varying shapes depending on whether they occur initially, medially, finally, or in isolation. However, despite the fact that Farsi is written in Arabic characters, it retains its basic Indo-Iranian morphology and syntactic structure.

CHAPTER II

RUDIMENTARY FARSI PHONETICS

2.0--Introduction

A transformational-generative phonology of Farsi comprising systematic phonemics and systematic phonetics is still unformulated,and such, of course, is beyond the scope of this work,which addresses itself to some simple and selected needs of ESL teachers, for whose benefit an emphasis is placed on a more or less raw inventory of Farsi systematic phones organized around the natural class basis of Vowels, Consonants, Liquids, and Glides, the distinctive feature classification of which is set out in Table I. The inventorial

TABLE I

NATURAL CLASS DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

	Vowels	Consonants	Liquids	Glides
Syllabic	+	—	+	—
Consonantal	—	+	+	—

analysis set out in this chapter compares favorably with that suggested for Farsi by Merritt Ruhlen (1975:256).

2.1--Vowels (+syllabic, —consonantal)

Conventionally, six Farsi monophthongs are recognized. These are traditionally transliterated as i̱, e̱, æ̱, u̱, o̱, a̱. These graphs serve well as phonetic characters except for a̱, which linguistically is used for a vowel segment which is unlabialized (spread/non-round). The Farsi segment which it represents is labialized phonetically, so for transcription purposes an open o ([ɔ]) is used instead. Historically, the Farsi vowel system derives from systematic phonemic /ī, i, ū, u, ā, a/, where the macron represents either the feature + tense or + long, or both perhaps. The contemporary system of monophthongs is set out in terms of distinctive features in Table II below.

TABLE II

FARSI VOWELS

	i	e	æ	u	o	ɔ
High	+	—	—	+	—	—
Low	—	—	+	—	—	+
Back	—	—	—	+	+	+
Round	—	—	—	+	+	+

In the jargon of conventional articulatory phonetics, [i, e, æ] are palatal or front, and [u, o, ɔ] are velar or

back. Further, [i, u] are high, [e, o] are mid, and [æ, ɔ] are low. Additionally, [u, o, ɔ] are labialized (rounded) and [i, e, æ] are unlabialized (spread).

Duration (length) is of some significance in classifying the vowels, and the two types are distinguished by Farsi phoneticians; that is [i, u, ɔ] are phoneticially +long whereas [e, æ, o] are -long (short). However, quantitative distinction is clearly revealed only in an unstressed open syllable where [e, æ, o] are greatly reduced in length; whereas [i, u, ɔ] retain longer duration. Thus, for example, in pedār 'father', sæfid 'white', and šotōr 'camel', the first unstressed vowel has minimal duration; whereas in divār 'wall' and tāze 'clean/fresh' the first unstressed vowel is drawn out in slow speech. In rapid conversational speech, however, vowel length is neutralized.

Illustrative tokens of the monophthongs are assembled in Table III, where primary stress, which generally falls on the vowel of the ultimate syllable, is marked.

TABLE III

FARSI PHONETIC TOKENS

Conventional Romanization	Gloss	Phonetic Transcription
kæbir	'great'	[kæbír]
bidar	'awake'	[bidɔ́r]
xane	'house'	[xɔné]

TABLE III--(Continued)

Conventional Romanization	Gloss	Phonetic Transcription
ketab	'book'	[ketɔ́b]
æknun	'now'	[æ knún]
sæ fær	'journey'	[sæ fǽr]
kæ bud	'blue'	[kæ búd]
zudi	'rapidity'	[zudí]
mobaræ ze	'struggle'	[mobɔraæ zé]
kotob	'books'	[kotób]
bad	'wind'	[bɔ́d]
badam	'almond'	[bɔdɔ́m]

An observation concerning the raising of [e] to [i] before [y] is in order here. The conventional transliteration of 'foot/pedestrian' is peyade, and 'come' is beya. Phonetically, these are [piyɔde] and [biyɔ] respectively.

There are six diphthongs in modern Farsi, [ēy, ǣy, āy, ūy, ōy, ōw]. Two of these [ēy, ōw] require comment. In general [ēy] and [ōw] occur preconsonantally and in word final position as in ney 'flute', meymun 'monkey', now 'new' and towr 'form/manner'. The glide [w] occurs only after [ō].

Byond the scope of this analysis are the alternation of [ī] with [y] and [ū] with [v] and [w], as well as the alternation of [o] and [æ], as in ræftæn 'go, set out', miræ væd 'he is becoming' from isolated forms row and šow.

2.2--True Consonants (—syllabic, +consonantal)

In terms of raw inventory, the consonantal differences between English and Farsi are not very great, generally. An overview of the true consonant system (nasals, stops, and fricatives) is set out in Table IV, attended by articulatory descriptions denoting manner and place. A slash mark separates voiceless from voiced segments respectively.

TABLE IV

FARSI TRUE CONSONANTS

Phonetic Character	Articulation
[p/b]:	bilabial stops
[t/d]:	apico-dental stops
[k/g]:	dorso-velar stops
[č/ǰ]:	lamino-palatal affricated stops
[q]:	dorso-uvular voiced stop
[f/v]:	labio-dental fricatives
[s/z]:	apico-dental fricatives
[š/ž]:	apico-palatal fricatives
[x]:	dorso-uvular voiceless fricative
[h]:	laryngeal voiceless fricative
[m]:	bilabial nasal
[n]	apico-dental nasal

The Farsi voiceless stops, [p^h, t^h, k^h], tend to be phonetically aspirated, much as they are in English in initial position. Noticeably dental are Farsi [t̪, d̪, n̪], whereas their English counterparts are alveolar in point of articulation. The dorso-velar stops, [k/g], have palatal allphones before [i, e, æ], just as they do in English. Thus, for example, æ gær 'if' and gol 'flower' are phonetically [æ g̑ær] and [gol].

The uvular fricative, [x], is produced by pressing the dorsum against the extreme posterior of the velum so that the uvula vibrates. It is very much like the [x] in the standard German pronunciation of the name Bach.

The uvular stop, [q], appears prevocalically as in qesm 'part'. Intervocalically, it is a fricative as in aqaz 'beginning'. In a voiceless context as in vaqt 'time', there is regressive assimilation, [væxt].

Formed in the larynx, [h] is a voiceless fricative very much as it is in English.

As can be seen in Table V, there is asymmetry in the Farsi system of stops and fricatives.

3.0--Liquids (+syllabic, +consonantal)

Farsi has two liquids, /l/ and /r̃/, a lateral and a trill, respectively. Neither of these poses any particular problem for the Farsi speaker attempting English.

TABLE V

FARSI NON-NASAL CONSONANTS

	Labial	Dental	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Laryngeal
Stops:	p/b	t/d	č/ǰ	k/g	q	—
Fricatives:	f/v	s/z	š/ž	—	x	h

4.0--Glides (— syllabic, — consonantal)

Phonetically, Farsi contains [y], a front glide, and
[w], a back glide. The former occurs initially, medially,
and finally as in yattæn 'find', iraniyan 'Iranian', and
ney 'flute'. The glide [w] occurs only after [o]. Morpho-
logically [w] alternates with [v] as in now 'new' and
lebas-e nov-e mæn (dress-new-my) 'my new dress'.

5.0--Consonant Clusters

The syllable system of Farsi and English is of the peak
type so that there are as many syllables as there are peaks.
The syllable structure of Farsi can be represented as CV(C)(C).
This means that Farsi permits clusters of two consonants only
syllable-finally , and that there is no consonant clustering
syllable-initially. By contrast, English syllable structure
may be represented as (C)(C)(C)V(C)(C)(C)(C). This English
permits three consonants initially as in street and four
finally, as in worlds. The interpretation of certain English
clusters by Farsi speakers is set out below.

5.1 -- Anaptyctic [ū] inserted

For example, English <u>queen</u> is rendered [kūwīyn] rather than [kwīyn]. Clusters involved are [pw, bw, tw, dw, kw, gw, θw, s(k)w].

5.2 -- Anaptyctic [ī] inserted

For example, English <u>cute</u> is rendered [kīyūwt] rather than [kyūwt].

5.3 -- Anaptyctic [e] inserted

For example, English <u>shred</u> is rendered [šered] rather than [šred] or [sred]. Other fricative clusters are [fl, fr, θr].

5.4 -- Prothetic [e] attached

For example, English <u>school</u> is rendered [eskūwl] rather than [skūwl]. Clusters involved are [sp, st, sk, sm, sm, sn, sl] and [spl, spr, str, skr].

5.5 -- Anaptyctic [e] inserted

For example, English <u>clap</u> is rendered [kelæp] rather than [klæp]. Clusters involved are [pr, pl, br, bl, tr, dr, kl, kr, gl, gr].

5.6 -- Anaptyctic [īy] and Prothetic [e] added

For example, English <u>student</u> is rendered [estīyūwdant] rather than [st(y)ūwdant]. Clusters involved are [spy] and [sty].

6.0--Major Phonological Errors

It is common for the Farsi speaker attempting English to substitute Farsi /s/ or /t/ for /θ/, /z/ or /d/ for /ʒ/, and /ng/ for /y/. Another tendency is the use of Farsi [t̪, d̪, s̪, z̪, l̪, n̪], which are dental-alveolar, for English [t, d, s, z, l, n], which are alveolar. Other substitutions include generalizing [p^h, t^h, k^h] to all positions in English where these stops are phonetically unaspirated finally, internally after [s], and before unstressed vowels. Also, the Farsi speaker tends to use his strongly palatalized dorso-velar stops before front vowels, whereas native English speakers do not strongly palatalize them. Additionally, there is a tendency for the Farsi speaker to insert an anaptyctic vowel before [m, n, l, r] when they are syllabic, as in English bottom, button, bottle, butter; as well, he will tend to substitute his native trill, [r̃], for the English retroflex, [r].

As a final matter in this chapter, we suggest a brief approach for teaching the Farsi speaker who wishes to learn the orthoepy of the English vowel system. The target dialect is an r-ful one, termed General American English by Chomsky and Halle (1968) in The Sound Pattern of English.

The raw inventory consists of the monophthongs [i, e, æ, u, ʌ, ə], the diphthongs [īy, ēy, ūw, ōw, ɔn, ān, āy, āw, ɔy], and the triphthong [yūw]. The Farsi inventory includes the

monophthongs [ī, ē, ǣ, ū, ō, ɔ̄] and the diphthongs [ēy, ǣy, āy, ūy, ōy, ōw]. The aspiring Farsi speaker of American English might proceed to acquire that system in the following manner.

6.1.1--Add a triphthong [yūw] to the inventory, as in English fuel [fyūwl].

6.1.2--Learn to lax Farsi [ī, ē, ǣ, ū] to English [ĭ, ĕ, æ̆, ŭ] as in pit, pet, pat, put, [pit, pet, pæt, put].

6.1.3--Add a centering glide, [ʌ], to Farsi [ɔ̄] to produce [ɔ̄ʌ], as in English caught, [kɔ̄ʌt] or fall, [fɔ̄ʌl]. Of course, the ESL instructor will want to be aware that there is a tendency in contemporary American English to have an [āʌ] diphthong in these words, [kāʌt, fāɔl]. However, [ɔ̄ʌ] should be easier for the Farsi speaker to produce than [āʌ].

6.1.4--Learn to produce [ʌ] in primary stress position and [ə] in weak stress position as in English above, [ăbʌ́v]. Secondly, the r-coloring in mirth, berth, burden, and work should be acquired, [mʌ́rθ, bʌ́rθ, bʌ́rdən, wʌ́rk].

6.1.5--Add a front glide to Farsi [ī] and a back glide to Farsi [ū] to produce [īy] and [ūw] as in English feet and fool, [fīyt] and [fūwl].

6.1.6--Learn to unround Farsi [ɔ̄] to [ā] and then add a centering glide, [ʌ], to produce [āʌ] as in English cot, [kāʌt].

6.1.7--Learn to unround Farsi [ɔ̄] to [ā] and then add a back glide, [w], to produce [āw] as in English cow, [kāw].

Optionally, this diphthong may be fronted to [ǣw] and then laxed to [æw].

6.1.8--Learn to substitute Farsi [ōy] for [ɔ̄y], as in English boy, and note that some English speakers use [ōy] as well, [bɔ̄y] or [bōy].

As the Farsi vowel system has [ēy, āy, ōw], there should be little difficulty transferring them to English, as in bait, bite, boat, [bēyt, bāyt, bōwt].

After the vowel system has been mastered, attention should be given to the stress differences of such pairs, as súbject (noun) and subjéct (verb) and compound stressing as in bláck-bìrd versus blâck bírd, an adjective phrase.

This concludes our brief phonological overview of Farsi. The next chapter deals with syntactic considerations.

CHAPTER III

SYNTAX

3.0--Selected Syntactic Problems

3.1--Verb Complement Forms

Many concepts which are expressed in English by simple
verbs require the use of verb plus complement combinations in
Farsi and certain aspectual distinctions essential to English
are not part of the Farsi system. Since Farsi is an SOV
language, these complement constructions are of the order
Noun plus Verb; they thus parallel the Object + Verb structure.
Thus, for example, the English verbs <u>attempt</u>, <u>agree</u>, and <u>love</u>
are expressed in Farsi as below where N is Noun, and V is Verb,
and C is complement.

(1) $[_C[_N sæy]_N \quad [_V kærdæn]_V]_C$
    'attempt   do'

(2) $[_C[_N mowafeq]_N \quad [_V buwdæn]_V]_C$
    'agree(ment)   be'

(3) $[_C[_N duwst] \quad [_V dastæn]_V]_C$
    'love   have'

In the verb forms above, the infinitive suffix is /æn/ ;
hence, glosses for (1), (2), and (3) are something more like
'to do attempt; to be agree', and 'to have love'.

A structure related to the one above is one in which
two verbs are paired with a noun, thus forming a double

complement as in (4) and (5).

(4) $[_C$ $[_N$ hædaef$]_N$ $[_V$qærar$]_V$ $[_V$ dadæn$]$ $_V]_C$
          'aim   point   give'

(5) $[_C$ $[_N$etelaf$]_N$ $[_V$peyda$]_V$ $[_V$kærdæn$]_V]_C$
          'difference   find   do'

Thus (4) and (5) may be glossed as 'to point the aim' and 'to find the difference'.

In Farsi, there are a limited number of simple verbs which combine with single or double complements to produce a rather large number of complex verbs. This is true even of loan verbs such as <u>serv</u> 'serve' as in <u>serv</u> <u>kærdæn</u> 'serve do' (to do serving), or <u>servis</u> 'service' as in <u>servis</u> <u>dadæn</u> 'service give' (to give service). The Farsi transferring such structures into English produces what seem to be pleonasms of the type <u>to</u> <u>do</u> attempt and <u>I</u> <u>am</u> agree instead of <u>to</u> <u>attempt</u> and <u>I</u> <u>agree</u>.

Other repeatedly misused verbs by Farsi speakers of English are the pairs <u>learn/teach</u> and <u>lend/borrow</u>. The structure of these in Farsi is set out below.

(6) $[_C[_N$yad$]_N$ $[_V$gereftæn$]$ $_V]_C$
        'learning   take'   (learn)

(7) $[_C[_N$yad$]_N$ $[_V$dadæn$]_V]_C$
        'learning   give'   (teach)

(8) $[_C[_N$vam$]_N$ $[_V$gereftæn$]_V$ $]_C$
        'borrowing   take'   (borrow)

(9) $[_C[_N\text{vam}]_N \ [_V\text{dadæn}]_V]_C$
    'borrowing   give'   (lend)

A related structure which causes problems for the Farsi speaker aspiring to learn English is that in (10) which glosses as 'attacked the enemies', where P is preposition.

(10) [bær]   [došmænan]   [hoǰuwn]   [bordænd]
     P   P   N   N   N   N   V   V

     'to   enemies   attack   took/did'

Such a structure is responsible for the pleonasm in the three starred (ill-formed) sentences below.

(11)* They attacked to the enemies.

(12)* We enjoyed from the nice weather.

(13)* I hate from sitting and doing nothing.

Another problem with complements occurs for Iranians when in English they want to express something like 'he wants to show . . .' where the Farsi counterpart for the English infinitive complement is always a subjunctive as in (14).

(14) $[_V\text{mixahæd}]_V \ [_N\text{nešan}] \ [_V\text{dæhæd}]_V$

     'wants   show   give'

What the Iranian tends to produce in English is a redundant factive complementizer (that) rather than an infinitive complementizer.

(15)* I want that I go. (I want to go.)

(16)* He wants that he be the president. (He wants to be
       the president.)

Detailed description of Farsi complement verbs may be found in Sharifi (1975) and Sharifi and Sheih (1975).

3.2--Other Common Syntactic Problems

3.2.1--<u>Used</u> <u>to</u>. Frequently, Iranians confuse <u>used</u> <u>to</u> and <u>be</u> <u>used</u> <u>to</u> on the recognition level. To express <u>it</u> <u>used</u> <u>to</u> <u>be</u> <u>supposed</u>, for example, the corresponding Farsi construction which reads something like <u>in</u> <u>the</u> <u>past</u> . . . <u>became</u> <u>a</u> <u>supposition</u> as in (17).

(17)   [dær]   [gozæšte] . . . [mišod]
         P   P   N   N   V   V

         'in   past   . . . supposed'

Further, Iranians tend to avoid <u>used</u> <u>to</u> in preference for <u>I</u> <u>played</u> <u>tennis</u> <u>in</u> <u>the</u> <u>past</u>, <u>but</u> <u>not</u> <u>now</u> (I used to play tennis).

3.2.2--Deletion. Another problem arises for the Iranian who wishes to express (18) in its truncated form in (19).

(18)   The cat loves the kitten, but the cat does not
        love the mouse.

(19)   The cat loves the kitten but not the mouse.

Unnecessary repetition occurs because the student overlooks the possibility of deleting the repeated verb. The Farsi structure is an equation of the sort <u>the</u> <u>cat</u> <u>has</u> <u>love</u> . . . <u>does</u> <u>not</u> <u>have</u> <u>love</u> as in (20).

(20)   Gorbe . . . duwst daræd . . . nædaræd

          'cat . . . like/love have . . . not have'

3.2.3--Modals. English modals are separate clauses in Farsi. The result is that it may differ is rendered it may differs. The Farsi structure appears below.

(21) [momken æst] [færg konæd]

'may/possible is 'different does'

3.2.4--Emphatic do. Emphasis, expressed in English by do, occurs in Farsi as raised pitch in some cases or an intensifier such as vageæn 'really'.

(22) væli vageæn færg dast

'but really differ did' ('but it did differ!')

(23) be to goftæm

'to you I said' (I did tell you!)

In producing interrogative English structures, Iranians tend to ignore do; since they consider the equivalents of how? and why? as sufficient question markers.

(24) * How they got it? (How did they get it?)

(25) * How much it costs? (How much does it cost?)

(26) * Why you study? (Why do you study?)

3.2.5--Reported Speech. Indirect discourse is a slightly less complicated matter in Farsi than in English, since quoted material may be merely juxtaposed and optionally marked for reporting and requesting verbs such as goftan 'say', porsidan 'ask', and dastur dadan 'order' by the complementizer ke 'that'.

    (27) Hushang goft (ke) name-ra zud benevis

           Hushang said (that) letter-object fast write

           (Hushang said (for someone) to write the letter soon.)

In the examples below, the subject pronoun of the embedded

sentence are overtly expressed.

    (28) Hushang be man goft (ke) (man) halam xub nist

           'Hushang to me said (that) (I) feel well not'

           (Hushang said to me, "I do not feel well.")

    (29) Hushang be man goft (ke) (u) halas xub nist

           'Hushang to me said (that) (he) feel well not'

           (Hushang said to me (that) he does not feel well)

    (30) Hushang (azu) porsid (ke) (to) čera na-mi-nevisi

           'Hushang (from him) asked (that) (you) why not-ing-write'

           (Hushang asked him, "why aren't you writing?")

    (31) Hushang (azu) porsid (ke) (u) čera na-mi-nevisad

           'Hushang (from him) asked (that (he) why not-ing-write'

           (Hushang asked him why he isn't writing)

Production errors that often result from differences between

the languages are now a little more understandable.

    (32)* Hushang ordered write the letter soon.

In this instance the Iranian has not clearly distinguished be-

tween imperative and infinitive <u>write</u>.

    (33) Hushang told Hasan last week that I am going to

          Tehran.

Here the Iranian has used present tense (I am going) instead

of past tense (I was going).

(34)* My brother asked what is the problem

Here the Iranian has substituted question word order for statement word order (My brother asked what the problem is).

(35)* Hasan is asking you that why you didn't go to the cinema yesterday.

In this sentence the Iranian has extended the complementizer that to a position calling for if/whether (Hasan is asking if/whether you didn't go to the cinema yesterday).

3.3--Noun morphology

Singular nouns are unmarked morphologically, ketab 'book' and danešju 'student'. Plurality is signalled by either the suffix -ha or -an. In general, the former is added to animate or inanimate nouns and the latter only to animate nouns. Additionally, nouns indicating paired parts of the body and the word for tree are pluralized with -an.

TABLE VI

NOUN PLURALS

Gloss	Singular	Plural
'table'	miz	mizha
'horse'	æsp	æspha
'woman'	zæn	zænha/zænan
'worker'	kargær	kargæran
'lip'	læb	læban
'eye'	cæsm	cæsman
'free'	daræxt	deræxtan

A phonological bridge, [g], occurs in bænde 'slave, bændegan 'slaves'. A similar bridge, [y], in noun stems terminating in [i] and [7], danešǰu 'student', danešǰuyan 'students' and irani 'Iranian', iranyan "Iranians'. Occasionally, the bridge is a [v] as in æbru 'brow', æbruvan 'brows'.

3.3.1--Determiners. An overt formative paralleling English the does not exist in Farsi. Paralleling English a(n) and the numeral one are in Farsi the unaccented prefix -i (ya-ye væhdaet), the 'y of singularity' and yek 'one' as in doxtær-i 'a girl', miz-i 'a table'. Yek precedes the noun it specifies as in (36).

(36) yek doxtær amæd

'one/a girl came'

Definiteness is incorporated into the proximal demonstrative in 'this' and the remote demonstrative an 'that'.

(37) in mærd goft

'this man said'

(38) an mærd goft

'that man said'

Adjectives do not independently take the singular marker -i except in attributive izafet (ezafe 'addition') constructions. (See section 3.4.1).

(39) Kif siyah-i

'bag black-a'

(a black bag)

3.4--Functional Relationships

There is subject-verb agreement in Farsi, although the basic order is subject-object-verb (SOV).

(40)   yek doxtær amæd

'one girl-singular   came-singular'

(41)   doxtær-an amæd-ænd

girl-plural   came-plural

An overt copula exists in Farsi.

(42)   pedær-æm kærgær æst

'father-my   worker   is'

(my father is a worker)

Attributive adjectives follow the nouns they modify and the noun is marked with the izafet suffix -e.

(43)   gælæm-e xub

'pen-izafet good'

(good pen)

(44)   gælæm-e bæradær-e mæn

'pen-izafet brother-izafet my'

(my brother's pen)

3.4.1--Izafet constructions. In Farsi, modifiers are connected with the modified word by means of the izafet (ezafe 'addition') suffix -e (-ye post vocalically). In the izafet construction, the head noun stands in first position, marked with the suffix, and the modifier occurs last.

(45) xane-ye bozorg

'house-izafet big'

(big house)

(46) xane-ha-ye bozorg

'house-plural-izafet big'

(big houses)

Izafet constructions express not only attribution, but also possession, genetic relationships, and so on.

(50) divar-e sæfid-e xane

'wall-izafet white-izafet house'

(white wall of the house)

(51) divar-e xane-e sæfid

'wall-izafet house-izafet white'

(wall of the white house)

3.5 -- The postposition ra

Farsi is a surface SOV language with subject and object juxtaposed. It is often useful for Iranians to overtly mark objects with the postposition ra, which is obligatory if the object is definite and specific.

(52) ræfig-æm   ra   didæm

'friend-my   object   saw-I'

(I saw my friend)

(53) ketab   mi-xanæm

'book progressive-read I'

(I am reading a (non-specific) book)

(54) ketab-ra mi-xanæm

    'book-object progressive-read I'

    (I am reading the (specific) book)

(55) ab   bedeh

    'water (me) give'

    (give (me) water)

(56) ab-ra   bedeh

    'water-object give'

    (give (me) the water)

(57) Žaleh-ra   didæm

    'Žaleh-object saw I'

    (I saw Žaleh)

(58) to-ra   didæm

    'you-object saw I'

    (I saw you)

(59) qælæm-e   to-ra   arærdæm

    'pen-izafet you-object brought I'

    (I brought (you) your pen)

(60) qælæm-æt-ra   aværdæm

    'pen-your object brought I'

    (I brought your pen)

3.6--Adjective Characteristics

Adjectives usually do not independently take plural -an
and ha: or the indefinite marker -i. They are not usually
independently connected with prepositions and pospositions,

and in _izafet_ constructions, they appear as the second member
as in _divar-e_ _sæfid_ 'wall-izafet white' (white wall).

A characteristic of adjectives is the presence of degrees
of comparison. The comparative suffix is -_tær_, the super-
lative -_tærin_ as in _sæfid_ 'white', _sæfidtær_ 'whiter', and
sæfidtærin 'whitest'.

The comparative pivot is _æz_, which appears before the
thing compared.

(61)   mæn   æz   to   bozorgtær   æm

'I than/from you bigger/older am'

(I am bigger/older than you)

What is superlative in meaning but comparative in form is also
expressed with _æz_ 'than/from' and the comparative suffix
-_tær_.

(62)   æz   hæme   bozorgtær   æm

'than all bigger/older am'

(I am bigger/older of all)

3.7--Personal Pronouns

The Farsi personal pronouns are unmarked for case; that
is, for example, _mæn_ may be glossed as 'I' or 'me' depending
on function, and so on.

TABLE VII

FARSI PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Person	Singular	Plural
1st	mæn 'I'	ma 'we'
2nd	to 'thou'	soma 'you'
3rd	u 'he/she/it	anha~išan 'they'

The form išan is regarded as more polite and formal than anha.

When izafet -e is affixed to a preceding noun, the personal pronouns function as possessive adjectives as in ketab-e to 'book-izafet thou/you' (thy/your book). Appositives are formed by preposing the personal pronouns to nouns as in soma danešjan 'you students' (you, (the) students,) and ma kargæran 'we workers' (we, (the) workers,). Similarly, when marked with izafet-e and preposed to nouns or adjectives, such expressions as mæne-e meskin 'I-izafet unhappy' (I, unhappy one,) or to-ye bicare 'thou-izafet jobless' (you, jobless one) are formed. Finally, with adpositions, other expressions such as be to 'to thee', ba mæn 'with me', and u ra 'he of' (of him) are generated.

3.8--Pronominal enclitics

The pronominal enclitics are unaccented and are attached suffixally directly to singular nouns and after the plural suffix on non-singular forms,as in ketab-æm 'book-my' (my

book), ketab-æt 'book-thy' (thy/your book), ketab-ha-yæm
'book-plural-my' (my books). In izafet construction the

TABLE VIII

PRONOMINAL ENCLITICS

Person	Singular	Plural
1st	-æm	-eman
2nd	-æt	-etan
3rd	-æš	-ešan
(after vowels: -yæm, -yæt, -yæš, -yeman, yetan, -yešan)		

enclitic attaches after the last modifier,as in ketab-eævvæl-
æm 'book-first-my' (my first book).

3.9--Interrogative Pronouns

There are three interrogative pronouns, ke/ki 'who'
(restricted to +human forms) če 'what' (restricted to -human
forms, and kodam 'what' (freely occurring). The plural forms
of ki and če are kiha and čeha, respectively.

3.10--The Reflexive Pronoun

The general reflexive pronoun is xod 'oneself/one's own'.
In the classical language xiš 'one's own' and xiš tæn 'oneself'
occur.

3.11--Indefinite Pronouns

In this category one finds hæme 'all/entire', hær 'each/every', and hič 'any' (with a negative 'none').

4.0--Verb Morphology

Farsi verb stems bear syntactic tense, and each stem has a past tense form and a present tense form. In general, there are three classes of Farsi verbs, regular, strong, and suppletive. An example of a regular verb is ræsidæn 'attain/ arrive'. The present stem is ræs to which is added id to form ræsid the past stem, to which is added an infinitive suffix -æn, to form ræsidæn. Another regular verb is xandæn 'read' with a present stem, xan and a past stem, xand. An example of a strong verb (one with consonantal alternation) is saxtæn 'build' with a present stem, saz, and a past stem, saxt. Another example is suxtæn 'be burning' with a present stem, suz, and a past stem, suxt. An example of a suppletive verb is didæn 'see' with a present stem, din, and a past stem, did.
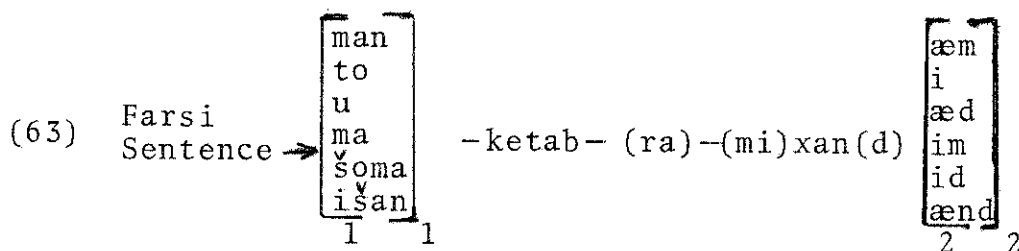
TABLE IX

PERSONAL VERB SUFFIXES

Person	Number	
	Singular	Plural
1st	—æm	—im
2nd	—i	—id
3rd	—æd	—ænd

4.1--Verb Prefixes

Only three prefixes enter into the structure of verb forms. The first is mi- (from historical hæmi) which indicates progressive aspect, duration, or recurrence. The second is be- which doubles as marking aorist and imperative. The third is the accented particle, næ-, which indicates negation as in nædidæm 'not see I' (I didn't see). An optional variant is mæ which occurs chiefly with imperative forms, næ-kon/mæ-kon 'not do' (don't do!).

4.2--A Phrase Structure Rule

At this point, it is instructive to exemplify the concatenation of various formatives in illustrative sentences. As an example, consider the rule in (63) which conflates a rich amount of information and collocates the personal pronouns in subject position optionally, ketab 'book' as an object, optionally marked as such by the past-position, ra, the optional progressive aspect marker, mi, the verb stem xan 'read', the optional past tense marker d, and the personal verb suffixes which pair with the personal pronouns as indicated by the numbered brackets.

$$
(63)\quad \text{Farsi Sentence} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \text{man} \\ \text{to} \\ \text{u} \\ \text{ma} \\ \text{šoma} \\ \text{išan} \end{bmatrix}_1{}^{1} \text{-ketab- (ra) -(mi)xan(d)} \begin{bmatrix} \text{æm} \\ \text{i} \\ \text{æd} \\ \text{im} \\ \text{id} \\ \text{ænd} \end{bmatrix}_2{}^{2}
$$

Thus, minimal and maximal strings, for example, are those indicated below.

(64)　ketab xan--æm

　　　'book read-present-I'
　　　(I read (the/a) book).

(65)　ketab xan-d-æm

　　　'book read-past I'

　　　(I read (the/a) book).

(66)　man ketab-ra mi-xan-æm

　　　'I book-obj ing-read-am'

　　　(I am reading the book).

(67)　man ketab-ra　mi- xan – d –æm'

　　　'I book-object　ing- read- past-was'

　　　(I was reading the book).

Only one morphological adjustment is necessary to the generalization in (63), and that is in the past tense form; that is xand-d-æd 'read-past-third person' is ill-formed. It is necessary to delete the personal offix so that xan-d-æd becomes xan-d. With this adjustment, the forms below are evident.

(68)　ketab-ra xan—æm.

　　　'book-object read-s(he)'

　　　((s)he reads the book).

(69)　ketab-ra xan-d

　　　'book-object read (s)he'

　　　((s)he read the book).

Proper nouns can be introduced into the structures in (63) by a rule which converts u ((s)he) into human names as in (70).

```
                    Hasan
      (70)  u       Zhala
                    Hushang
```

Illustrative sentences are set out below.

(71) u ketab-ra xan-æd

'(s)he book-object read-third-person'

((s)he reads the book).

(72) Zhala ketab-ra xan-æd

'Zhala book-object read-third-person'

(Zhala reads the book).

4.4--The Aorist and Imperative Forms

The so-called aorist and imperative forms are set out in Table VIII.

TABLE X

FORMS BUILT ON PRESENT STEM

	Aorist		Imperative	
Person	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1st	(be-) xan-æn	(be-)xan-im	-	-
2nd	(be-) xan-i	(be-)xan-id	(be-)xan	(be-)xan-id
3rd	(be-) xan-æd	(be)xan-æd	-	-

5.0--Subject Noun Phrases

At least four types of subject noun phrases can be dis-
cerned (simple nouns, pronouns, infinitives, past participles).

(73a)   danešyar æmæd   (<u>simple noun</u>)

'teacher came'

(74a)   yek piyade æz rah mi-gozæst (numeral+<u>simple noun</u>)

'one pedestrian along road ing-passed'

(a pedestrian was passing along the road)

(75a)   to didi?   (pronoun)

'you saw'

(did you see?)

(75b)   ki goft?   (pronoun)

'who said'

(76)   sigær kæsid-æn dær otaq- m-æm nu-æst (infinitive)

'cigarette smoke-to in   room   prohibited is'

(cigarette smoking is prohibited in the room)

(77)   gofte-ye mæn sæhih bud   (past participle)

'said-izafet I correct was'

(my words (what I said) were correct).

6.0--Predicates

Farsi predicates are, in general, verbal or substantival.
Examples of the former are included below.

(78) Yek mærd-e sævare æz rahi migozæšt

'one man riding along road passing'

(one (horse)man was passing along the road).

(79)   mæn hærf-e to-ra bavær næmikonæm

'I   word-izafet you-object believe not'

(I don't believe your words).

(80)   in deræxt bolænd-æst

'this tree   tall - is'

(this tree is tall)

(81)   mæn danesju bu-d-æm

'I   student be-past-first-person'

(I was a student)

7.0--Direct Object Noun Phrases

The direct object can be expressed in two ways: 1) by
an unmarked substantive, and 2) by a substantive marked with
the postposition ra, which marks the object as being definite
and specific. In (82) below the copulative conjunction -o
occurs:

(82)   mæn xub-o bæd-e an-ra næ-mi-dænæm

'I good-or bad-izafet that-object negative-progressive-know

(I don't know if that is good or bad)

8.0--Indirect Object Noun Phrases

An example of an indirect object appears below.

(83)   be ræfig-æm goft-æm (ke) name-ra zud benevis

'to friend-my said-I (that) letter-object soon write'

(I said to my friend to write the letter soon)

9.0--Co-ordination and Compounding

Co-ordination is accomplished by the conjunctions v<u>æ</u>
and <u>o</u> 'and', <u>ya</u> 'or', ya . . . ya 'either or' and <u>če</u> . . . <u>če</u>
'as well as'. Thus, for example, <u>ketab-o qælæm</u> means 'book
and pen' and <u>ya ensan ya heyvan</u> means either 'human being or
animal'. Noun series may be conjoined by <u>o</u> or <u>væ</u>.

 (84) ketab-o dæftær-o qælæm xæridæm

    'book-and notebook-and pen bought I'

 (85) Ketab dæftær væ qælæm xæridæm

    'book notebook and pen bought I'

Co-ordination may also be indicated by mere juxtaposition.

 (86) šæbha ruzha hæfteha mahha gozæšt

    'nights, days weeks months passed'

Alternatively, the plural marker (<u>ha</u>), in conjoined nouns may
appear following the last conjoint.

 (87) ketab-o dæftær ha ry-ye miz æst

    'books-and notebooks plural on-izafet table are'

Other conjunctions are listed below with examples.

 (88) hæm 'also': šoma anja
          'you there'

    næbudid, mæn hæm næ-budæm

    'not-were, I also not-was'

    (you were not there, I also was not there)

 (89) Ya 'or': rædd ya qæbul

      'pass or fail'

(90) če . . . če 'whether/either . . . or': če piyade
če sævare

'whether on foot or horseback'

10.0--Subordination

The subordinating particles are listed below with
examples.

10.0.1--<u>ke</u>. A subordinating conjunction with a very
broad meaning, used in the following types of subordinate
clause:

a) objective [that]: <u>mæn midan æm ke u anja næbud</u> 'I
<u>I know that he there wasn't</u>

know very well that he wasn't there;' b) attributive:

<u>ruzname-i ra ke šoma aværde budid xandæm</u> 'I read the paper
<u>newspaper that you bought read</u>

that you brought for me;' c) of purpose [in order to] <u>inja</u>
<u>here</u>

<u>amæd æm ke šoma ra beginæm</u> 'I came here (in order) to
<u>I came to you day see</u>

see you;' d) of cause ['because, since'] <u>biš æz in soal</u>
<u>again ask</u>

<u>nækon ke čizi-i næxahæm goft</u> 'don't ask me again, for I
<u>don't for anything I won't say</u>

won't say anything,' e) of time: <u>u ke amæd madær-æš goft</u>
<u>he came mother (his) said</u>

'when he came, his mother said . . .'

In addition, this same conjunction also introduces direct
speech: <u>goft ke sal-e ayænde be Tehran xahæd amæd</u> 'he said:
<u>said that year next to Tehran will come</u>

"Next year he will come to Tehran."'

10.0.2 -- <u>aegæ r</u>. The general Farsi morpheme or forma-
tive corresponding to English 'if' is <u>aegaer</u> alternating with
<u>gaer</u> and <u>aer</u>. It may combine with the form vae 'but' and
the negative morpheme <u>nae</u> with a meaning 'but if not' or
'otherwise' as in <u>aegaer</u> <u>be</u> <u>in</u> <u>qeymaet</u> <u>bashaed</u> <u>migiraem</u> <u>vae</u>-
<u>gar</u> <u>nae</u> <u>naemigiraem</u> (if-it-at-this-price-I-take-it-but-if-
not-I-take-it-not).

10.0.3 -- <u>aegæ r-ce</u>. Corresponding to English 'al-
though' is Farsi <u>aegæ r-ce</u> which has the variants <u>gaer-ce</u>
or <u>haer-caend</u> as in <u>aegæ r-ce</u> <u>amaede</u> <u>bashaed</u> <u>maen</u> <u>u</u> <u>ra</u> <u>haenuz</u>
<u>naedidaem</u> (although-came-he-him-I-not-saw).

10.0.4 -- <u>ba</u> <u>an</u> <u>ke</u>. Paralleling English 'in spite of/
despite' is Farsi <u>ba</u> <u>an</u> <u>ke</u> which has the morphological var-
iants ba <u>vojud-e</u> <u>in</u> <u>ke</u> or <u>ba</u> <u>vojud-e</u> <u>an</u> <u>ke</u> as in <u>ba</u> <u>an</u> <u>ke</u>
<u>u</u> <u>paenj</u> <u>sal</u> <u>daer</u> <u>tajikestan</u> <u>zendegani</u> <u>mikaerd</u>, <u>zaeban-e</u>
<u>tajiki</u> <u>ra</u> <u>naemidanaed</u> (in-spite-of-the-fact-he-lives-five-
years-in-Tajikistan, he-Tajik-language-not-know).

10.0.5 -- <u>cun</u>. Another subordinating particle is
<u>cun</u> which functions much like English 'when' and 'as/like'
as in <u>cun</u> <u>be</u> <u>an</u> <u>shaer</u> <u>amaed</u> <u>maerdoman</u> <u>u</u> <u>ra</u> <u>naeshenaxtaend</u>
(when-arrived-he-in-town-that-people-him-not-recognize) and
as in a comparison phrase (in English much like a simile,
and therefore somewhat poetic) <u>aebruvan-aesh</u> <u>cun</u> <u>mah-e</u>
<u>now</u> (brows-her-like/as-moon-new), that is to say, 'her
brows (were very much like, or shone as) the new moon, or,
as the new moon shines, so shine her brows.'

10.0.6--<u>cun key</u>. cun ke, Zira, Zirake ['because, since']:

<u>name-ye soma ra be u nædadæm</u>, <u>cun ke (Zira ke) u ra nædidæm</u>
<u>letter you obj to him didn't give</u>　　　　<u>because he obj didn't see</u>

I didn't give him your letter, because I didn't see him.

10.0.7--<u>væqt-i ke</u>. <u>væqt-i ke</u>, <u>hængam-i ke</u> ['while,

when'] are subordinating conjunctions of time: <u>væqt-i ke u</u>
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　when　　he

<u>daxel-e otag sod</u> 'when he entered the room.
　<u>entered the room</u>

10.0.8--<u>hæmin-ke</u>. hæmin-ke is a subordinating con-

junction of time ['as soon as']: <u>hæmin-ke cæsm-æs be u oftad</u>
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　as soon as　　saw　　　him

'as soon as he saw him. . . .'

11.0--Types of Subordinate Clauses

11.0.1--Attributive Subordinate Clause. Farsi has no

relative pronoun by means of which other languages bring about

the subordination of an attirbutive clause. The conjunction

<u>ke</u> is used as the subordinating conjunction with an attributive

clause: <u>mær d-i ke inja bud, bærad ær-e mæn-æst</u> 'the man
　　　　　　<u>the man that here was, brother my is</u>

who was here is my brother.' An attributive subordinate clause

usually follows directly after the substantive to which it is

related. This substantive takes "the i of indication."

11.0.2--Object Subordinate Clause. This category of

subordinate clause is also subordinated with the aid of the

conjunction ke and follows directly after its antecedent

(usually a verb): <u>u goft ke miayæd</u> 'he said that he would come.'
　　　　　　　　　　<u>he said that he would come</u>

Subordination of conditional clauses is produced by means of
the conjunctions ægǣr 'if,' vǣ ǣg ǣr 'but if' etc., ǣgar
dǣrs bexani gǣbul misavi 'if you study, you will pass.'
study you   pass   will
Subordinate conditional clauses are usually put at the very
beginning of the complex sentence.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

In this work, we have filled a gap in the field of grammar; that is, we have provided a succinct but telling brief account of the phonological and syntactic structures of Modern Farsi, which are likely to present problems for the ESL teacher who wishes to teach a modern Iranian English orthoepy and idiomatic syntax. To that end we hope the work will be useful; but we acknowledge with Edward Sapir that all grammars leak, even ours.

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