

## The Distinctive Features of The Persian Language: Historical-Linguistic and Structural Analysis and Its Role in Intercultural Communication

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### ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the Persian language (Farsi, Dari, Tajik) from a scientific perspective, focusing on its historical roots, genealogical classification, and phonetic, morphological, syntactic, and lexical-semantic features. As a member of the Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family, the article explores the development stages of Persian, the influences of Arabic, Turkic, and Western languages, as well as the structural elements of contemporary literary Persian. Sociolinguistic processes and regional variants (Iranian Persian, Afghan Dari, Tajik Persian) are examined with a comparative and evidence-based approach.

**Keywords:** - Persian language, Iranian languages, phonetics, morphology, syntax, lexical-semantic system, Dari, Tajik, historical linguistics.

### INTRODUCTION

The Persian language belongs to the Iranian group of the Indo-European language family and has a history spanning over two millennia. It serves as the official language of Iran, is recognized as Dari in Afghanistan, and functions as the literary language of Tajikistan. Persian has played a significant role in the linguocultural processes of Central Asia, the Middle East, and the Caucasus, influencing literature, diplomacy, philosophy, and scientific development.

The factors that characterize the uniqueness of Persian include:

#### 1. Historical Development Stages of Persian

Linguists typically divide Persian into three major historical stages:

##### 1.1. Old Persian (c. 6th–4th century BCE)

Old Persian, the official language of the Achaemenid Empire, is attested in cuneiform inscriptions. Its syntax was highly inflectional.

##### 1.2. Middle Persian (c. 3rd–7th century CE)

Developed during the Sassanian period, known as Pahlavi, this stage saw an increase in analytic constructions and a broader use of auxiliary verbs.

##### 1.3. New Persian (from the 8th century to the present)

Under the influence of Islamic civilization, Arabic vocabulary entered extensively. The phonetic system simplified, and syntactic structures became more regular. Each stage has had a direct impact on

the structure of modern Persian.

## 2. Phonetic Features of Persian

The Persian phonetic system is characterized by simplicity and stability.

### 2.1. Vowel system

Persian has six primary vowels:

- Short vowels: /a/, /e/, /o/
- Long vowels: /ā/, /ī/, /ū/

The opposition of vowel length serves a semantic distinguishing function:

- gol – “flower”
- gōl – “victor”

### 2.2. Consonant system

Consonants borrowed from Arabic such as /q/, /x/, /ɣ/, /ħ/, /ʕ/ are retained in some dialects. In Tajik, /q/ often shifts to /k/.

### 2.3. Stress and intonation

Stress usually falls on the final syllable. Persian exhibits moderate emotional intonation, particularly in Dari, where melodic intonation is prominent.

## 3. Morphological Structure

Persian primarily uses an analytic system; grammatical meanings are usually expressed by auxiliary words rather than affixes.

### 3.1. Noun categories

Persian lacks case suffixes; relationships are expressed through prepositions:

- be — “to”
- az — “from”
- dar — “in”

The possessive relationship is indicated with the linking morpheme -e / -ye:

- ketāb-e ustod — “the teacher’s book”

### 3.2. Plural forms

The general plural marker is -hā:

- ketābhā — “books”
- For humans: -ān / -gān:
- ustodān — “teachers”

### 3.3. Verb system

Persian verbs have a relatively simple system:

- Present tense: mi-raftam — “I was going”
- Past tense: raftam — “I went”
- Passive form: rafté šod — “was gone”

Analytic verb forms are created using the auxiliary verb budan (to be).

## 4. Syntactic Features

### 4.1. Word order

The canonical word order is SOV (Subject–Object–Verb):

- Man ketāb-rā xāndam — “I read the book”

### 4.2. Prepositional constructions

Prepositions are central in Persian syntax:

- be dārūn-e xāna raft — “he entered into the house”

### 4.3. Adjectives and modifiers

Modifiers follow the noun they describe:

- ketāb-e bozorg — “big book”

## 5. Lexical-Semantic Features

Persian vocabulary has three main sources:

### 5.1. Indigenous Iranian layer

Core Persian words:

- āb (water), ruz (day), dil (heart)

### 5.2. Arabic layer

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Due to Islamic civilization, many Arabic words were integrated:

- elm (knowledge), madrese (school), adabiyat (literature)

Approximately 35–40% of modern Persian vocabulary derives from Arabic roots.

### 5.3. Turkic and Western layers

Centuries of cultural contact introduced Turkic words:

- xon, beg, yuz, do‘st

In the 20th century, English and French borrowings increased:

- telefon, mashīn, radio

## 6. Persian Variants: Persian–Dari–Tajik

### 6.1. Iranian Persian

- Literary standard, written in Arabic script.

### 6.2. Dari (Afghanistan)

- Phonetically conservative, melodically intonated, retains some archaic phonemes.

### 6.3. Tajik

- Developed under Soviet rule, uses Cyrillic script. Arabic phonemes and some morphemes simplified.

These variants are mutually intelligible but differ in phonetics, orthography, and morphology.

## CONCLUSION

Persian is a linguistically rich system with a historical legacy, distinct phonetic structure, analytic morphology, clear syntax, and extensive cultural influence. Its development involved indigenous Iranian layers, Arabic linguistic influence, Turkic contacts, and modern global interactions. The Persian language variants—Persian, Dari, and Tajik—share a common root yet exhibit unique features today. Studying Persian is essential for understanding historical, cultural, and political processes across Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Middle East.

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