

Reflections on Persian Language Instructional Materials and Teaching Methods Adabiyat Posts by Michael Craig Hillmann

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Subject: Persian Language and Literature at Texas, 1960–2012

1. Persian Language Studies at Texas, 1960–2012.

In the mid-1960s, in part owing to both the expanding presence of American Peace Corps volunteers in Iran and pre-service Persian language training needs in the United States and in Iran, Persian language course designers and instructors at American universities developed syllabi to meet the projected day-to-day language needs of those volunteers on- and off-the-job in Iran. Consequently, language syllabi and textbooks produced in America such as M.A. Jazayery's *Elementary Lessons in Persian* (1968), Donald Stilo's *Elementary Persian* (1969, 1973), and produced in Iran such as my *Elementary Modern Persian* (1972) focused exclusively on Colloquial as opposed to Literary Persian as the language of instruction in Beginning Persian and the register which students learned in lessons mostly built around dialogues and conversations on conversation situations relating to everyday activities of Americans living in Iran.

In the mid-1970s, when former Iran Peace Corps Volunteers began playing a role in academic Persian Studies in American universities, some universities, including The University of Texas where Ali Jazayery had developed the first academic syllabus based on Colloquial Persian, further developed instructional materials built around Colloquial Persian language situations. My *Elementary Persian 1, 2, 3*, written for the Experiment in International Language (Brattleboro, VT) and used at The Academy of Language in Tehran for University of Arizona students and at The University of Texas, and revised versions of Donald Stilo's materials including materials developed by Jerome Clinton for Persian courses at Princeton University typified such modified audio-lingual Colloquial Persian materials. In the Persian language program at The University of Texas from 1974 to 1995, administered by M.A. Jazayery, a teaching assistant, and me, the First-year Persian sequence devoted its first semester to listening, speaking, reading, and writing Colloquial Persian and its second semester to more advanced work using Literary Persian texts for reading, writing, and some listening activities and Colloquial Persian for all speaking and some listening activities. At the same time, the First-year Persian syllabus gradually became proficiency-based, with preliminary versions of self-contained lesson models from three textbooks called *Persian Listening* (2008), *Persian Reading and Writing* (2009), and *Persian Conversation(s)* (2012), respectively, serving as course materials. Meanwhile, Donald Stilo and Jerome Clinton were joined by Kamran Talattof in the writing of a new two-volume version of the Stilo textbook called *Modern Persian: Spoken and Written* (2005). Moreover, newer Defense Language Institute Persian materials likewise privileged Colloquial Persian for its listening and speaking learning and practice activities, although they focused on Literary Persian materials in reading instruction. An annotated bibliography (unpublished but available upon request), which I compiled in December 2009, surveys the currently available materials for the study of Dari, Farsi, and Tajiki dialects of Persian.

The rationale for using Colloquial Persian exclusively in Beginning Persian courses (e.g., First-year Persian 1 in a university Persian course sequence) had seemed obvious to some Persian instructional materials developers and Persian instructors since the early 1960s. First, in a Persian language classroom environment in general, instructors naturally speak in a Colloquial Persian register. Second, in Persian language environments in general on and off the job, the register which auditors hear and which interlocutors use is Colloquial Persian. Third, the Persian language register of cinema and television drama, talk shows, interviews, and the like, is Colloquial. Fourth, the ubiquitousness of reading texts in the Colloquial Persian register makes its use in a four-skills learning environment mutually reinforcing

of reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills. Fifth, the shift from Colloquial to Literary Persian registers seems as unproblematic for adult English-speaking learners of Persian as for native Persian-speaking children who move from the social world outside of school into academic environments. The differences between Colloquial and Literary Persian, as described in *Persian Listening and Persian Grammar and Verbs* (2011) are phonological and syntactically regular, but do not involve any loss of endings or the sorts of reduction of markers in Colloquial as opposed to Literary Persian that might suggest that learners first receive exposure to the fuller (i.e., Literary) forms before learning the shorter or simplified (i.e., Colloquial).

Of course, an equally compelling rationale exists for a focus on Literary Persian in Beginning Persian courses in the case of Persian programs which have an achievement orientation. Those programs, which textbooks from Ann Lambton's *Persian Grammar* to Wheeler Thackston's *An Introduction to Persian* (2000) and John Mace's *Persian Grammar* (2003) suit, teach amounts of Persian with the aim that students completing a program will "know" Persian and will have the reading skills to deal with important Persian texts. In other words, students learn specific Persian texts in order to have those texts as part of a repertoire. In contrast, in proficiency-based programs, students learn how to deal with future texts of a particular sort through the development of the skills necessary to deal with such texts. In the 1960s and 1970s at Tehran University and The University of Chicago, for example, Colloquial Persian did not figure in any Persian language courses for non-native learners of the language, and both universities produced competent teachers of classic Persian texts.

But, the hesitation which some instructors who advocate a skills-oriented approach to teaching Persian evidence in focusing on Colloquial Persian in Beginning Persian courses needs explanation. In the case of Iranian-born and Iranian-educated Persian teachers, two facts perhaps figure in such hesitation. First, Iranian education has historically given little or no attention in any Persian course at any level to Colloquial Persian. Second, many literate Iranians think of Literary Persian as the "real" language, with Colloquial Persian a ruleless or lazy or inexact register of the language. Third, many literate Iranians who likely read traditional(ist) Persian verse and some Iranian fiction may have little exposure to written Colloquial Persian. Third, many literate Iranians do not realize that texts which they construe as Literary Persian because they do not exhibit phonological signals of Colloquial Persian are colloquial in phraseology and word order. In any case, anecdotal evidence suggests that English-speaking American students of Persian face no short-term or long-term problems in achieving intermediate proficiency in the language with a syllabus that starts with a colloquial register of the language and later introduces a literary register. In fact, anecdotal evidences suggests that moving from colloquial to literary in a beginning to elementary course sequence produces less confusion in a communicative Persian learning environment and more confident speakers of Persian at the intermediate and advanced levels.

In 1995, the First-year Persian course sequence at Texas veered away from a proficiency model and began using *Persian for Beginners: A Textbook for Teaching Adults and Young People*(1985) by M.R. Ghanoonparvar in the first semester and Gernot Windfuhr's *Modern Persian: Elementary Level* (1981) in the second semester. Students and teaching assistants observed that *Modern Persian: Elementary Level* seemed out of date insofar as its materials related to Iran before the Islamic Republic and that *Persian for Beginners* also seemed out of date and lacking in methodological underpinnings or aids for its use in self-study. Also in 1995, the Second-year Persian sequence, which I taught, used preliminary versions of lesson modules from *Reading Iranian Reading Iranians: Second Edition Revised* (2002), *Persian Vocabulary Acquisition: Second Edition* (2003), and *Persian Reading and Writing*. Also, a new Persian Conversation Session was added to the program to give Second-year Persian students two more weekly hours of exposure to everyday conversation situations and topics. And a new Third-year Persian course offered a cycle of these three kinds of Persian in successive semesters: Persian Newspaper Reading, which made use of preliminary versions of units in *Persian Newspaper Reader: Second*

Edition (2000), *Reading Persian Fiction*, which made use of preliminary versions of units in *Persian Fiction Reader: Second Edition* (2000); and *Persian Essay Reading*, which made use of *Advanced Persian Reader* (1995, private printing). In 1998, I added Tajiki and Dari course materials to the Persian program, the core syllabus deriving from *Basic Tajik(i) Word List* (2003) and *Tajiki Textbook and Reader: Second Edition* (2003).

With the 2008–2009 school year, a non-tenure track Persian Lecturer assumed responsibility for UT's First-year Persian sequence and a new Second-year Persian sequence. In addition, UT's Department of Middle Eastern Studies [= DMES] also announced a new Elementary Persian for Heritage course to serve the needs of Iranian American students with Persian listening and speaking skills but illiterate in Persian. First offered in the Fall 2010 Semester, the new heritage Persian course made use of the already cited, new textbook of mine called *Persian Reading and Writing*.

At the same time, DMES reduced the foreign language requirement for undergraduate students declaring Persian as their foreign language of choice from four semesters to two semesters of Persian courses and from twenty credit hours to twelve credit hours. The new, one-year Elementary Persian course sequence added one class hour each week to the earlier five-hour First-year Persian course sequence and called the new course sequence "Intensive." In addition, DMES instituted a policy that precluded one senior Persian faculty colleague from teaching the regular elementary, intermediate, and advanced Persian courses. Both new policies, undiscussed with at least one senior Persian faculty colleague, presumably related to budgetary constraints, although had DMES allowed tenured Persian faculty to teach such languages courses as their third courses each semester (their required teaching load being two courses each semester), no budgetary problems would have remained.

Also presumably related to budgetary constraints, in March 2011 DMES announced the following Fall 2011 Persian course schedule: Intensive Persian 1, Intensive Persian for Heritage Speakers (which course DMES cancelled in August 2011), and Intermediate Persian 1. For the first time since the Spring 1974 Semester, UT Austin would be offering no Persian literature courses.

In response to a query about the absence of Persian literature courses in the 2011-2012 course schedule, the DMES Chair wrote in late April 2011: "2012-2013...is the year we will become MELC at all levels. There will no longer be PRS programs (nor ARA, HEB, TUR) as separate entities. Therefore, we anticipate a reduced need for language-specific courses at all levels. This is the time to think broadly within our new comparative framework to plan new courses."

In the words of UT's Persian prose specialist, writing in early August 2011 in response to a query about the language of the texts in a Fall 2011 graduate Persian course: "With the new direction of the department, contrary to what I did in the past, I have been asked to teach my graduate courses in English in order to attract students in the entire department. The language of the course is English and I have tried to put together reading material in English." The course in question apparently offers graduate credit in Persian to students who may or may not have reading skills in the language.

UT's Persian poetry specialist is circumventing the new English-only Persian course policy by offering an informal seminar (which can become an official, so-called conference or official small graduate course should DMES adjust the new policy) in both the Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 semesters for any students who want read Persian texts. In the Fall 2011 Semester students will meet three hours each week to read Hedayat's *Buf-e Kur* line-by-line from beginning to end and also read other Persian texts, e.g., Khayyamic quatrains, relevant to the appreciation of Hedayat's narrative. For the Spring 2012 semester, graduate students on their own have petitioned DMES for approval of a graduate course called Classics of Persian Poetry 1 (9th–15th centuries). **Note** (102612): In response to students requests, DMES authorized the offering of PRS 384C Classics of Persian Poetry 1 for the Spring 2012 Semester . Four graduate students in Comparative Literature, Asian Studies, and Middle Eastern Studies are participating in the course. DMES is reviewing a proposal for PRS 384C Classics of Persian Poetry 2 planned for Fall 2012.

Two years earlier, in the 2009-2010 academic year, UT Austin's Persian poetry specialist received unprecedented warnings from DMES administrators that any graduate Persian literature course would face cancellation if more than six students did not register for it and that undergraduate courses would face the same fate if a dozen or more students did not sign up for them. In fact, DMES canceled a Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* and Pop Culture course before the middle of the first week of classes because only nine students had registered at that point (four or five others might have registered by the end of the week after students finished their wonted shopping around for courses). Also for the first time ever at Texas, a DMES administrator also warned that "the days are over when you can teach what you want," as if Persianists designed courses, for example, on Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, Sa'di's *Golestan*, and Hafezian ghazals because of personal preferences and not because no student of Persian literature, Iranian history, Islamic Studies, Iranian politics, or whatever, can undertake a serious study of those subjects without substantial exposure to Ferdowsi, Sa'di, Hafez, et al. As every Persianist or Iranist knows, Persian literature, especially poetry, lies at the core of Iranian culture and social and intellectual life past and present.

As *From Classroom to Courtroom* (2008) chronicles it, UT Austin's programs in Arabic Studies, Hebrew Studies, Persian Studies, and Turkish Studies faced serious, albeit not unique, problems at the departmental level ever since its Department of Middle Eastern Cultures began its eight-year existence in 1994. By 2008, some of those issues had resolved themselves in a new Department of Middle Eastern Studies established in 2002, while a new issue, an arguably new departmental philosophy about its Persian Studies and Iranian Studies components, seemed to emerge. First, Arabic and Hebrew Studies colleagues began making decisions about Persian/Iranian Studies without consultation of senior Persian faculty. Second, DMES administrators expressed frustration or dissatisfaction in their dealings with a majority of Persian Studies students and faculty colleagues. Third came the cited redesign of the Persian language program over the detailed and written academic objections by senior Persian faculty. Fourth came the cited new enrollment restrictions on Persian courses.

Fifth came a departmental announcement in the Spring 2011 Semester of a new core Middle Eastern Cultures course. Here follows a list of the topics in the new Middle Eastern Cultures course. 1. Nation Building. 1.1. The Rise of Israel as a Unified Kingdom and Its Collapse. 1.2. *The Shahnameh*: Epic and National Myth in Iran. 1.3. Arab Nationalism. 1.4. Ataturk's Reforms and the Making of Modern Turkey. 1.5. Images of the New Turkish Republican Woman. 1.6. Music, Art and Literature in the Turkish Republican Era. 2. Ideas of the Self and Other. 2.1. Women in Islam. 2.2. The Concept of "ger" in the Bible. 2.3. The "Other" in Literatures of Israel and Palestine. 2.4. Kurdish Artists in Turkey: Lifting the Controls on Kurdish Public Expression. 2.5. Love, Family Honor and "the Other" as Portrayed in the Turkish Media. 2.6. Literature and Film. 2.7. Turkish Self-Isolation between the Two World Wars. 3. Language and Identity. 3.1. The Use of Aramaic in the Achaemenid Empire. 3.2. Languages in Syria-Palestine in Late Antiquity 3.3. Biblical Translations. 3.4. Diglossia in Arabic. 3.5. The Origins and Standardization of Arabic. 3.6. The Shelving of Ottoman Turkish. 3.7. Language Politics in the late Ottoman Empire, the Early Republican Era and the 1970s. 3.8. Minority Languages and Communities in Turkey. 4 Immigration. 4.1. The "Exodus". 4.2. The effect of the Babylonian Exile on Israelite Religion. 4.3. Jewish Migration to Palestine (pre- and/or post-1948) 4.4. Palestinian Refugees from the Nakba to the Present. 4.5. 18th-19th century Migration of Muslims from the Balkans and Caucasus to Anatolia. 4.6. Migration to Turkish Cities and Beyond (1970s onward). 5. Worship and the Divine/Secular and Profane. 5.1. Polytheism in Ancient Israel. 5.2. Sectarian Relations in the Levant. 5.3. Anatolian Dervish Lodges and Their Transformation in the 20th Century. 5.4. Rumi, His Poetry, Ideas, and International Legacy. 5.5. Islamic Businesses, Banks, and Faith-based Civic Organizations in Contemporary Turkey. 6. Cultures in Contact. 6.1. Cultural Contact in Egypt during the Persian Empire. 6.2. Indo-European People in the Ancient Near East. 6.3. Encounter with the West: Arab Writers in Europe. 6.4. Encounter with the West: Turkish Writers in Europe, especially Germany. 6.5. Ottoman "Management" Style:

Administration of the Multi-ethnic, Multi-religious, Multi-religious Empire. 6.6. The Adoption of European Literary Genres into Turkish Literature. 6.7. The Intertwining of Sufi, Armenian, and Sephardic Musical Traditions in Ottoman Istanbul. 6.8. The Arabesque in Turkish Popular Music. 7. Patronage of Arts and Architecture. 7.1. Patronage of Arts in the Courts of Medieval Iran. 7.2. The Development of Writing in Sumer. 7.3. The Emergence of Modern Arabic Literature. 7.4. Mima Sinan's Architectural Contributions. 7.5. Ebru, Calligraphy, and Illumination: Past and Present Practice of Traditional Islamic Arts in Istanbul. 7.6. The History of Anatolian Carpet Motifs and Carpet-making Today. 8. Shaping Political Systems. 8.1. The Rise of Kingship in Ancient Israel. 8.2. Colonialism in the Arab World. 8.3. The Impact of Changes in Family Law in the Late Ottoman Empire and Modern Republic of Turkey. 9. Construction of Leadership and Authority. 9.1. The Priest as Leader in 2nd Temple Judaism. 9.2. Ayatollah Khomeini and the Creation of an Islamic Republic. 9.3. Ottoman Consolidation of Authority: Myth and Reality. 9.4. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the Creation of a Secular Republic. 10. Transmission of Knowledge. 10.1. How the Mishna Was Created. 10.2. Centers of Learning in the Islamic World. 10.3. Similarities and Differences in the traditional Ottoman mektep/medrese and the New Turkish School/University. 11. Major Social Events (or: Intellectual Revolutions). 11.1. The Rise of Christianity. 11.2. The Nahzat and the Birth of Arab Modernity. 11.3. The Tanzimat Era. 11.4. The Ozal Era. 12. Transference of Power. 12.1. Naser in Egypt. 12.2. The Islamic Revolution in Iran. 12.3. The Collapse of the Ottoman Empire. 12.4. Popular Revolutions in the Arab world. 12.5. The Democratization of Modern Turkey.

Admittedly lacking formal training and expertise in Middle Eastern Studies although trained in Islamic Civilization (e.g., its history with Wilferd Madelung and long-standing appreciation of it à la Marshall Hodgson's *Venture of Islam*) and Persian Studies (with Heshmat Moayyad, Tehran University Persian Department faculty, Nader Naderpur, et al.), I did not recognize signature periods, events, and objects/texts in either subject in the new MELC core course list. For example, the course features no lectures on the Koran or the Mongols. Moreover, in weighing periods, events, and objects/texts in various Middle Eastern cultures, I could not think of reasons why the Use of Aramaic in the Achaemenid Era might have more significance than the Achaemenid Era itself or why Polytheism in Ancient Israel might have more significance than polytheism in Ancient Arabia or Zoroastrianism as a first monotheism in the region or why Kingship in Ancient Israel should not defer to kingship on the Iranian plateau or why "The Philistines and Israel" had greater cultural significance than the cultural facts and issues that lie behind the literal fact that maps of the Middle East published in Iran identify "Felestin" as a country and do not cite Israel. At the same time, I wondered what would keep college freshmen awake during lectures on Islamic businesses, Sephardic musical traditions, Tanzimat reforms, Ebru, and the rest in Turkey, while the eye-opening cultural significance of what has happened there to Armenians and Kurds has been swept under cited Anatolian carpets, which may represent only the third richest tradition in oriental carpet production.

In the months following dissemination of a critique of the new Middle Eastern Culture course's topics sent to departmental administrators, colleagues, and graduate students, I have received no comments from faculty colleagues. Regardless, the new MELC course topics list constitutes a dramatic reminder that UT Persian language and literature-in-translation (formerly literature) instructors need to emphasize cultural features and ramifications of Persian in all of their courses to give students a balanced perspective on at least one Middle Eastern culture.

If memory serves me correctly, years ago when administrators at a New York state university were contemplating the elimination of Persian from its course offerings, Arabic and Persian literature specialist Joe Bell (and perhaps others) informed Persianists around the world of the situation and encouraged them to write to that university in hopes that it would rethink the proposed elimination of Persian. If memory serves me correctly, the encouragement neither stemmed from an insinuation of bad faith on the part of university administrators nor suggested adversarial arguments. Rather, we were to

write about the significance of Persian in the cultural, historical, and academic scheme of things.

The same holds here from my perspective vis--vis administrative proposals and decisions at UT Austin. In other words, presumably operating in good faith, presumably trusting their overview of things Persian--without benefit of input by trained Persianists--and presumably faced with new budgetary realities and constraints, DMES administrators have made cited decisions the rationales for which experienced teacher-scholars of Persian language and literature likely cannot appreciate. On the contrary--and herein lies my aim in writing this commentary--Persianists can likely think of many reasons why DMES administrators might rethink their new Persian-related proposals, decisions, and policies. Such rethinking might result from letters from Persianists, Iranists, and lovers of literature at other universities, and others to: Department of Middle Eastern Studies, 1 University Station F9400, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712.

At the same time, let me hasten to assert that no self-interest inheres in this report and its encouragement of reader response. My chief academic love has always been imaginative literature and literature as culture, English or Persian, although my familiarity with the latter has unfortunately never approached that with the former. Consequently, whether or not UT's DMES offers Persian literature courses in the future not does not affect my teaching insofar as Persian literature courses usually constitute a so-called teaching overload for me, i.e., a third course beyond the required two courses each semester. With or without officially offered Persian literature courses, my 2011-2012 teaching schedule would include: (1) The American Experience as Told through Autobiographies for 100 students (Fall 2011), (2) Iranian Culture for 35-40 students (Fall 2011), (3) Reading a Classic Persian Text for 2-5 students (Fall 2011), (4) Classics of World Poetry for 50 students (Spring 2012), and Self-Revelation in Women's Writing: Zora Neale Hurston and Forugh Farrokhzad for 25-35 students (Spring 2012), and (6) Classics of Persian Poetry 1. Finally, insofar as 2012 will mark the 50th anniversary of the beginning of my university teaching career, I see myself as a lame duck in UT's DMES and think that colleagues teaching in DMES twenty years from now have the ultimate right to chart its Persian Studies course. But they need encouragement to realize that they cannot prepare competent Iranist political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, Islam specialists, and historians--not to speak of Persian literature specialists--without substantial student exposure to Persian literature.

2. A Partially Annotated and Unedited Bibliography of Representative Persian Instructional Materials Available in North America and Observations about It

My Adabiyat post called "Persian Language and Literature at UT Austin, 1960-2012" (Adabiyat@lists.uchicago.edu, Saturday, 13 August 2011, 11:58 am) mentioned a bibliography of Persian instructional materials available to *Adabiyat* readers upon request. In response to several requests, "A Partially Annotated and Unedited Bibliography of Representative Persian Instructional Materials Available in North America" appeared as an attachment to a second post called "Persian Language/Literature at Texas 2" (Adabiyat@lists.uchicago.edu, Saturday, 19 August 2011, 1:17 pm). Here follows a copy of that bibliography.

Abrahams, Simin. *Modern Persian: A Course-Book*. New York, NY: Routledge Curzon, 2005.

Accompanied by an audio cassette and CD.

Adelson-Goldstein, and Norma Shapiro. Translation reviewed by Ramin Eshtiaghi. *English/Farsi Oxford*

Picture Dictionary: Second Edition. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009. xi, 305p. Despite many errors in the translation of English terms into Persian, a useful ancillary resource with its everyday topics sections and illustrations of 4,000+ words and expressions.

Amuzegar, Hooshang. *A Dictionary of Common Persian & English Verbs with Synonyms & Examples*. Bethesda, MD: Ibex Publishers, 2005.

- _____, and Farideh. *How to Speak, Read and Write Persian*. Bethesda, MD: IbeX Publishers, 2003. Accompanied by 3 twin-track audio cassettes.
- Anvari, Hasan, et al. *Farhang-e Bozorg-e Sokhan* [Sokhan Comprehensive Dictionary Persian to Persian]. 8 volumes. Tehran: Sokhan Publishing, 2002/3.
Includes linguistic and grammatical terms in its headword list and definitions and multiple authentic examples in the entries for those headwords.
- Atai-Langroudi, Aziz, and Michael Craig Hillmann. With Behrad Aghaei. *Advanced Persian Reader*. Austin, TX: Persepolis Institute, 2005. 20 lessons based on the complete text of Jalâl-e Ahmad's *Sangi bar Guri* [A Stone on a Grave] printed on demand. Accompanied by two audio CDs with readings of all 20 text sections.
- Ashraf-al-Kuttabi, H. and M. *Farsi dar Safar* [Persian for Travel]. Tehran: Istandard Publications, 1999.
- Ayman, Leili. *Fârsi Biyâmuzim: Ketâb-e Avval* [Let's Learn Persian: Book One]. Bethesda, MD: Iranbooks, 1994.
- Baizoyev, Azim, and John Hayward. *Beginner's Guide to Tajiki*. New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004. First published as *The Official Beginners' Guide to Tajiki*. (Dushanbe: Star Publications, 2001).
- Banaie, Sedigheh. *Âmuzesh-e Zabân-e Fârsi* [Learning Farsi: for students with limited knowledge of English language]. Los Angeles, CA: Ketab Corporation, 2005.
- Bashiri, Iraj. (1981). *Persian for Beginners: Reading texts*. Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing Company, 1981. Accompanied by a tape manual with notes on grammar. The texts and explicit contexts in any Persian instructional materials published before the end of the Iran-Iraq War and Ruhollah Khomeini's death are out of date.
- Behzad, Faramarz, and Soraya Divshahi. *Persian Language Course: An Introduction to the Persian Language of Today*. Translated from the German *Sprachkurs Persisch*, 4th edition, (2003) by J. P. Luft. Bamberg, Germany: LOGIS, 2003. Accompanied by 4 audio CD-recordings of all reading sections and exercises).
- Boyle, John Andrew. *Grammar of Modern Persian*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1966. Outdated. In its day thought the clearest beginner's guide in English.
- Dabir-Moqaddam, Mohammad. "Compound Verbs in Persian." *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* 27, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 25–59. A lucid presentation deserving citation and use in discussion of Persian verbs.
- Darabi, S. *Fârsi-ye Sâdeh* [Simple Persian]. Lahijan: Nashr-e Niknegâr, 1998.
- Defense Language Institute. *Persian Basic Course*. Presidio of Monterey, CA: DLI Foreign Language Center, 1966. Reprinted 2006. The texts and explicit contexts in any Persian instructional materials published before the end of the Iran-Iraq War and Ruhollah Khomeini's death are out of date.
- Dehghani, Yavar. *Persian–English English–Persian Learner's Dictionary*. Bethesda, MD: IbeX Publishers, 2006. Presents 6,700+ English words with Persian equivalents and 8,300+ Persian words with English equivalents. Lacks a guide to word stress patterns, alphabetizes Persian words according to Latin transcription, and features many mistakes. A good Persian learner's dictionary remains a desideratum.
- Educational Services Corporation. *Persian (Farsi); Start Speaking Today*. Washington, D.C.: Educational Services Corporation, 1994.
- Elwell-Sutton, L. P. *Colloquial Persian*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1979.
- _____. *Elementary Persian Grammar*. London, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1963. An outdated beginner's guide popular in its day.
- Entezar, Ehsan M. *Dari Grammar and Phrasebook*. Bloomington, IN: Xlibris, 2010. A linguist's introduction to the grammar of the colloquial register of Dari Persian.
- Farzad, Nargess. *Teach Yourself Modern Persian*. New York, NY: McGraw–Hill, 2004. Employs a

- grammar-translation method. Teaches literary/written Persian forms exclusively, even in sample dialogues and conversations. Presents non-authentic texts.
- Hafezian, Mohsen. *Persian Verbs: Morphology and Conjugations*. Montreal, Canada: Multissage, 2009. An English guide to Persian verbs remains a desideratum because of the shortcomings of this study, e.g., its inexact English as a result of inexpert translation from French, its omission of many common one-word verbs, its failure to label verbs as transitive or intransitive, and its mistranslation of many finite verb forms.
- Ghanoonparvar, M.R. *Persian for Beginners: A Textbook for Teaching Adults and Young People*. Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 1985. Exhibits no methodological underpinnings and contains no explanatory material or cultural content.
- Hayward, John. *Understanding Tajiki News*. Enstone, Oxfordshire, UK: WritersWorld, 2004. An intermediate advanced reader with exercises designed to improve newspaper reading skills.
- Hillmann, Michael Craig. *Basic Tajiki Word List*. Springfield, VA: Dunwoody Press, 2003. An elementary guide to reading and vocabulary acquisition and maintenance.
- _____. *Persian Conversation(s)*. Hyattsville, MD: Dunwoody Press, 2012. Contains 90 prompted situational conversations accompanied by language notes, conversation subjects determined by role models exercises identifying Persian language speaking situations and environments in the United States.
- _____. *Persian Grammar and Verbs*. Hyattsville, MD: Dunwoody Press, 2012. Authentic illustrations appear in the discussion of each language feature, and each lesson concludes with an authentic text with a reading of the text on an accompanying CD.
- _____. *Persian Listening*. Hyattsville, MA: Dunwoody Press, 2008. Accompanied by an audio CD with readings of all 130+ texts.
- _____. With Ramin Sarraf. *Persian Newspaper Reader: Second Edition*. Springfield, VA: Dunwoody Press, 2000. For intermediate/advanced students. 40+ authentic texts, translations, glossary, language notes, and audio CD recordings.
- _____. *Persian Reading and Writing*. Hyattsville, MD: Dunwoody Press, 2009. Includes a word-method introduction to the Persian alphabet writing system, models and texts for *naskh*, *tahriri*, *nasta'liq*, and *shekasteh* handwriting styles, and 120+ authentic reading texts with audio recordings of the texts on an accompanying CD.
- _____. *Persian Vocabulary Acquisition—An Intermediate Reader and Guide to Word Forms and the Arabic Element in Persian: Second Edition*. Springfield, VA: Dunwoody Press, 2001. For intermediate/advanced students. Accompanied by an audio CD with readings of all texts.
- _____. *Reading Iran Reading Iranians: Second Edition Revised*. Springfield, VA: Dunwoody Press, 2002. For intermediate/advanced students. Accompanied by an audio CD with readings of all texts.
- _____. *Tajiki Textbook and Reader: Second Edition*. Springfield, VA: Dunwoody Press, 2003. A guide to reading, listening, and appreciation of grammar of the literary/written register of Tajiki Persian. Presents a programmed introduction to reading. Features authentic texts. Accompanied by an audio CD with readings of all texts.
- Jazayeri, Mohammad Ali, and Herbert Paper. *A Reference Grammar of Persian*. 1961. A typewritten manuscript labeled "Not for publication."
- Khalili, Kâmyâr. *Farhang-e Vâzheh'sâzi dar Zabân-e Farsi* [Dictionary of Word Formation in Persian]. 3 volumes. Tehrân: Qasid Sar, 2006.
- Khojayori, Nasrullo. *Tajiki: An Elementary Textbook*. 2 volumes. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2009. Volume 1: xvi, 341p. Volume 2: xvi, 333p. The best available elementary guide, accompanied by two DVDs.
- _____, and Mikael Thompson. *Tajiki Reference Grammar for Beginners*. Washington, D.C.:

- Georgetown University Press, 2009. A basic descriptive grammar of the literary/written register of Tajiki Persian with clear illustrations. Divided into five chapters: (1) Orthography and Phonology, (2) Nominals and Prepositions, (3) Verbs, (4) Adverbs and Particles, and (5) Compound and Complex Sentences.
- Khorrami, M. M. *Elementary Persian; Self-Taught I & II*. New York, NY: Bisotun, 2003.
- Lambton, Ann K.S. *Persian Grammar*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1953; reprinted with corrections in 1957; reprinted in 1996. Accompanied by *Persian Vocabulary* (Cambridge University Press, 1954). Reprinted with and answer key in 2000. *Persian Grammar: Students' Edition*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1971. The most used guide of its sort in its day, now outdated, with exclusive focus on the written/literary register of the language.
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- Stilo, Donald, Kamran Talattof, and Jerome Clinton. *Modern Persian: Spoken and Written*. 2 volumes. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005. A basically audio-lingual guide with not error-free descriptions of culture and features of grammar.

Thackston, Wheeler M. *An Introduction to Persian*. Revised Fourth Edition. Bethesda, MD: Ilex Publishers, 2009 (third revised edition, 1993). Follows in the tradition of grammar-translation teaching manuals by John Boyle, L.P. Elwell- Sutton, Ann Lambton, and John Mace. Its 184-page treatment of "The Grammar of Modern Persian," which focuses exclusively on the literary/written register of Tehran Persian, presents 60 pages of translation, transformation, substitution, and question-and-answer exercises (without answer keys), 35 pages of vocabulary lists, two reading passages, and concluding Persian-English and English-Persian glossaries. I remember reading and enjoying the 1978 edition of Wheeler Thackston's book and thinking that he was likely getting good results through its use in his own Persian classes. I remember reading the 1993 edition and thinking that things had been happening in the cultural and social context of Tehran Persian and to the literary/written register of the language not reflected in the book, and recognizing that the book intended basically to prepare students to read literary/written Persian texts. And recently, in the course of putting finishing touches on *Persian Grammar and Verbs*, I read the 2009 edition of *An Introduction to Persian* and have been wondering if Thackston and I are writing about the same language or share any methodological underpinnings. I do not imply here that Thackston does not accomplish what he sets out to do in *An Introduction to Persian* or that he makes serious mistakes in his treatment of Persian grammar. Thackston's discussion of Persian grammar offers students much food for thought and surely sensitizes them to important issues they should have in the backs of their minds in listening to and reading Persian. His very readable descriptions of specific features and phenomena of nouns in predicate nominative position (p. 16), the specific direct object marker /r/ (35–6), restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses (82–85), and infinitives taking subjects and objects (138–9) hit the mark. Rather, the implication in my wondering about the different Persian languages about which Thackston and I are thinking and writing has to do with the cause-and-effect relation between what he does in his book and his readers take away from his book and what my readers learn as a result of what *Persian Grammar and Verbs* presents and how. For example, almost all of the illustrations of Persian language phenomena and features in *An Introduction to Persian* and almost all of the exercises are artificial, which is to say, they are self-consciously produced by the author to illustrate a language feature. Consequently, they neither offer readers models useful in everyday reading nor do they serve to develop or enhance specific language skills on the part of readers. For example, exercises calling for the translation of artificial English statements into Persian or artificial Persian statements into English, especially since readers will not confront such statements in their Persian reading, would appear not to help students better accomplish any real-world Persian language tasks. Here follow a dozen or so typical sentences for translation in *An Introduction to Persian*. When read aloud, their artificiality and lack of relevant content should seem obvious to Persian teachers and could lead them to wonder why Persianist linguists, grammarians, and textbook writers do not use always authentic examples, so abundant and easily found in printed and recorded texts. Examples are: • *ân bachcheh kistand?* Who are those children? (19) • She hasn't gone to school; she's too little (46). • We found the best book of all in the university library (59). • Why didn't they select the best fruits of the garden for us? (67) • I'll read those few books tonight (91). • Don't listen to his words (105). • I had scarcely come when he turned around and left (105). • This is at least the third time that we are doing this (105). • One can guess that all have gone to sleep (105). • Even the children here seem old; they must have seen a lot of evil (105). • *Khânom, bebakhshid, vaqt ast ke bâ hamdigr khodâhâfezi konim* (168) [literally: Madam, forgive me, it's time for us to say good-bye with each other]. As a second illustration with methodological implications, *An Introduction to Persian* does not treat the colloquial/ spoken register of the language in its 25 lessons on "The Grammar of Modern Persian" (1–186), but rather relegates it to a brief separate section to it called "Colloquial Transformations" (199–207). If, as Gilbert Lazard stated and implied in the 1957 edition of *A Grammar of Contemporary Persian*, the world of Persian operates

concomitantly in literary/written and colloquial/spoken registers, if the colloquial/spoken register may these days be affecting the literary/colloquial register more than vice-versa, if written colloquial/spoken Persian texts are part of the everyday language experience of educated Iranians, and if a naturally communicative classroom or other environment dealing with Persian and Persian learning cannot take place without colloquial/spoken Persian, Persian teachers might reasonably wonder why Persianist grammarians and textbook writers do not present colloquial/spoken Persian forms before or at the same time as literary/ written Persian forms. A third illustration with methodological implications has to do with sources. When a writer of a Persian grammar book says that item X operates in Y fashion in Persian and uses one or more artificial examples to support his or her assertion, readers may wonder on what basis they should accept as fact what the writer has asserted. In the case of *An Introduction to Persian*, issues arise in this regard with respect to the pronunciation of words, the meanings of words, word formation and patterns, and Persian syntax. *An Introduction to Persian* cites no sources for its pronunciation of Persian words and phrases. In the instances cited below, among others, standard Iranian Persian dictionaries record pronunciations different from those recorded in *An Introduction to Persian*. Absent authentic recordings verifiable as typical, writers of Persian instructional materials might at least use as sources standard Persian dictionaries published in Iran, among them these four dictionaries: Hasan Anvari et al., *Farhang-e Bozorg-e Sokhan* [Sokhan Unabridged Dictionary], 8v. (Tehran: Sokhan Publishers, 2003); (2) Mohammad Reza Bateni et al., *Pooya English-Dictionary* (Tehran: Farhang Moaser Publishers, 2008), cited below as FM E-P; (3) Karim Emami, *Kimia Persian-English Dictionary* (Tehran: Farhang Moaser Publishers, 2006), cited below as FM P-E; and (4) G.H. Sadri Afshar et al., *Persian Encyclopedical Dictionary*, 3v. (Tehran: Farhang Moaser Publishers, 2009), cited below as FM P-P. Here follow sample instances in which the standard Farhang Moaser dictionaries record pronunciations different from those in *An Introduction to Persian*.

- *adabiyât* literature, which FM P-P transcribes as *adabiyât*.
- *azal* muscle, which FM P-P transcribes as *azol*.
- *ballur* crystal, which M P-P transcribes as *bol* 晶.
- *bazres* conductor [sic], which FM P-E transcribes as *bzrs* [= inspector]
- *gawj-ye farang* tomato, which FM P-E transcribes as *gowj farang*.
- *gram* gram, which FM P-P transcribes *geram*
- *hendavâne* watermelon, which FM P-E transcribes as *hendevâné*.
- *hivdah* seventeen, which FM P-P transcribes as *hefdah*.
- *hizdah* eighteen, which FM P-P transcribes as *hejdh*.
- *kârt-e e'tebâr* credit card, which FM P-P transcribes as *kârt-e e'tebâri*.
- *tarbiyat-e badan* physical education, which FM P-P transcribes as *tarbiyat badan*.
- *tran* train, which FM P-P transcribes as *tern*
- *tut-e farangi* strawberry, which FM P-E transcribes as *tt farang*.

Here follow sample instances in which the Farhang Moaser dictionaries record English or Persian equivalents different from those in *An Introduction to Persian*.

- *angab* 地 honey., whereas FM E-P cites *asl* as the Persian equivalent for "honey," but not *angab* 地.
- *kangr* cardoon, whereas FM P-E records "thistle" as the English equivalent, and "artichoke" as the equivalent for *kangar farangi*.
- *shebet* dill, whereas FM P-E cites *shevid* for "dill" but not *shebid*.
- *shirini* sweets, to which FM P-E adds "pastry/ pastries" as an English equivalent.
- *overkot* peacoat, whereas FM P-E offers "heavy overcoat" and "car coat" as English equivalents and FM E-P gives *plt* as the Persian equivalent for "overcoat."
- *jelitqe* vest, whereas FM P-P does not record *jelitq*, but does cite *jeliq*, which FM P-E defines as "vest."
- *aynak-e dudi* sunglasses, whereas FM E-P cites the more common *aynk-e ftb* as the only Persian equivalent for "sunglasses."
- *dastshu'i* wash basin, to which FM P-E add "bathroom" (WC) as an English equivalent.
- *dandânpâkkon* toothbrush, while FM E-P gives *mesvâk* as the only Persian equivalent for "toothbrush," and FM P-P does not cite *dandânpâkkon* as a headword.
- *rakhtekhab*sheets, whereas FM P-E cites "bedding" as its English equivalent, and FM E-P records *malâfé* as the Persian equivalent for "sheet(s)."
- *dâneshkadé* faculty, to which FM P-E adds "college" (e.g., liberal arts college or a university division) as an English equivalent. Of course,

for writers of Persian instructional and reference materials, even citation in standard Iranian dictionaries and the testimony of educated native speakers of Persian do not satisfy requirements for sources of something Persian. When educated Persian-speaking colleagues of mine tell me X is how Y is said or written in Tehran, I politely tell them they need to prove their observation or assertion with an authentic recorded or written text. When Persian-speaking colleagues point to a text and identify something in it as "wrong" or "substandard," I express lack of curiosity about what Persian writers and speakers should write and say, and paramount interest in the Persian as educated speakers actually use it. If a grammarian collects authentic examples of a Persian language feature and then frames a description or generalization about that feature exclusively on the basis of the relevant authentic examples, readers can presumably trust the generalization as far as it goes. In contrast, if a grammarian reaches a generalization about a feature of Persian on the basis of anecdotal experience and then creates artificial examples to support the generalization, issues such as the following in *An Introduction to Persian* can arise.

- "...the present stem of almost all ... verbs...whose infinitives end in *-dan* ... (with the notable exception of *shenidan* 'to hear') is obtained by removing the *-id-* ending of the past stem" (60). Note: *chidân* (*chin*) to arrange, set (e.g., table) and *ridn* (*rin*) to defecate.
- "The second- and third-person singular enclitics are commonly pronounced *-et* and */esh*, the older *-at* and *-ash* pronunciations being now somewhat bookish..." (68). Note: FM P-P records only *-am*, *-at*, *-ash*, *-emân*, *-etân*, and *-eshân* as the pronunciations of suffixed forms of these personal pronouns. [Note: Orthographic anomalies, not in the original, occurred with file transfer.]
- "...*ketâb* means both 'the book' (about which we already know something) and 'books' (in general)" (4). Note: FM P-E cites "book" as the English equivalent for *ketâb*. The word presumably means "book" when it appears as a dictionary headword and in phrases such as *yek kerâb* [one book] and *do ketâb*[two of the category of things called "book"]. • "Although ...*man*, *to*, *u* et cetera have other uses, these are basically subject pronouns" (21). Note: Navid Hayeri's *DNPW Corpus of Journalistic Writing, 2004–2010*) reveals that personal pronouns appear more frequently as direct and indirect objects, as objects of prepositions, and as modifiers in *kasr-ye ezâfe* constructions than as subject pronouns.
- "Expressed pronominal subjects are not necessary in Persian since they are implicit in the verb..., [e.g.] 益羊d盈" (33). Note: FM-PP defines *-am*, *-i*, *-ad* etc. endings as connected/suffixed subject pronouns, which makes them explicit and not implicit markers.
- "The passive is used in Persian only when the personal agent is not expressed" (180). Note: *nam esh tavassot-e goruh-e 'te'âtr-e bist-o panj-e shahrivar ejrâ' shod* [The play was performed by the 25th of Shahrivar Theater Group].
- "Not so many Arabic plurals are now in common use...The student's only recourse is the dictionary" (56). Notes: The "Persian-English Vocabulary" section of 1,800 headwords at the end of *An Introduction to Persian* cites approximately 50 so-called broken Arabic plural nouns. In a list of the 5,000 most frequently appearing words in *Hamshahri* daily newspaper (*DNPW1 Corpus of Journalistic Writing, 2004–2010*), alongside scores of so-called regular Arabic loanword nouns ending in the *-ât* pluralizing noun suffix, 140 broken plural noun forms appear. In addition, most of the broken plural noun forms in question exhibit some degree of predictability. For that matter, the Arabic element in Persian goes untreated in *An Introduction to Persian*. Nahvi's already cited *Dictionary of Roots of Arabic Loanwords or Arabic Words Used in Persian* demonstrates the extent and significance of the Arabic element in Persian, while Perry's already cited *Form and Meaning in Persian Vocabulary: The Arabic Feminine Ending* demonstrates its pervasiveness through a thorough its treatment of a single Arabic feature in Persian. *Persian Vocabulary Acquisition: An Intermediate Reader and Guide to Word Forms and the Arabic Element in Persian–Second Edition*

(2003) argues for attention to Arabic loanword forms and patterns from the elementary level of Persian study onward, while *Persian Grammar and Verbs* devotes 120+ pages to a description of those forms and patterns in the context of authentic examples and texts illustrating them.

• "The past perfective narrative tense [*nâreside bude (ast)*]...will not be encountered frequently" (87). Notes: See Sections , 147 and , 148 in Lazard's *A Grammar of Contemporary Persian* and Lesson

33.6 in *Persian Grammar and Verbs*.

• The subjunctive mood in Persian ... always depends in some way upon or follows a primary verb in the indicative mood (107). Notes: *Zud berim t bebinim unj chekabar-e** [Let's hurry so we can see what's going on there]. *Khod konad owzâ' dorost shavad* [May God make things turn out okay].

• The subjunctive mood is used for personal complements of all impersonal verbs and verbal constructions like *bâyad*" (108). Notes: *Bâyad zudtar migoftid* [You should have said (sth) mentioned (it) sooner]. *Nbyad unj miraftid*. [You shouldn't have gone there].

• "There is no sequence of tense in Persian" (117)." Notes: *Goft ke miyâd, va sar-e mowqe' resid ** [He/she said she/he'd come, and he/she arrived on time]. *Migoft ke dar un mo'mel khayli manfa'at karde, váli shakk dêram ** [He/she said she/he'd profited a lot in that transaction, but I have my doubts].

• "Whereas temporal clauses precede the main clause, purpose clauses always follow the main clause" (155). Note: *Barâye inke behtar bâzi konid, bâýad bishtar tamrin konid* [In order to play better, you-2 have to practice more].

• "All substantives (adjectives and nouns) are abstracted by suffixing *-i*. For substantives ending in *-e*, the abstraction is *-gi*" (162). Notes: In words such as *nevisandeg*, the suffix is *-*, while *-g-* serves as a buffer between *-e-* and *-;* in the case of *Farns* [France, French language] *vis--vis farnsav* [French person], */v/* represented by the letter *v* ^خ serves as the buffer sound.

• "*S'at-e chnd ast?* What time is it?" (210). Notes: *S't chand ast* [What time is it (lit: the hour/time is how much)]? *Sa't-e chand residi khun ** [What time/hour did you-1 get home]?

Finally, *An Introduction to Persian* has little Iran-specific content or cultural contextualization of the language features it identifies and describes, e.g., the ubiquitous *ta'âróf* system of polite, respectful, and deferential expressions.

Windfuhr, Gernot L. Editor. *The Iranian Languages*. New York, NY: Routledge–Routledge Language Family Series, 2010.

_____, and Hassan Tehranisa. *Modern Persian: Elementary Level*. Ann Arbor, MI: Department of Near Eastern Studies, University of Michigan, 1981 (revised edition).

Windfuhr, Gernot L. *Modern Persian: Intermediate Level, Volumes 1 and 2*. Ann Arbor, MI: Department of Near Eastern Studies, University of Michigan, 1979.

_____. "Persian." *The World's Major Languages*. Second edition. Edited by Bernard Comrie. New York, NY: Routledge, 2009 (first published in 1987, reprinted with revisions, 1989). Pp. 445–459.

_____. *Persian Grammar: History and State of Its Study*. The Hague: Mouton–Trends in Linguistics State of the Art Reports 12, 1979. Both an analysis of Persian and a survey of writing about Persian up to 1979, perhaps making unnecessary recourse to any writing on the subject prior to 1979.

Yamini Sharif, A. Farsi, *Zabân-e Irân* [Persian, the Language of Iran]. Tehran, Iran: Nashr-e Ravesh-e.

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Among the responses which that second post elicited was an e-message from Yann Richard making useful, albeit not cheering, observations about Persian programs in Europe and these concluding remarks about "A Partially Annotated and unedited Bibliography of Representative Persian Instructional Materials Available in North America...compiled by Michael Craig Hillmann, 050511": "I regret the limitation of Hillmann's comments to American academy. It seems that nothing exists outside the US.

Even I was astonished, reading his...bibliography, to see that Lazard's *Grammaire du Persan contemporain*, new version (2006) is not available in Austin Texas. We sometimes produce good stuff on the old continent, sorry not always in English."

In a 1994 review of Gilbert Lazard's readily accessible *A Grammar of Contemporary Persian*, translation by Shirley A. Lyon (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 1992, 301p), a translation, with corrections and revisions, of *Grammaire du persan contemporain*. (Paris: Klincksieck, 1957), John R. Perry correctly observed: "Lazard's *Grammaire du persan contemporain* has been out since 1957, and has never been surpassed. This translation, with revisions by the author, will at last provide English-speaking students of literary and spoken Persian with a comprehensive reference grammar. Clear distinctions are drawn between literary and vernacular usage," [et cetera]." As for the less readily available new French edition, with Yann Richard, called *Grammaire du persan contemporain: Nouvelle édition* (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters Publishers, 2006), Perry accurately observes in a 2010 review that the new version improves on the 1992 edition and stands as the best reference grammar of Fârsi Persian, particularly useful to advanced students of the language and to Persianists. But he adds that its usefulness to elementary and intermediate American students of Persian is limited because most of them do not know French. For example, the only foreign language which most undergraduate students at The University of Texas can read when they register for a Persian language class is Spanish.

Another response to "A Partially Annotated and Unedited Bibliography of Representative Persian Instructional Materials Available in North America" came from Simin Mohajer who wrote in part: "I believe for some reason you forgot to include in in your list our book *Learning Persian Book One* and *Learning Persian Book Two and Three* authored by Simin Mohajer, Mahvash Shahegh and Farima Mostowfi. Therefore, I am passing along to you information regarding these two volumes that are currently taught at Georgetown University and American University and used as recommended book in other universities in this area, and hope you will update your list in the future."

The preface to *Persian Grammar and Verbs* (2012) reviews existing guides to Persian grammar as a preliminary to a description of the scope and method in that book, while the preface to *Persian Conversation(s)* (2013) reviews existing guides to that subject preliminary to a description of that book's scope and method. In both cases, I wanted to make certain to practice something I've long preached to myself: that we writers of Persian instructional materials need to do a better job of taking into account existing Persian instructional materials when writing our own wheel-reinventing materials. Historically, Persian instructors and professors in most American university Persian language programs (e.g., Harvard, Columbia, NYU, Princeton, Penn, Michigan, Texas, Utah, UCLA, Berkeley, and U Washington) have designed and used materials of their own without citation of other materials or mention of specific reasons why they have felt the need to write another Persian manual. At least four new elementary Persian textbooks by university Persianists are scheduled for publication in America between 1 October 2011 and 30 September 2012. Fortunately, in the case of *Learning Persian*, I still have time to learn from it in putting the final touches on *Persian Conversation(s)*. And *Learning Persian* will appear in future versions of "A Partially Annotated and Unedited Bibliography of Representative Persian Instructional Materials Available in North America," along with a blurb that summarizes the following description of the two-volume textbook which is based—*caveant lectores*—only on a perusal of its prefatory materials and the first lesson in each volume.

• Mohajer, Simin, Mahvash Shahegh, and Farima Mostowfi. *Learning Persian Book One*. Bethesda, MD: Ibex Books, 2007. 240p. Mohajer, Simin and Mahvash Shahegh. *Learning Persian Books Two and Three*. Bethesda, MD: Ibex Books, 2010. 284p. Accompanied by CDs which offer "audio segments."

Learning Persian Book One contains fifteen lessons each consisting of a list of lesson aims (e.g., Lesson 1: subject–the first day of class, grammar–sentence structure, the *ezâfé* construction, and the connecting verb “to be,” letters–look at the alphabet), a situational dialogue, questions, and exercises (e.g., comprehension and completion, but without answer keys). The table of contents identifies the fifteen conversation situations as: (1) first day of class, (2) two students meet, (3) at the college coffee shop, (4) at the college bookstore, (5) preparing for Sima's birthday, (6) Sima's birthday party, (7) summer trip to Canada 1, (8) summer trip to Canada 2, (9) travel agency, (10) doctor's appointment, (11) at the doctor's office, (12) Linda's trip to England, (13) the historical city of Isfahan, (14) New Year's ceremonies, and (15) my mother is like a flower. Following the fifteen lessons are units on: "The Persian Alphabet," Persian sections on the "grammar for" each lesson (“for the instructors not for the students”), "Sample Conjugation of Verbs," "Irregular Verbs," "Glossary of Grammar Terms," and "English Introduction."

The English Introduction states that the "method" in *Learning Persian* is "direct (i.e., presented solely in Persian)." Consequently, the content of the book's dialogues appears in Perso-Arabic script only, without English translations or comprehensive Persian-English glossaries or accompanying explanatory language or cultural notes in English. Moreover, the dialogues do not feature any Perso-Arabic guidance to pronunciation in words and phrases (e.g., short vowel marks) or any phonetic transcriptions of Persian words or phrases to serve as a guide to Persian stress patterns in words and phrases.

As for the content of the fifteen dialogues in *Learning Persian Book One*, the selection of the cited subjects does not seem to derive from any role model exercises to define the situations in which American university learners of Persian need or can use Persian. Here is a list in alphabetical order of role-model-based conversations and subjects arguably suitable for a first-year university Persian course: (1) acquaintance, talking about a mutual, (2) apologies, (3) borrowing things, (4) buying things, (5) classroom objects and life, (6) computers and accessing Persian web sites, (7) condolences and sympathy, expression of, (8) congratulations, (9) daily activities, (10) dinner at an Iranian(-American)'s, (11) education, one's, (12) family, talking about one's own, (13), future plans, immediate, (14) indisposition, describing one's, (15) introduction, (16) language, talking about (17) likes and dislikes, talking about, (18) lunch at an Iranian(-American) restaurant, (19) nationality, inquiring/talking about, (20) occupations, talking about one's and others', (21) residence, talking about one's, (22) telephone, talking on the, (23), textbook, negotiating one's language, (24), things, questions about, (25) trip, back from a, (26) weather and climate, (27) whereabouts, people's, and (28) words, talking about the meanings of. The phrase "arguably suitable" as a characterization of the just cited subjects and situations implies that whatever subjects textbook writers choose, readers might want to see an explicit rationale for their choices. The attached pdf file called “Notes on Persian Teaching” offers some of the thinking that has gone into my Persian language syllabus and course designs.

Also on the matter of dialogue content in *Learning Persian Book One*, all fifteen dialogues are artificial (i.e., neither authentic nor prompted) and appear transcribed in a literary/written register which Persian speakers do not use in the conversation situations in question, rather than a colloquial/spoken register which they do use. On the latter score, author Simin Mohajer offers this rationale: “The reason for using *neveshtari* [written] versus *goftari* [spoken] is because it is easier for elementary students to look in the dictionary and find the meaning of the word that they might not know, and it would be easier for them to read other Persian books as well, when they know the *neveshtari*. We introduced a sentence in *goftari* form at the end of each lesson and instructors should practice those in class and explain differences logically. It would be much more difficult to explain the entire

dialogue instead of one sentence at the time...I am certain all of changes from *neveshtari* to *goftari* need thorough explanation and clarification. [In addition], the language of radio and television is formal *neveshtari* and students listen to news frequently in my classes.”

As for *Learning Persian Book Two and Three*, it contains 26 lessons entitled: (1) breakfast at Simin’s house, (2) Iranian days and months, (3) predicting Tehran’s weather, (4) Linda and Bizhan at Pardis restaurant, (5) graduate celebration for Tom, Bizhan, and his sister Zhaleh, (6) calendars, (7) jokes and satire, (8) recipe for cooking rice, (9) the province of Fars, (10) the province of Khuzestan, (11) Persian class students at an Iranian grocery store, (12) Toronto, (13) Los Angeles, (14) Linda and Tom at an Iranian bookstore, (15) Omar Khayyam, an Iranian poet, astronomer and mathematician, (16) opening a bank account, (17) Bizhan’s conversation/interview with an Iranian merchant, (18) Bizhan and Linda at a concert of traditional Iranian music, (19) getting acquainted with Sadegh Hedayat, a/the famous Iranian writer of fiction, (20) an Iranian family in America, (21) important Iranian celebrations/festivals, (22) several Iranian proverbs (e.g., *har ân kas ke dandân dahad nân dahad*, translated as “There is always bread to an open mouth”), (23) Sima and Kaveh’s wedding, (24) Iraj Mirza’s poem called “Mother,” (25) Cyrus the Great, (26) Iran and the Islamic Revolution.

No doubt the authors of *Learning Persian* get good results in their Persian courses at American University, Johns Hopkins University, Georgetown University, or elsewhere, despite the fact that the methodological premises and content in *Learning Persian* could not differ more from the methods and content in the materials I use in teaching Persian language courses, as implied in the annotations in “A Partially Annotated and Unedited Bibliography of Representative Persian Instructional Materials Available in North America” and described in the attached “Notes on Ideas about Teaching Persian” and illustrated in *Persian Listening, Persian Reading and Writing, Persian Grammar and Verbs* (in press), and *Persian Conversation(s)* (2013, with sample lessons now available on request). In Tehran, at The Academy of Language I had a handful of advanced-level students who had learned Persian under the tutelage of Anne Lambton and had used her *Persian Grammar* as their course textbook. Those individuals were the best prepared English-speaking Persian students in Tehran despite the fact that I could not have done an effective job of teaching elementary or intermediate Persian using *Persian Grammar* and would not have recommended the book to any other teachers or, for that matter, learners. In the case of *Learning Persian*, its authors doubtless make adjustments in classroom activities and in homework assignments that make their teaching methodologically eclectic and effective. But the fact that their not user-friendly textbook does not exhibit eclecticism and the fact that it rests on debatable methodological assumptions may mean that many learners may find the going difficult unless they participate in the authors’ classes.

In response to the foregoing solicited blurb on *Learning Persian* (2007, 2010) posted at aatpers@gmail.com, coauthor Mahvash Shahegh, submitted this post to aatpers@gmail.com (emphasis added): [1] “One should keep in mind that these books [*Learning Persian*] were written by three native instructors, of whom each has nearly 30 years of experience in teaching the Persian and working with the language... Yes, we composed [i.e., wrote ”artificial” texts] because what we NATIVE INSTRUCTORS write should be considered “AUTHENTIC”. Usage of authentic materials is for THE NON-NATIVES whose PERSIAN MAY NOT MEASURE UP and must cut and paste. This is the reasoning behind individuals using authentic materials... [2] Yes, we have not used the ENGLISH LANGUAGE [in the textbook] as A CRUTCH for our students. Using English was not a problem for any of us...the purpose of this book was to address gaps in the direct method. We felt that this gap should be filled and the result is *Learning Persian*... HAD you [HILLMANN] READ THE PREFACE of the book, you [Hillmann] would have realized that there, we clearly addressed our method and gave

suggestions to our colleagues on how to properly use the book...If our colleagues read our suggestions, they can do what we can. [3] Your [Hillmann's] other criticism was a selection of topics discussed in our books. In response to that, I have to mention that it is our 30 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE working with students which has GUIDED US IN OUR CHOOSING OF TOPICS.”

Then, in response to an e-message sent to *Learning Persian* coauthor Simin Mohajer, which she shared with coauthor Mahvash Shahegh and AATP, the latter posted this at aatpers@gmail.com: “Dear colleagues, I trust all of you know the story of *âhangar* and *mesgar*. I wrote a response to Prof. Hillman's [sic] critique of our books, *Learning Persian*, and he responded to Ms. Mohajer. You should read *hadis-e mofassal az een mojmâl*." [Hillmann:] “I've just seen the AATP post on your book, which now has as much publicity as any Persian textbook on the market. I regret that my solicited blurb on the book has caused discomfiture, especially the word ‘artificial’, which I was using as a technical, and not a value, term, as opposed to ‘prompted’ and ‘authentic’. In other words, some "authentic" texts may have less utility than some ‘artificial’.”

Here follow comments, numbered according to the numbers added to Mahvash Shahegh’s first post at aatpers@gmail.com, in further explanation of “authentic” and of my take on that first post.

1.1. The terms “artificial,” “prompted,” and “authentic” can define three sorts of target language texts, respectively: (1) texts which textbook writers self-consciously produce for students to read or listen to or practice in conversation, (2) texts which textbook writers produce or the production of which they orchestrate in simulated situations, perhaps with a guiding scenario, but without a text and without specific awareness of their ultimate use in a textbook, and (3) texts which native speakers produce in ordinary discourse. In other words, the term “artificial” can objectively describe a sort of text, which may or not prove as natural or efficacious as a prompted or authentic target-language text.

1.2. The assertion that whatever native speakers of Persian write should be considered authentic could encourage a conversation among AATP members about the ramifications of native-speakerism that figure in the views of some Persian language instructors.

1.3. The assertion that the use of authentic materials is for the non-natives whose Persian may not measure up and must cut and paste both relates to Item 1.2 and could call for reflection on the part of AATP members in the light of the fact that standard textbooks of Spanish and French written by native speakers for speakers of English and standard textbooks of English written by native speakers privilege authentic texts from day one onward.

1.4. The assertion that 30 years of Persian language teaching experience should count in the responses of others to publications by persons with such experience could lead to conversation among AATP members as to whether or not author experience per se lends any authority to the content and methodology in specific Persian textbooks. If it did, logic might dictate that the authors of *Persian Learning* defer to the views and textbooks of Persian language instructors at five or six American universities longer in the tooth than they are.

2.1. As for the assertion that the “preface of the book” gives a clear statement of the book’s methods with suggestions “on how to properly use the book,” AATP readers can judge for themselves. For example, they could look in the preface for any statement of method with respect to the instruction of the rudiments of Persian reading or any methodologically driven suggestions as to how to teach reading from day one onward.

2.2. The term “direct method” need not imply that a learner’s native language should not appear in instructional materials, nor does it imply that the use of English in a textbook either reduces the amount of target-language materials in a textbook or that it serves as a crutch. First, if all communication in class takes place in Persian between and instructors and students, English will not serve as a crutch of any sort for students. Second, if a Persian textbook includes grammar notes in English for self-study (but not for discussion in class), no diminution in “direct methodology” would obtain in class. Parenthetically, grammar instruction can also take place in class in accordance with direct methodology if an instructor leads students to inductive conclusions about a specific feature or pattern through illustrations of it in an authentic text. Third, if Textbook A has 1,500 lines of Persian texts in it and no English, and Textbook B has 2,500 lines of Persian texts in it and 2,500 lines of English in it, Textbook B offers students greater exposure to Persian. Fourth, if a Persian course has the development of facility in using a standard Persian-English dictionary or a standard English-Persian dictionary as a performance goal, English would have to figure in syllabus or textbook materials.

3. Without the development of role model exercises defining situations in which American learners of Persian either can or need to use Persian—the American Peace Corps in Iran used this method in defining the contents of Persian materials for pre-service training programs—, textbook writers may not have a means or a reliable mental check list to use to recognize whether or not a significant situation has not figured in a given syllabus or that a relatively insignificant situation has. For that reason, the preface to my *Persian Conversation(s)* (2012) presents and emphasizes the results of two role model exercises, one for on-the-job and the other for off-the-job situations in which American learners in larger American cities will have occasion to hear and speak Persian, and the textbook’s sixty-two artificial, prompted, and authentic texts are conversations reflecting those subjects and situations and recorded in colloquial/spoken Persian on audio files and transcribed in Perso-Arabic script exactly as recorded

The citation of *Persian Conversation(s)* raises another issue, the possibility of a vested interest on my part in touting my own Persian textbooks and in writing negative critiques of other textbooks. Insofar as Dunwoody Press, the publisher of the bulk of the Persian instructional materials with my name on the cover, appears to have a primary interest in meeting the self-study needs of English-speaking students of Persian at an advanced level (usually beyond the skill levels of 3rd-year, non-heritage American university students at least in the areas of listening and speaking Persian), books such as *Persian Fiction Reader: Second Edition* (2000), *Persian Newspaper Reader: Second Edition* (2000), *Reading Iran Reading Iranians: Third Edition* (2012), and *Persian Vocabulary Acquisition: Third Edition* (2012), do not compete with any 1st- or 2nd-year Persian teaching manuals and usually find their way into university Persian courses only as ancillary materials. As for books such as *Persian Listening* (2008), *Persian Reading* (2010), *Persian Grammar and Verbs* (2012), and *Persian Conversation(s)* (2013) that feature beginning and elementary materials in them, they are designed for use in intensive language-learning session (= 4+ contact hours per day) which treat listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills discretely. Of course, the citation here of these titles may raise another issue, that their very citation constitutes public relations on my part to enhance sales of the books. But, to avoid a conflict of interest on this score, I have not published any Persian instructional materials to date with contracts calling for author royalties but, rather, write such books for a flat, up-front fee.

4. Foreign Language Teaching Methods and Teaching Persian

At the beginning of every Persian language course of mine, whether a First-, Second-, or Third-year American university course or a non-academic intermediate or advanced intensive course for American government Persian specialists, course participants receive the latest version of the following,

occasionally updated "Notes on Ideas about Teaching Persian." The first part presents the personal take on foreign language teaching methods which my Persian textbooks and readers exhibit, e.g., *Tajiki Textbook and Reader: Second Edition* (2003), *Persian Listening* (2008), and *Persian Reading* (2010). The second part presents a check list of features of a Persian course syllabus, instructional materials, classroom activities, assignments, and assessment procedures which strike me as almost necessary in any successful Persian language course of mine for adult American learners. The third part...

When writing a Persian lesson or when planning a Persian, I first ask myself this two-part question: Does the lesson or class session in question have as its goal that students "learn" some Persian, which is to say end up "knowing" some Persian they did not previously "know," or does the lesson or class session have as its goal that students come away from it having the skill to do something in Persian.

An example of a goal of student "learning" or "knowing" some Persian or of learning an amount of Persian would be classic Persian poems. Because Persian poetry is important for many Iranians in everyday life and interaction, my elementary and intermediate Persian lessons include classic pre-modern and modern poems. One method of "teaching" such texts, not unlike how Latin teachers teach Latin poems, might involve discussion of the **grammar** of everything in the text and teasing out the meaning of the text through paraphrase or **translation**. The goal in teaching such a text is not that students come away from the lesson or class with the skill to read others texts similar to the text in question, but rather that they "know" that text permanently, which is to say, that they can read it again and again in the future and enjoy it.

As for the majority of authentic reading texts, which are not classic or memorable, and listening texts and predictable speaking situations in which variability and creativity play parts, other sorts of lessons and lesson plans naturally come into play. All other things being equal (and they rarely or never are), it would appear to make sense that Persian students get exposed to and learn to deal with Persian in their course materials and classrooms in somewhat the same ways as they encounter Persian in the world outside textbooks and classrooms through **methods** that expose them to Persian **directly**, helping students to develop skill at inducing meaning from unglossed, unexplained language they read and hear. This approach calls for a Persian-only classroom environment and, for example, introducing new vocabulary in context or through demonstration without translation.

In the case of Persian phraseology and sentence patterns which are new to American speakers of English or which involve different forms and structures than exist in English, this direct approach to teaching Persian can lead to textbook and classroom activities focussing on Persian grammar, presenting it through oral models which students reproduce, this **audio-lingual** process leading to student appreciation of the morphology and/or syntax of Persian material organized to lead to such inductive appreciation and to development of incipient good habits with respect of Persian phrase and sentence patterns and comprehensible Persian pronunciation. A Persian-only environment, minimal discussion of grammar (perhaps relegated to printed materials for selfstudy), classroom or language laboratory or computer-based drills (repetition, substitution, transformation, etc.) are hallmarks of this approach, through memorization and drilling, no discussion of grammar, repetition, substitution, transformation, habit-forming, which would appear useful for students in learning mathematical operations and calculations and set phrases and sentence patterns, for example, those phrases and statements in the system of polite/ respectful/ deferential verbiage called *ta'rof* that are set, i.e., and often occurring in a set statement-response exchange.

American students of Persian seem to me to participate more enthusiastically and efficiently in Persian language settings when they get absorbed in a particular text, situation, interaction, or task and are focussed on it without primary consciousness of either Persian as foreign or learning Persian as the task at hand. Those same students often seem to me to appreciate Persian grammar and acquire new vocabulary more quickly when classes deal with subjects that happen to be in Persian rather than Persian

which happens to be the language of a particular subject. Consequently, my Second-year Persian course is designed as an Iranian geography course and makes use of a junior high school Iranian geography textbook, Iranian maps, and a relevant geographical dictionary. The course description informs students that their Persian course grade depends upon their level of mastery of Iranian geography, with listening, speaking, and reading assessment procedures in Persian. After only a session or two, these students, who usually have no background in geography, appear to forget that they are listening to or speaking or reading Persian as they try to find a place on a map, to identify the capital city of North Khorasan Province, to describe the multiple sorts of transportation access to Bandar Abbas, or to characterize Qashqa'i migration routes. At the same time, geography as a subject lends itself naturally to a lesson plan in which discrete class activities take no more than ten or so minutes each. Meanwhile, imbedded in the course materials of this **immersion** in geography are authentic examples of the phrase and sentences patterns, vocabulary, and cultural content of a Second-year Persian course, whether achievement or performance in aims.

In a sense, mastering Iranian geography in such a course means interaction of students with one another (American competition not the least of the motivating factors) and with oral and written texts. But the context for this interaction is limited basically to the classroom. Not that such a context is a bad thing. If students early on learn how to negotiate a classroom in Persian, perform in Persian all of the possible actions therein, and interact effectively in Persian with everyone in the room, that can serve them as a confidence-building experience in dealing with other unfamiliar settings and interaction situations. *English/Farsi Oxford Picture Dictionary: Second Edition* (2009), *Basic Tajik(i) Word List* (2003), and *Basic Farsi Word List* (in manuscript, 2011) show how rich a Persian interaction setting a language classroom can be. Nevertheless, American learners of Persian need or want to deal with many more important specific Persian contexts and need to have the skills to accomplish specific tasks in those contexts.

Moreover, outside of the language classroom, details and specifics of predictable Persian verbal interactions are not predictable. That unpredictability, part of it the great variety of ways in which Persian verbal communication in even the most straightforward settings with the least complicated purposes can take place even, calls for materials and teaching which help students develop **competence** in Persian **communication**. That means helping students use language creatively in communicating meaning. That in turn translates into lessons privileging authentic texts, a Persian-only classroom environment, and classroom activities which both connect the classroom to an outside Persian-speaking world and introduce and practice the sorts of verbal interaction in which students have to or want to participate in that world. Typical of such activities are: role playing, interviewing, games of various sorts, and students working in pairs. *Persian Conversations* (in manuscript, scheduled for publication by Dunwoody Press in 2012) features 70 situational conversations, each of them related to an explicit notional–functional basis.

The **words in bold script** above imply methodological eclecticism on my part in Persian lesson design and implementation. In other words, I choose specific methods to suit materials and goals rather adjust materials and goals to suit methodological preferences. At the same outlines and describes personal views and experiences and not constitute an argument or a proposition for readers to accept. The same holds for the following check list of features of a Persian language course that I find essential in any of my Persian courses to get intended results. In other words, other Persian teachers may reach their desired goals in courses exhibiting different features. Here follows a check list of features in successful Persian language courses of mine.

1. written course description with stated aims combining proficiency and performance components; i.e., aims relating both to development of reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills (proficiency), and to carrying out predictable real-world language tasks (performance).
2. A syllabus explicitly designed for the specific student population taking the course; e.g., (1)

Iranian heritage students or Americans without exposure to Iranian culture, (2) undergraduate or graduate students, (3) foreign language requirement students, (3) area studies students, (4) Persian Studies students, and (5) academic or non-academic students.

3. Instructional materials relating to the environment where students will most likely use Persian; e.g., a large American city, an American government office or organization, an academic community, at home, or Iran.
4. Up-to-date instructional materials; i.e., texts, textbooks, and dictionaries written after the late 1990s.
5. Accessibility of textbook materials on a course web site or Blackboard and in computer-assisted instruction format for self-study review.
6. A preponderance of authentic materials in syllabi and textbooks; i.e., texts spoken and written by native speakers of Persian in communication among themselves in Iran and America (rather than texts written specifically for students and textbook lessons).
7. Syllabus and textbook lessons with stated proficiency and performance aims and exercises and activities which practice specific language skills.
8. Printed English translations and Persian-English glossaries for Persian course texts, for use in self-study.
9. Audio and video cassette or CD/VCD recordings of Persian course texts for use in self-study.
10. Workbook exercises for self-study review of textbook lessons.
11. Use of Persian as the language of communication in class.
12. Syllabus attention to Persian resources on the Internet (e.g., BBC Persian and IRNA).
13. Syllabus attention to (e.g., practice in the use of) Persian-English, English-Persian, and Persian-Persian dictionaries.
14. Syllabus attention to local community Persian language opportunities.
15. Integration into instructional materials of cultural information on Iranian life in Iran and America.
16. Textbook and classroom presentation of examples of language features and phenomena and consequent student inductive reasoning in response to questions about language forms and patterns, rather than classroom discussion of morphology and syntax.
17. Textbook explanations of morphology and syntax which do not oblige students to have prior knowledge of or to learn technical grammar or linguistic terms.
18. Regular course tests based on current testing methodology and coordinated with specific instructional materials and specific language skills; e.g., no tests emphasizing translation (except in courses designed to teach translation skills) or identification of aspects of grammar (except in grammar courses).
19. Use of tests primarily as a learning and diagnostic tool and only marginally as a grading device.
20. Scheduling of optional remedial or review sessions.
21. Scheduling of outside-of-class conversation practice sessions.
22. Scheduling of optional extracurricular social activities with Persian language situations.
23. Syllabus attention to the maintenance and improvement of language skills after completion of a course or course sequence.

Here follows a description of the goals and methods of an elementary Persian course for English-speaking, Iranian heritage university students. In the first class session, students receive a copy of the description.

• This field-tested **proficiency-based course of 90 classroom contact hours and 180+ self-study hours** intends to meet projected needs of Iranian heritage university students who have had prior exposure to Persian speaking and listening, but who cannot read or write Persian.

- Successful course participants have by the end of the course the reading and writing **skills** to:
 1. Locate materials in their language syllabus in response to directions in Persian;
 2. Take notes on Persian words, phrases, and statements;
 3. Perform adequately on daily dictation exercises mostly highlighting anomalies in the Persian writing system;
 4. Perform arithmetic functions in Persian (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division);
 5. Recite the Persian alphabet in order as a skill to facilitate dictionary use;
 6. Recognize Persian noun phrase patterns in context;
 7. Appreciate word patterns and word formation techniques in native Persian and Arabic loanword vocabulary;
 8. Distinguish among the functions and uses of Persian verb tenses and moods in context;
 9. Describe in writing chief events in their lives (making use of appropriate past tense verb forms);
 10. Describe in writing their chief daily activities;
 11. Describe in writing likes and dislikes (making use of subjunctive mood verbs);
 12. Describe in writing personal and professional plans;
 13. Exhibit in dealing with reading texts on general subjects control over the 1,500 most common Persian words;
 14. Read shorter new items, public announcements, and advertisements;
 15. Read shorter straightforward descriptions of persons, places, and things;
 16. Read general-audience essays and newspaper articles on subjects of student interest;
 17. Write a letter or essay on Items 7, 8, 9, and 10 (above);
 18. Exhibit on a written review test the familiarity with geography expected of an Iranian 5th grader in Iran;
 19. Use efficiently basic Persian-language computer web sites, including news, dictionary, and social networking sites; and
 20. Begin using an up-to-date Persian-English dictionary.

The course **syllabus and course resources** consist of:

1. A printed programmed, word-method guide to the Persian writing system, which encourages learners to read words by recognizing clusters of letters reminding them of already familiar English and French loan words in printed and handwritten *naskh* scripts. Online and CD audio files accompany the printed Persian writing guide.
2. A printed Persian-English and English-Persian, corpus-based, threshold reading, listening, and speaking word list of 4,000+ of the most commonly used words in Persian, from which guide come daily dictation exercises which students self-correct by checking their answers in the guide. Entries for all headwords in the Persian-English word list feature examples in the literary/written and colloquial/spoken registers of common headword uses. Online and CD audio files accompany the printed word list.
3. Copies of an up-to-date Gitashenasi Persian-language map of Iran for almost daily in-class reading activities.
3. Printed syllabus units with exercises to help students develop skills in writing Persian, first in basic *naskh* and *tahriri* scripts and then in *nasta'liq* script.
4. Printed syllabus units consisting of pre-reading, reading, and reading practice activities and authentic texts presenting the sorts of written Persian part of everyday life in Iranian-American communities; e.g., advertisements, application forms, announcements, restaurant menus, personal and business notes and letters, short news items, and general short newspaper and magazine articles. Students develop scanning, skimming, and gisting skills in engaging in elementary to mid-intermediate reading activities with such texts. Through close and loose imitation, students also develop intermediate skills in Persian composition. Online and CD audio files accompany all reading syllabus units.

5. Upwards of fifty printed intermediate Persian reading units for self-study use by course participants after completion of the course with online or CD audio files accompanying all units.
6. The availability of copies of Karim Emami's *Kimia Persian-English Dictionary* for students interested in using a Persian-English dictionary after completion of the course.