Routine Politeness Formulae in Persian: A Socio-Lexical Analysis of Greetings, Leave-taking, Apologizing, Thanking and Requesting

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Abstract

Speakers of Persian, like speakers of other languages, utilise Routine Politeness Formulae (RPF) to negotiate central interpersonal interactions. RPF in Persian have not received any systematic description as to their forms, their functions, their typical conditions of use and their discourse structure rules. Bridging this gap, for the first time, RPF from five frequently-used speech acts – namely, greeting, leave-taking, apologizing, thanking and requesting – are documented in this thesis.

Data were derived from Persian soap operas and from role-plays with native speakers, and were entered into a database for further analysis. The analysis is qualitative and the data are conceived of as phraseological units to be represented as dictionary entries.

The study of the aforementioned speech acts and their related array of RPF reveals the dynamics of interpersonal polite behaviour among Persians, reflecting the following socio-cultural values prevalent in Iranian society: (i) its group-oriented nature, (ii) a tendency towards positive (solidarity) politeness, (iii) sensitivity to remaining in people's debt, (iv) sensitivity to giving trouble to others, (v) a high premium on reciprocity in interpersonal communications, (vi) the importance of seniority in terms of age and social status, and (vii) differentiation between members of the 'inner circle' and the 'outer circle'. This thesis also reveals the dominance of the strategy of self-lowering and other-elevating. Almost all RPF in Persian allow for the use of this pervasive strategy, which is also manifested by two further sub-strategies: (i) a propensity to exaggerate favours received from others, and (ii) giving precedence to others over oneself. Finally, it is suggested that Islamic teachings have significantly influenced the formation and use of certain RPF.

The dictionary resulting from this work can serve as a resource for researchers in sociolinguistics and pragmatics, and for the teaching of Persian to non-Persian speakers.

Keywords: Politeness Formulae in Persian; Formulaic Language; Phraseology; Lexicography; Sociolinguistics; Pragmatics; Intercultural Communication.

This thesis is dedicated to:

My parents,

Aryan, Khorshid, Mehrshad, Armita and Artin

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List of Abbreviations and Symbols

ALT – Announcing leave-taking formulae

ARs – Apology responders

CC –Conversational contract

CCSARP – Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization

CofP – Communities of practice

DCT – Discourse completion test/task

FTA – Face threatening act

GGEs – generic gratitude expressions

HA – head act

INT – Intensifiers

IFIDs – Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices

lit – literal translation

LT – Leave-taking

LTM – Long term memory

NEE – No English equivalent

PLIs – Phrasal lexical items

RPD – Role-Play Data

RPF – Routine Politeness Formulae

SOD – Soap Opera Data

STM – Short term memory

TLT – Terminal Leave-Taking

TP – Tehrani Persian

VOC – Vocatives (or terms of address)

 () – optional discourse constituent(s)

{} – alternative discourse constituents

/ – alternative separator

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Foreword

The conversational routines such as 'How do you do?', 'I'm sorry', 'Hello', etc., which are associated with a specific function or standardized communication situation, have attracted the attention of linguists (Aijmer, 1996, p. 1). Ferguson (1976) refers to such interpersonal verbal routines as "little snippets of ritual", or politeness formulae, which are prolifically employed in daily encounters (p. 137). The capacity to use politeness formulae appropriately is an important element of our social and linguistic competence.

Learning a new language is not simply a matter of mastering its grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Learning the rules of appropriateness, i.e., to say the right thing to the right person at the right time (see Saville-Troike, 1989), or simply to speak idiomatically (see Pawley & Syder, 1983), is also important. A considerable part of learning the rules of appropriateness or speaking idiomatically is, among other things, to know how to use routine politeness formulae (RPF) in daily social interactions.

As Iran is a relatively traditional society, where the norms have changed little over the centuries, one can expect to observe many RPF in the linguistic repertoire of Persian speakers. Like other languages, e.g., English (see Pawley, 2009, p. 8), the number of RPF known to a competent mature speaker of Persian may run into the hundreds; however, as we shall see in this thesis, there has previously been little work on their forms, discourse functions, discourse contexts, appropriate conditions of use, patterns of response and discourse structure rules.

1.2 Why should RPFs matter?

Conventional formulae (including RPF) have strategic functions in discourse and social interaction (Pawley, 2007, p. 19), i.e., they do particular work for a speaker in a given situation (Kuiper, 1996, p. 16). These common repetitive expressions are central to social life (Kuiper, 2009, p. 59) and they are essential in the handling of day-to-day situations (Coulmas, 1981a, p. 4). The presence of conventional formulae in our daily social life is pervasive. Apart from certain American Indian societies such as the Western Apaches (see

Basso, 1972), it is hard to find a human society where, for example, people come together or leave each other's company without acknowledging those arrivals or departures verbally and/or non-verbally. Similarly, it would be hard to imagine a society where somebody spills coffee on someone's shirt at a formal function and simply leaves the scene without offering any words of apology and/or without exhibiting any body language signals denoting apology (e.g., gestures, facial expressions). Conventional formulaic expressions used by speakers of a language as markers of politeness for such purposes as greeting, leave taking, apologizing, etc. have an important role in maintaining and facilitating social relationships, social bonding and cohesion among people. Such common speech acts are usually associated with an array of conventional formulaic expressions, also known as "speech act expressions" (Pawley, n.d., p. 1), which usually possess a canonical form and a number of variants.

The importance of politeness formulae becomes clear when they are omitted or not properly acknowledged in daily social interactions (Ferguson, 1976, pp. 140-1). Imagine a hypothetical situation, for example, in which a person enters his/her workplace. In the corridor, a colleague greets him/her with 'Hi', 'How's it going?', but s/he does not reply verbally and simply smiles and passes by. Later on in the day, another colleague provides him/her with a cup of tea, but s/he simply smiles back and leaves the table without thanking or bidding the colleague farewell. What would be the result of this kind of behaviour in real life? Interestingly, Charles Ferguson (1976) performed this unusual experiment on his secretary for a short time. He withheld verbal replies to his secretary's greetings of 'good morning' for two days. Instead, he smiled back in a friendly way, and behaved as per usual throughout the day. Ferguson (1976) writes, "That second day was full of tension. I got strange looks not only from the secretary but from several others on the staff, and there was a definite air of *What's the matter with Ferguson?*" (italics mine) (p.140). He (1976) adds, "I abandoned the experiment on the third day because I was afraid of the explosion and possible lasting consequences" (p.140). Where did our hypothetical person and the sociolinguist Charles Ferguson fail socially? They failed to use RPF in their interactions with others.

1.3 Politeness and RPF

A human society may be thought of simply as individuals who are connected to each other in many different ways and are engaged in a range of broad cooperative activities (see Lenski &

Lenski, 1982). The continued existence and well-being of the society is, then, bound to the ways that members of the society treat each other in everyday social interactions.

All human societies, irrespective of how traditional or modern they might be, are believed to have developed certain mechanisms to control and regulate daily interactions among its members. These are known as rules of etiquette and courtesy, or more technically, rules of politeness. Generally speaking, politeness entails the application of good manners and "involves taking account of the feelings of others" (Holmes, 2008, p. 281). Politeness can be realized via non-linguistic and/or linguistic devices. For example, a considerate person who leaves the door open behind himself/herself to let others pass through performs a polite act. Similarly, a person who precedes his/her request with a politeness marker (e.g., *please*) shows politeness, although suprasegmental features such as intonation and tone of voice also matter (see Holmes, 2008). Therefore, politeness phenomena are important for achieving social cohesion and harmony and, in all known human societies, they are implemented through linguistic (e.g., lexicon and morphology) and non-linguistic devices (e.g., body language or even silence). Further, in all known languages, routine politeness formulae, as a subgroup of phrasal lexical items (PLIs) and as a linguistic device, are partly responsible for enacting politeness. That being so, the question then arises as to how RPF are acquired.

1.4 RPF in first and second language acquisition

In recent decades, the role of conventional expressions in measuring command of language has attracted scholars from fields such as first and second language acquisition (see Pawley, 2009). A native speaker of a given language usually acquires and masters the use of RPF through long years of acculturation and socialization from early childhood right up to adulthood. As Saville-Troike (1989) points out, the most fundamental part of children's socialization is acquiring ritual competence, including RPF (p. 241). Some RPF and related non-verbal behaviours are acquired in early childhood, e.g., an infant of six or seven months who is taught to wave and say bye-bye to his/her departing father (see Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 241). However, some other RPF are acquired and employed much later in the life, and children are not expected to apply them, e.g., the formulae used for expressing condolences are generally delayed (see Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 242). Another example showing the place of RPF in first language acquisition is demonstrated when parents openly persuade small children to say 'please', 'thank you', etc. to adults. When small children accept a gift with

simply a smile, their parents might tell them: "Say *thank you* Joe", or more indirectly, "Aren't we supposed to say something, Joe?" (Dogancay, 1990, pp. 49-50). Ganda people, who live in South-central Uganda, teach their children greeting and parting formulas as well as the necessary bodily gestures and postures even before they can speak well (Mair, 1934; as cited in Firth, 1972, p. 33). Likewise, four- to six-year-old children in Nepal are explicitly taught by parents to interact socially by repeating the greeting or leave-taking formulae. For example, while greeting a visitor, parents turn to their child and say 'Say *namaste*' and the child does so with the appropriate gesture (Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 242). Since the appropriate use of politeness formulae is a sign of socially sanctioned socialization, any failure by children and teenagers in that regard will usually be regarded by members of a speech community as being a result of poor upbringing for which the parents may be blamed. Put differently, politeness formulae are among the few linguistic skills that parents consciously and explicitly attempt to teach their children, which is why Gleason and Weintraub (1976) claim that routines (or RPF) are acquired differently from the rest of language.

In acquiring Persian as a second language, a learner probably finds little opportunity to talk about Cyrus's Charter of Human Rights, and how he saved the Jews from Babylonian captivity. However, the same speaker/learner, in communicating with members of the Persian speaking community, does need to greet people, to take his/her leave, to thank, to apologize, to make requests, and so on, almost every day. Beginning learners of Persian, for example, may learn and use a greeting formula such as *hal-e shoma chetore?* ('How are you?') long before they learn to form WH-Questions, because, as Coulmas (1981a) contends, "routines may be learned before and independent of their individual word meanings and internal structures" (p. 8).

Furthermore, in order to be able to speak a language fluently and idiomatically, language learners do need to know its conventional expressions (Pawley & Syder, 1983). However, as Pawley (2007) points out, "Most adult second language learners seem to have particular difficulty with certain kinds of formulaic language, not only during early stages of learning, but even when they are otherwise completely fluent" (p. 25). As such, for second language learners, routine politeness formulae are a source of challenge. In addition, failure to use native-like formulaic sequences (including RPF), as Pawley and Syder (1983) write, can mark out the advanced L2 learners as non-native. For example, the native-like way of greeting people in New Zealand is to employ formulae such as *Gidday*, or *How are you?* or

simply *Hi*, but a native speaker is not expected to say *Are you in good health?*, or *Have you eaten?* as some people may say in Singapore English (Kuiper, 1996, p. 3). Whereas errors of second/foreign language learners in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary might not hinder communication (and may even amuse native speakers!), the social impact of any errors in using RPF may be greater, potentially being seen as a sign of disrespect or other negative attitudes, that can lead to misunderstandings, misjudgements or social disputes.

1.5 Clearing the ground: The place of RPF in linguistic knowledge

Since the structure of lexical items will be dealt with in more detail in chapter two, suffice it here to say that RPF are a subtype of speech formulae; speech formulae are a sub-type of phrasal lexical items (PLIs), which in turn are a subtype of multi-word lexical items (MLIs), and MLIs themselves are a subtype of complex lexical items, as shown in Figure 1.
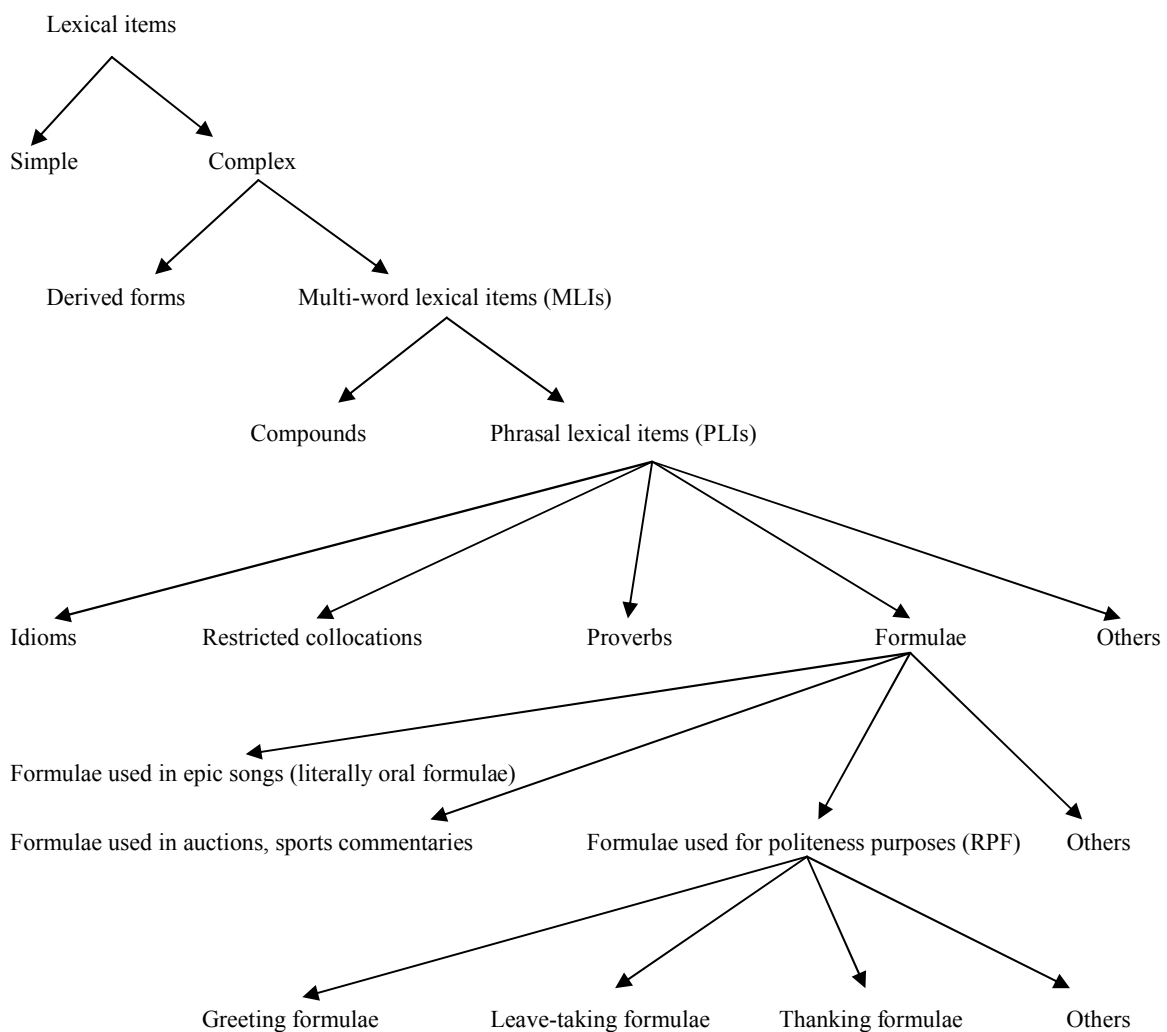
Figure 1: Linguistic tree showing the structure of lexical items, with a focus on RPF

In all human societies, formulae are plentiful. Formulae, as Kuiper (2006) writes, are those "phrasal lexical items that are indexed for their role in social interaction or, more narrowly, indexed for specific use in discourse varieties, registers, and genres" (p. 597). Kuiper (2009) further adds that, as a result, formulae have non-linguistic conditions of use and are linked to particular social tasks (p. 6). In effect, formulae do particular work for a speaker in a given situation (Kuiper, 1996, p. 16).

Formulae are of various types. For the purposes of this study, it would be a huge task to deal with all types of formulae in Persian. Therefore this study does not present an inventory of all formulae in Persian because the best guess is that there are thousands of them and a full description of their form, structure and conditions of use would be too great a task for a single thesis. Accordingly, this study deals with the kinds of formulaic expressions used by speakers of Persian as politeness formulae. For the same reason, only five types within the family of politeness formulae are considered, namely: greeting, leave-taking, thanking, apologizing and requesting. The reason these speech acts were chosen (although the database to be described in chapter 3 contains further various types of speech acts) was because they occur more frequently in the collected data than other collected speech acts. This also allows their variants to be studied, since the more high-frequent a formula is, the more likely its variants are to be manifested in the data.

1.5.1 A working definition for RPF in this study

As understood in the literature, politeness formulae are used in particular recurrent situations to facilitate and regulate day-to-day social interactions (see Ferguson, 1976, p. 137). Politeness formulae are those speech formulae that are restricted to particular situations/occasions, whose use is part of a society's protocol, and which are considered by speakers of that society to be markers of politeness, facilitating and regulating day-to-day social interactions among people (see Davies, 1987, p. 75). In addition to this, politeness formulae have another attribute, i.e., being 'routine', which first needs to be examined. *The Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines a routine as "a usual or fixed way of doing things; done as part of what usually happens, and not for any special reason". Based on this definition, a great variety of human practices (linguistic or non-linguistic) are regarded as routine (Coulmas, 1981a, p. 3). Coulmas (1981a) further writes, "Wherever repetition leads

to automatization, we could call a performance a routine" (p. 3). In addition, this routinized characteristic of politeness formulae makes their form and content highly predictable.

In every society, some social situations or acts are customary and recurrent, i.e., there are standardized communication situations in which people react in an automatic manner (see Coulmas, 1981, p. 2). During a single day, for instance, we may find ourselves in situations to greet people several times in almost fixed and automatic manners. Every reasonably competent member of society knows a number of different scenarios in which s/he can perform the act of greeting properly, such as greeting family members, friends, acquaintances or total strangers; greeting the opposite sex; greeting seniors or juniors in terms of age and/or social status; greeting somebody elaborately such as at a party, or greeting a person in passing, such as on the street. Likewise, each of these scenarios is usually associated with an array of fixed conventional linguistic expressions used in a more-or-less fixed and automatic manner. For example, a Persian speaker may automatically use *chetori?* ('How are you (T-form)?') for intimates, whereas for non-intimates *hal-e shoma chetore?* ('How are you (V-form)?') is favoured as it implies more deference.

Reviewing the literature, there is a perplexing diversity of terms and what we call RPF in this thesis have been termed differently over the years. Some of these terms are as follows: politeness formulas (Ferguson, 1976, p. 137); situationally identified formulas (Ferguson, 1983, p. 66); routine formulae (Coulmas, 1979; Fiedler, 2007, p. 50); situation formulas (Yorio, 1980, p. 436); situation-bound expressions (Lyons, 1968, p. 178; Kecskes, 1997; Pawley, 2007, p. 19); linguistic routines (Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 241); conversational routines (Coulmas, 1981b; Aijmer, 1996); Höflichkeitsformeln [formulae of politeness] (Coulmas, 1981c); speech act expressions/formulas (Pawley, n.d., p. 1; 2009, p. 6); pragmatic idioms (Roos, 2001, p. 70); functional idioms (Cowie et al., 1983, p. xvii); and others.

Given the multifaceted nature of RPF, it is not easy to provide a comprehensive definition. Building on scholars such as Goffman (1971, p. 90), Ferguson (1976), Yorio (1980, p. 434), Coulmas (1979, p. 244), Coulmas (1981a, pp. 2-3), Davies (1987, p. 73), Pawley (2009, p. 6), Kuiper (1984, p. 219; 1996; 2006, p. 597; 2009, p. 6) among others, the working definition of RPF for this thesis is as follows:

RPF are the conventional, pre-patterned expressions whose occurrence is often triggered by standardized communication situations and their use is almost automatic on the appropriate occasion. They usually have fixed specific social (non-linguistic) conditions of use that the

competent speakers of a specific speech community unanimously agree upon. They are lexicalised to varying degrees, retained in the collective memory of a speech community and are drawn wholly or in part from long-term memory. They usually appear as single word interjections, phrases or complete sentences. They are indexical in character, i.e., they are indexed for their role in social interactions. They can convey the group values of a given culture.

Having proposed a working definition for RPF, I now consider how RPF should be studied.

1.5.2 How should speech act formulae (including RPF) be studied?

During the past few decades, interest in studying speech acts has produced an impressive amount of research on different types of speech act. These studies, however, have paid little attention to properties of the conventional expressions that perform the speech acts, or "speech act formulas" (Pawley, 2009), including their form (e.g., the canonical form and variants), structure, discourse functions, discourse contexts, their appropriate conditions of use and their patterns of response. Pedagogical grammars for foreign languages also list and discuss a number of formulaic expressions, but they usually do not give a systematic account of their structure and use (Pawley, 1992, p. 24). The lack of attention to conventional expressions is not merely limited to speech act studies and grammars. Dictionaries (e.g., phrasal dictionaries) have also not paid due attention to conventional expressions (including RPF) and their descriptions are usually imprecise and non-exhaustive (Pawley, 1992, p. 24). Therefore, as a preliminary step, Pawley (n.d.) wonders, "what are the properties of conventional expressions ... and how can these properties be captured in dictionary entries" (p. 1).

Although phrasal dictionaries for English have been around for several generations, it was only in the 1970s that dictionary makers paid serious attention to phraseology (Pawley, 2007, p. 26). The *Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English* (ODCIE1) (Cowie & Macklin) was published in 1975 and was followed in 1983 by ODCIE2 (Cowie, Macklin & McCaig). Whereas ODCIE1 treated phrasal verbs, i.e., multiword units consisting of a verb and a particle or preposition, ODCIE2 covered general idiomatic expressions, including idioms (pure and figurative), as well as restricted collocations. However, as Pawley (n.d.) comments, "None of these phrasal dictionaries of English recognize SBEs [situation bound expressions],

or speech act expressions, as a distinctive type" (p. 7). ODCIE2 includes a number of speech act expressions but does not provide separate labels for them (Pawley, n.d., 7). Moreover, as Pawley (2007) points out, the number of conventional expressions in ODCIE2 whose discourse functions and/or discourse contexts are indicated is slight – perhaps less than five percent of the 7000 entries (p. 29). Lastly, although Pawley doubts whether the analytical and descriptive tools to handle all aspects of SBEs have yet been developed, he asserts that the ODCIEs have provided the needed apparatus to describe situation bound expressions (including RPF) to some degree, which can subsequently be used as a platform to extend and refine existing descriptive tools (Pawley, n.d., p. 9; 2007, p. 30). The following section shows what a proposed dictionary for situation bound expressions (including RPF) might look like.

1.6 The presentation of speech act formulas as separate and distinctive dictionary entries

Unlike a typical lexical unit that usually has the three components of 'form', 'meaning' and 'grammatical category', situation bound expressions or speech act formulas (including RPF), as Pawley points out, may have a bundle of different components: (i) discourse function, (ii) discourse context, (iii) linguistic meaning, (iv) grammatical structure, (v) lexical variability, (vi) body language, and (vii) music (Pawley, 2007, p. 19; 2009, p. 7). To see what such a hypothetical dictionary may look like, one example from Pawley (2009) is presented below:

Formula form: (I'm) (INTENSIFIER) pleased to meet you!

Discourse context: a response move in a first meeting with the addressee, after the addressee has introduced himself or been introduced. Near functional equivalent in this context is *How do you do?*, but *(I'm) pleased to meet you* is a little warmer.

Discourse Function: to warmly acknowledge the addressee's status as a new acquaintance.

Linguistic meaning: Literal (i.e., not an idiom).

Music: should be spoken in a friendly manner, with a bright tone, there should be a main stress on *pleased* and *meet* (not *I'm* or *you*).

Idiomaticity constraints:

a. **Grammar:** must be an assertion in the present tense, as above, e.g., cannot be questioned or negated or put in another tense without destroying the formula. (The formula *be-TENSE NP$_i$ pleased to see NP$_j$!* As in *Are we pleased to SEE YOU!?*, has a distinct discourse context and function.) In its syntactic form this formula belongs to a class of constructions that consists of subject + copula/quasi-copula + adjective of emotion + of Emotion + infinitival complement (to V+ O), e.g.*, She was relieved to find us, They seemed pleased to meet us*, or *I'd be delighted to go*, but it does not inherit the general characteristics of this class.

b. **Lexical variability:** The unmarked adjective is *pleased* but any of a few others, e.g., *delighted, honoured, glad, thrilled*, can be substituted though with certain contextual conditions. The adjective can be modified by certain other intensifying adverbs, e.g., *very, really* or *so*. However, there are subtle constraints and nuances associated with the use of these intensifiers, as there are with the marked adjectives.

c. **Body language:** Ideally the speaker and addressee should be facing each other, should make eye contact as the greeting is spoken and should be more or less stationary (not walking away from each other). Unless physical circumstances make it awkward it is customary to offer a handshake either during, or in the seconds before or after uttering the formula (pp. 7-8).

Regarding a speech act formula as a social institution, and following Pawley's (2007, p. 19; 2009, pp. 6-8) model for representing speech act formulas as distinct dictionary entries, in the present study, I will present RPF as dictionary entries.

1.7 Writing a dictionary for RPF in Persian

As mentioned above, standard dictionaries that treat typical lexical units cannot capture the peculiarities of conventional expressions used as politeness markers (or RPF). In the same manner, phrasal dictionaries either do not usually consider RPF in detail, or do not consider them at all. Pawley (n.d.) states, "I do not know of any phrasal dictionaries that deal mainly with SBEs (situation bound expressions) but many do include a selection of such expressions" (p. 6). This thesis is, then, an attempt to pave the way for the creation of a dictionary of RPF in Persian.

This work is closer to a thesaurus than a dictionary. However, while a thesaurus arranges words in groups that have similar meanings, this thesis lists RPF by their usage (function). That is, all the formulae that, for example, are used for expressing apology are grouped together. This dictionary lists as exhaustively as possible typical (central) politeness forms that every native speaker of Persian would recognize. RPF are grouped by canonical form and variants, and for each formula, a cultural description is provided: who says what to whom, and under what circumstances. The primary emphasis is on occasions of use and, in introducing RPF, mainly their spoken form has been used. So RPF are categorised by function and then subcategorised in terms of form and variants. While, in a normal dictionary, quotations show how words are used in context; in this work, video clips function as quotes, i.e., video clips show how the expressions are used in social context (see chapter three). Having said that, in this thesis, information about RPF is represented under two broad titles: formula form and formula structure. The formula form includes (i) the canonical forms and their variants, (ii) the literal meaning, (iii) the socio-cultural functions (iv) the appropriate conditions of use and (v) the patterns of response. Formula structure, on the other hand, represents the structure of formulae, their lexical variability and their possible combinations with other optional elements such as terms of address (VOC), intensifiers (INTs) and benedictions.

1.8 Aims and significance of the study

The study underlying this thesis asks: what are the conventional formulaic expressions used by speakers of Persian as markers of politeness for such purposes as greeting, leave taking, apologizing and thanking? To the knowledge of this author, there are no comprehensive works dedicated to RPF in Persian, and this thesis, as a step in this direction, aims to fill this gap. RPF in Persian have not received any systematic description as to their typical conditions of use, their canonical forms, their variants, their patters of response and their discourse structure rules. To address the above, this thesis provides a "thick description" (see Geertz, 1973) for rituals of greeting, leave-taking, thanking, apologizing and requesting in Persian, such that these rituals and the related formulae may become understandable for non-native speakers. Moreover, this thesis does not deal with the frequency of occurrence of the RPF. Thus, this study asks:

i. What politeness formulae are used in Persian for greeting, leave-taking, apologizing, thanking and requesting?

ii. What are their canonical forms and variants?

iii. What are their socio-cultural functions?

iv. What are their appropriate conditions of use?

v. What are their patterns of response?

vi. How might their sequencing be modelled?

As a result, this thesis can be regarded as an introduction to the dynamics of interpersonal polite behaviour among Persians thereby opening a door to those who are interested in studying non-Western cultures. Thus, this study can serve as a source for researchers in sociolinguistics, pragmatics and the teaching of Persian to non-Persian speakers. RPF are highly relevant formulae for second language users to learn because these are needed in daily social interactions. That is, if second language learners are to operate more-or-less comfortably in a native environment, RPF are the sorts of linguistic competencies that they will have to perform every day. Finally, this study will also provide information that may be of benefit to designers of textbooks for learning Persian.

1.9 The Persian language and the Tehrani dialect of Persian

Persian is an Iranian language within the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European family of languages. It is spoken in Iran, Tajikistan and part of Afghanistan; however, down the centuries, due to its cultural dominance, Persian has been spoken as second language in other parts of Asia. Persian is called Farsi in Iran, Tajiki in Tajikistan and Dari in Afghanistan. Modern Persian is a direct continuation of middle Persian (also called Pahlavi) from the Sassanid era and Old Persian from Achaemenid era. Old Persian was highly inflectional, but modern Persian has lost much of its inflection on nouns, verbs and adjectives (see Mahootian, 1997, p. 2).

Old Persian was written in a cuneiform script, middle Persian in Pahlavi script, and modern Persian is written in the Arabic alphabet with some modifications. Persian is a pluricentric language, i.e., Persian has an official standard version, on the one hand, and many regional

dialects spoken around the country (e.g., Tehrani Persian, Isfahani Persian) on the other hand. Standard Persian is mainly the language of education and media (radio and television, newspapers, textbooks, etc.). The main sources of variation among different dialects of Persian are differences in word-level phonetics and phonology and to a lesser extent the implementation of different vocabularies. The contemporary Persian dialect spoken in Tehran (or Tehrani Persian (TP)) has secured its position as the most common and prestigious dialect of Persian in Iran mainly due to the economic and political centrality of Tehran as the capital of Iran since 1786. TP is not merely confined to the mega city of Tehran; it is also spoken in other cities, mostly as a lingua franca among people with other first languages (e.g., Tabriz). In recent decades, some radio and television programs (especially soap operas) have also helped the TP dialect to further penetrate throughout Iran, giving TP more prominence than other dialects of Persian. This process has been so quick and pervasive that it is already endangering other regional Persian dialects or other Iranian languages, putting them on the verge of extinction. Given its status, speaking TP can imply high prestige for its speakers, and speaking other dialects of Persian (especially those of far away towns and cities) may imply lower social status and/or illiteracy.

Because of the centrality, pervasiveness and high status of TP in Iran, the data for this study is limited to TP. Almost all the soap operas used as sources of data are in TP and the subjects who took part in role-plays were born and/or raised in Tehran. Moreover, throughout this dissertation, TP is referred to wherever the language 'Persian' is mentioned.

1.10 Structure of this dissertation

The remainder of this dissertation is organised as follows:

Chapter 2, entitled Background, presents an account of formulaic language used in a variety of genres, and overviews of politeness theory, speech levels and terms of address in Persian.

Chapter 3 addresses the methodology, which discusses the different instruments of data collection (naturalistic vs. elicited data) and elaborates on their advantages and disadvantages. Soap operas and their characteristics are introduced, including a discussion to justify their use as the primary source of data in this study. In addition, the basis for the analysis and description of RPF, which is based on lexicography and phraseology, as well as the electronic database are discussed in detail.

Chapters 4 through 8 are the data chapters, dealing, respectively, with the rituals of greeting, leave-taking, apologizing, thanking and requesting. All these chapters follow approximately the same structure. Each data chapter begins with a specific review of literature, then moves on to an account of the relevant speech act in Persian community and introduces RPF as separate dictionary entries with notes on their form, function and context of use.

Chapter 9 is the conclusion. It suggests that the examination of the form and function of RPF provides a view into the world of politeness exchanges in Persian and consequently reveals the socio-cultural values underlying politeness exchanges such as the group-oriented nature of Iranian society.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the necessary background for the investigation of RPF in Persian. The first part deals with phrasal lexical items (PLIs) and formulaic speech, offering two major explanations for the use of formulaic speech, namely, psychological and sociocultural explanations. This is followed by an account of formulae and their characteristics. In the second part of this chapter an overview of politeness including a definition of (im)politeness and the main approaches to politeness, namely, universalistic, cultural relativity and postmodern approaches are outlined. In the third and fourth parts of this chapter, speech levels and terms of address in Persian are introduced respectively.

2.2 The lexicon and the structure of lexical items

To be a competent speaker of a language, one must have acquired a grammar of that language. A grammar aims to represent the native speaker's knowledge of that language and inquiring into the nature of this grammar is the empirical domain of theoretical linguistics. Part of that knowledge is lexical and the other part is syntactic if we see the grammar a mediating between the phonological representation of a sentence and its semantic representation. In effect, the knowledge of the lexicon (both single- and multi-word lexical items) is an important part of linguistic knowledge.

Lexical items can be structurally simple (e.g., *dog*) or complex. Complex lexical items can divide into derived forms (e.g., *doggy*) or multi-word lexical items (MLIs). MLIs can further divide into compound words (e.g., *blackboard*) and phrasal lexical item (PLIs). PLIs are an important part of our linguistic knowledge and they are a common phenomenon in languages. PLIs are structurally phrasal, i.e., they have syntactic structure. PLIs have linguistic conditions of use determined by their syntactic properties; however, they may or may not have non-linguistic conditions of use (Kuiper, 2009, p. 5). Schmitt (2010) assumes that for every conventional activity or function in a culture there are associated phrasal vocabulary items (p. 119). Pawley and Syder (1983) estimate there are several hundreds of thousands of

such PLIs in the lexicon of English (and surely in other languages) (p. 213). PLIs include idioms, restricted collocations, proverbs, speech formulae, etc. Each of these can also have sub-types. PLIs are stored and retrieved as wholes or chunks in the memory, rather than through processing and word combination processes (Pawley & Syder, 1983, p. 205; Kuiper, 1996; Wray, 1999, p. 214). PLIs have idiosyncratic characteristics/properties as opposed to, for example, novel ad-hoc phrases in language. These properties can be in any area of their representation: syntactic, semantic or phonological. The two main properties attributed to PLIs are fixedness and semantic opacity (Carter, 1987; Cowie, 1998; Everaert et al., 1995; Kuiper et al., 2007; Schmitt, 2010 *inter alia*). These properties are continua, rather than absolute, i.e., PLIs can vary in the degree of fixedness, and opacity/non-compositionality. For example, while some PLIs are completely fixed (e.g., 'the early bird catches the worm'), others might allow some degrees of variation (e.g., 'he smelled a rat', 'I think, I can smell a rat'). Similarly, while some PLIs are semantically completely opaque (e.g., 'kick the bucket' has nothing to do with either kicking or buckets, but simply means "to die."), others might be fully transparent (e.g., 'have a nice day') or something in between (e.g., 'their business took off'). PLIs also have unpredictable phonological properties, but these will not be examined in this study.

Within the large family of PLIs, as Schmitt (2010) points out, idioms have attracted the greatest amount of research mostly because of their obvious non-compositionality (p. 118). Formulae seem to be relatively little studied PLIs, though most of the research already done on politeness and speech acts can also be attributed to formulaic genre studies. Formulae themselves are of various types. I shall deal with this in the following section.

2.3 Formulaic speech

Formulaic speech, as Kuiper (2006) points out, is simply speech that makes use of formulae (p. 597). Formulae are those "phrasal lexical items [PLIs] that are indexed for their role in social interaction or, more narrowly, indexed for specific use in discourse varieties, registers, and genres" (Kuiper, 2006, p. 597). There is a gradation between more and less formulaic speech based on the frequency of formulae. As Kuiper (2009) adds, formulae have non-linguistic conditions of use and are linked to social tasks (p. 6).

Formulae can be distinguished by different attributes. For example, the formulae used in the oral heroic poetry of Homer will be recognized as literary oral formulae or oral formulae for

short. The types of formulae used in auctions, sports commentaries, etc., are also oral formulae but restricted to use in auctions, sports commentaries, and so on. The types of formulae used in specified recurrent situations to facilitate social interaction (e.g., to apologize to others) are referred to as politeness formulae (see Ferguson, 1976). It is a huge task to deal with all types of speech formulae in Persian, and this study cannot possibly provide an inventory of all formulae, because according to the best guess, there are several hundreds of thousands of them. Accordingly, this study deals merely with routine politeness formulae in general use in the community. I shall return to politeness formulae shortly.

The interest in oral formulaic genres or formulaic language is neither new nor limited to phraseology. According to Pawley, scholars from a wide range of disciplines have shown interest in formulaic language in recent decades, such as: literary scholars working on sung epic poetry, anthropologists and folklorists concerned with ritual speech song, philosophers and sociologists concerned with ordinary language use as strategic interaction, neurologists and neuropsychologists concerned with localisation of language functions in the brain, psychologists concerned with learning and speech processing, researchers in educational psychology, grammarians, and lexicographers producing phrasal dictionaries of English (1992, p. 24; 2007, pp. 5-11).

As regards the importance of the pioneering work of Parry (1930, 1932) and Lord (1960) on the role of formulae in the epic poems of Homer, the next section deals with classic formulaic performance.

2.4 Classic formulaic performance

The theory of formulaic speech or oral-performance was placed on the map of linguistic studies mainly through the pioneering fieldwork of Parry (1930, 1932) and Lord (1960) on the oral formulaic performance of Yugoslav bards (Pawley, 2007, pp. 5-6). In the 1930s and 1940s, and just before these traditions were threatened by the increasing literacy of bards, Parry and Lord recorded and investigated the performance of oral heroic South Slavic epic poetry in order to comprehend how the epic poems attributed to Homer could have been composed and transmitted down centuries by local singers/bards. Parry and Lord's theory of oral-performance has mainly attracted the attention of linguists who specialize performance

but has also been very influential in the study of oral performance of epic sung poetry in general (see Foley, 1988).

Illiterate bards performed the South Slavic epics in real time with unusual fluency and speed. For this reason, the singers were subject to heavy working memory loading. Singers sing in particular places (e.g., coffee houses) and at particular times (30 nights of Ramadan and at weddings). Performances are lengthy and sometimes take several hours. They follow a fixed plot (a broad outline of the story), containing a number of episodes with an internal sequential structure. The structure of the episodes can be defined by a finite set of discourse structure rules. Once these discourse structure rules are acquired, the singers do not need to learn new ones in order to sing new songs (see Lord, 1960; Kuiper, 2000, 2006). Because of the length and complexity of the songs and their metric requirements, acquiring the traditional way of singing requires neophytes to go through a long apprenticeship period under the influence of a mature singer(s). This includes absorbing the plots, the episodes and more importantly a huge number of literary oral formulae or formulae for short (Lord 1960; Kuiper, 2006). The defining characteristic of the performances, as Kuiper (2006) points out, is the way that epics are composed: "The epic is composed anew each time it is performed and is therefore never exactly the same each time it is performed" (p. 598). Put differently, singers do not recall the epics word for word, but they rely upon established traditional elements such as basic plots, episodes and formulae. According to Kuiper (2004), one significant conclusion from Lord's work is that formulaic performance occurs where the working memory is under a range of pressures (from both the speech tasks and other related cognitive tasks that must be simultaneously performed), and employing a formulaic speech tradition and its associated oral formulae can lower this pressure (p. 39). Considering this fact, Kuiper (2000) offers this hypothesis that formulaic speech is a natural response to the pressures of real-time performance, and that employing formulae makes it easier for speakers to speak fluently under working memory pressure (p. 295). In the section on psychological explanations for formulaic speech, this will be discussed in more detail.

2.5 Formulae in other linguistic performances

Over the last thirty years, Kuiper and his colleagues (Kuiper & Haggo, 1985; Kuiper & Flindall, 2000; Kuiper & Tan, 1989; Kuiper, 1996; Hickey & Kuiper, 2000; Kuiper, 2006; Kuiper, 2009) have pushed forward the boundaries of the study of oral formulae from oral

traditional literature or high culture to a wide variety of communities of practice such as auctioneering, sports commentaries, weather forecasting, supermarket checkout interactions, and so on. Simply put, an important feature of Kuiper and his colleagues' work is that it extends Lord's observations about sung poetry to certain genres of spontaneous spoken discourse that are not poetic or sung.

Generally, speech with formulaic properties is to be expected in more pressured situations such as rapid auctioneering speech (e.g., livestock auctioneering) and fast sports commentary (e.g., ice hockey and horseracing) because high-speed performance makes greater demands on our working memory (Kuiper, 2004, p. 40; Kuiper, 2000, p. 280). Kuiper (2006) proposes two major sets of determinants, leading to the creation of oral-formulaic traditions (p. 598). The first determinant by definition is socio-cultural and the second is psycholinguistic. In routine and ritual contexts, and under significant pressure on memory resources, speakers need to be able to draw on formulaic resources (Kuiper, 2006, p. 601). The latter determinant has been explored by Kuiper and Haggo (1984) and is known as "Kuiper and Haggo's theory of language performance" (Aijmer, 1996, p. 8). I shall deal with psycholinguistic determinants in the next section.

2.6 Psychological explanation for formulaic speech

Pawley and Syder (1983) and Kuiper (2006), following Lord (1960), suggest memory limitations and processing pressures as a major determinant governing the use of oral-formulaic traditions. As human beings, we have relatively restricted processing capacities due to the limitations of our working memory (Pawley & Syder, 1983, 2000; Kuiper, 2004). Live high-speed performance of various types, such as performing classic heroic epics, livestock auctioneering and race commentaries, calls for sizeable memory and processing resources (Kuiper, 2006, p. 599). Singing epics, auctioneering and sports commentaries, etc., usually involve doing many things at the same time. As for the oral tradition of Lord's bards, by employing the oral-formulaic techniques or verbal formulae, the bards can cut down the amount of information that a performer has to keep in his/her working memory and to process while performing (Lord, 1960; Kuiper, 2006, p. 599).

In a pioneering study, Kuiper and Haggo (1984) studied livestock auctioneering in Canterbury, New Zealand. In corroborating and extending Lord's findings, they (1984)

claimed that livestock auctioneers use the same technique of composition resembling the classic case of oral formulaic composition by Yugoslav bards (p. 223). As evidence for this claim, Kuiper and Haggo (1984) showed: (i) most of the speech of the auctioneers consists of formulae; (ii) the formulae and the rules for their use are transmitted orally (p. 223). Then, they (1984) wondered why an oral-formulaic tradition should have emerged in livestock auctioneering similar to that of Yugoslav bards given that there seems to be no visibly direct link between the two traditions (p. 225). Following Lord (1960), Kuiper and Haggo (1984) suggested that the specific performance conditions of oral composition can be responsible for the evolution of an oral formulaic technique (p. 225). Firstly, both the bard and auctioneer must perform at speed and with extraordinary fluency (e.g., lack of hesitation phenomena, absence of filler expressions and absence of false starts). Secondly, both the bard and the auctioneer need to keep the attention of a mobile audience. As a result, the need to be extremely fluent beyond the levels achieved by most other speakers, and the need to be responsive to the audience put much pressure on working memory or short-term memory (hereafter STM), which, by definition, has a limited capacity (around seven chunks of information) and which can keep information only for a short while (Lashley, 1951; Miller, 1964; Goldman-Eisler, 1968; Kuiper & Haggo, 1984; Pawley & Syder, 1983). Long-term memory (LTM), on the contrary, has a huge capacity for holding information. At the time of auctioneering, the auctioneer draws necessary information from LTM, which then passes through STM for speech processing (Kuiper & Haggo, 1984, p. 226). Based on Kuiper and Haggo's count (1984), "an auction requires somewhere around the maximum STM load just for nonverbal functions" (p. 226). Speech processing, in its turn, needs STM load, which implies an excessive load on STM. The use of formulae is a response to heavy loading of STM since they are stored in and retrieved from LTM as wholes. That is, formulaic speech enables us to harness our resources (restricted processing capacities) in an efficient way and to channel energies into other activities (Pawley & Syder[1], 1983, p. 208; Kuiper, 2004, p. 52).

To sum up, formulaic speech makes the business of speaking as well as hearing easier since little encoding and decoding is needed. Kuiper (1996) assumes that when a speaker uses a formula s/he needs only to retrieve it from the internal dictionary instead of building it up from its constituent parts (p. 3). That is, "such expressions likely exist as whole or part utterances within the speaker's dictionary and need not be built up from scratch on every new

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[1] Pawley and Syder (1983), however, don't attribute use of speech formulae solely to processing limitations. They argue that command of speech formulae is essential to idiomatic command of a language, i.e. saying things in a native-like way.

occasion" (Kuiper, 1996, p. 3). In the following section, a different kind of explanation for the existence of formulaic speech is introduced, which attributes formulaic performance to socio-cultural factors.

2.7 Sociocultural explanation for formulaic speech

In trying to justify the use of different varieties of formulaic speech, Kuiper (2006) draws attention to socio-cultural factors as a crucial determinant (p. 598). If psycholinguistic factors deal with memory and processing pressures, socio-cultural factors deal with the situation in which the speaker is speaking and how routine this is (Kuiper, 2006, p. 601). To put it differently, in routine contexts (e.g., coming together to greet one another, or taking leave from one another), speakers need to resort to formulaic speech, i.e., to employ greeting and leave-taking formulae. According to Kuiper (2000), "Much of living in a society involves interacting with other people in predictable ways" (p. 283). In other words, much of what we do is highly predictable, and as a competent and accepted member of a given society, one should act in accordance with the established social and cultural conventions or simply social protocols. In many communicative situations, as encultured humans, we have few options for what to do and to say. Those options are laid down by our culture's constraints (Kuiper, 2000, p. 284). For example, imagine bumping into a person in a supermarket causing them to spill everything they have just purchased all over the floor. What is urgently required, based on English society's conventions and protocol (and in many other societies), is to apologise to the offended person for the probable damage, annoyance or inconvenience with conventional apology formulae. Not apologizing on the spot and not employing conventionalized nativelike formulae for apologizing (e.g., 'sorry', 'I am terribly sorry', etc.) can lead to various social problems. For instance, as Kuiper and Flindal (2000) point out, if in that hypothetical apology situation, the offender uses an expression such as 'never mind' instead of the proper conventional form 'I am (terribly) sorry', there would be different consequences for the offender ranging from being rejected by other members of the society to fights (p. 185). "[A]ll societies", as Kuiper (1996) notes, "have ways of dealing with those who act outside socially sanctioned rules" (p. 92). However, through long years of socialization, and through the conscious instruction of parents and caretakers, competent English speakers have learnt how to calm down and fix such situations by uttering

appropriate apology formulae. Likewise, Schmitt (2010) considers the mastery of formulaic sequences as an indication of the highest stages of language mastery (p. 145).

According to Kuiper (1996) social acts such as greetings, apologies, complementing, meal opening, etc., principally rely upon routine formulae, which are relatively fixed, occur under standard conditions of use almost automatically, and are indexed for their discourse roles and sociocultural roles (p. 93). Why then should formulae have such special characteristics? As regards the crucial social functions of RPF in everyday routine interactions, politeness formulae should be unambiguously identifiable in any situation by interactants. Likewise, Schmitt (2010) argues, "Because members of a speech community know these expressions [RPF], they serve as a quick and reliable way to achieve the desired communicative effect" (p. 120). Put differently, owing to the vital social functions of politeness formulae in maintaining and promoting social cohesion, RPF need to be easily recognized for their defined functions. Referring to Manes and Wolfson's (1981) study on the compliment formulae in English, Kuiper (1996) presents a revealing example, which can be regarded as an answer to our question (p. 92). In English, there are a number of relatively fixed syntactic patterns (or formulae), which are conventionally used as compliments (e.g., 'I + (really) + {like/love} + NP'). Thus, complimenting a person on buying a new suit, one, for example, can appropriately say 'I like/love your suit' (a), but surely not 'my mother would be grateful to see your suit' (b). According to Kuiper (1996), it would be very difficult for the hearer to identify sentence (b) as a compliment "because the hearer would have to infer that it was meant as a compliment" (p. 94). However, as for sentence (a), a competent native hearer of English would already know that (a) is a compliment by convention.

Up to this point, a justification has been provided for the use of formulaic varieties of speech under psychological and sociocultural factors. However, referring to the highly formulaic speech of broadcast weather forecasts studied by Hickey (1991), Kuiper (1996) draws attention to a relatively different factor, which, by definition, is neither psychological nor sociolinguistic. Actually, weather broadcasters are neither under working memory pressure as auctioneers or sports commentators are, nor are the type of formulae which they employ linked to the 'centrally social tasks'. In effect, the main reason that weather forecasters resort to formulae is "to cut down the options for the hearer's benefit" (Kuiper, 1996, p. 91).

Considering the fact that RPF perform social functions, it is the sociocultural factors that are significant in this study.

2.8 Formulae and their characteristics

As early as 1924, grammarians such as Jespersen (1924) drew attention to numerous grammatical structures, which have a stable form in all the contexts in which they happen (Aijmer, 1996, p. 1). Jespersen (1924) distinguishes 'formulas' or 'fixed expressions' from 'free expressions' as they entail different mental activities: in fixed expressions, memory and repetition are the important factors, whereas free expressions involve creativity (pp. 18-19).

Although formulae are largely phrasal in structure, single-word lexical items such as curses (e.g., *darn!*) that serve speech act functions can also be considered to be formulae, perhaps owing to their elliptical structure (see Kuiper, 2006, p. 597). In the following sections the characteristics of the formulae (including RPF) are dealt with in brief.

2.8.1 Formulae have non-linguistic conditions of use

The feature that distinguishes formulae from other PLIs is that they are indexed for their socio-cultural roles (Kuiper, 2004, p. 51; 1996, p. 96; 2000, p. 292). Therefore, the conventional use of a formula is restricted to the situations in which such conditions are appropriate. Condolences, for instance, will characteristically be used when speakers need to express sympathy to someone who has lost a loved one. However, while restricted collocations such as 'give offence' and 'take offence' in English are not restricted by anything other than their meaning, the use of 'I am sorry', or 'I do not know what to say', as condolence formulae, is dictated by the non-linguistic context, which is known by every competent native speaker of English (Kuiper, 2004, p. 51).

Because formulae have non-linguistic conditions of use, any change in their social context or their more-or-less fixed form might make them infelicitous or inappropriate. For example, a speech act such as 'I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth, God bless her and all who sail in her' at the time of ship launching and naming is considered a performative formula because native speakers of English are usually aware of the conditions under which this formula may be felicitously and appropriately uttered (see Austin, 1976). Generally, native speakers of English can associate this formula with a "matrix of social conditions" in Kuiper's terms (2006, p. 597) or to "frames" in Coulmas' terms (1979, p. 244). Kuiper (2006), for example, recasts a number of such social conditions (or non-linguistic conditions of use) accompanying the ship-launching-and-naming formula known as felicity conditions (see Austin, 1976;

Searle, 1969): (i) the person uttering this formula should have been introduced by the authorities, (ii) the person should utter the formula at the time or place already designated for the naming and launching ceremony, (iii) the person should also smash a bottle of champagne against the stern of the ship. In addition to these crucial social conditions, the form of the formulae should also remain relatively intact. Therefore, as Kuiper (1996) notes, "Even minor changes in the way such performative acts are expressed make them opaque or infelicitous" (p. 92). Likewise, Jespersen (1924) says, in any language, there are some units with formulaic character, i.e., nothing can be changed inside them (p. 18). A phrase such as 'How do you do?', as Jespersen (1924) points out, is completely different from 'I gave the boy a lump of sugar' since in the former everything is fixed (p. 18). That is, nobody can make a pause between the words, or change the accepted stress pattern. Having this in mind, for a ship launching and naming ritual, if someone says 'I give this ship the name Queen Elizabeth' something unusual has been said, and hence it is infelicitous and native speakers of English will evaluate it as non-native (Kuiper, 1996, p. 92-3). Although the form of some formulae is completely fixed, some other formulae allow for a small amount of internal variation. For example, as regards compliment formulae in English, the slot in *NP... (really) ADJ* can appropriately be filled with either 'is' or 'looks' (see Manes and Wolfson, 1981).

2.8.2 Formulae may be semantically non-compositional

A further lexical property attributed to some formulae is that they are semantically non-compositional, i.e., idiomatic (see Jespersen, 1924, pp. 18-19; Coulmas, 1979, p. 241; Kuiper, 2000, p. 295). Idioms have long attracted scholars for their apparent non-compositionality. Non-compositionality, however, is a matter of degree where at one end of continuum stand the formulae that mean what they say, and at the other end stand the non-compositional formulae. As an example of a semantically non-compositional formulae, Kuiper (1984) refers to 'going once, going twice' as a traditional formula to end bidding at an auction. Contrary to this formula, the lot is only going to be sold once, not two or three times. Likewise, Pawley (1991) claims that almost all formulae used in cricket commentaries are non-compositional. As regards RPF, some have a completely standard semantic reading (e.g., 'have a nice day'), some do not (e.g., 'I beg your pardon', which asks 'please repeat what you said, I'm not sure I understand') and others anything in between (see Jespersen, 1924, pp. 18-19).

2.8.3 Formulae are indexed for discourse roles

One other feature specific to formulae is that all formulae are discourse indexed or are simply indexed for their role inside discourse (Kuiper, 1996, p. 96). Take, for instance, the after dinner leave-taking ritual in Persian for which one can propose discourse structure rules. At the time of leave-taking, it is quite unusual for a guest to say bluntly goodbye and leave, and it is equally unusual for the host to acknowledge the leave-taking immediately since it might be interpreted as evicting the leave-taker. In Iranian culture (and probably some others), after dinner leave-taking is a relatively elaborate ritual containing a number of non-verbal (e.g., body language and posture) and verbal phases, which are sequentially organized. The person who takes his/her leave should first make his/her intention for leave-taking known through using proper 'announcing leave-taking formulae'. The host usually tries to persuade the leave-taker to stay a bit longer with an array of formulae tailored for this end. The leave-taker politely declines the offers for staying longer with conventional formulae and tries to justify his/her leave-taking with I-patterned or/and You-patterned excuses (see section 5.3.1.3.1). Then, the host acknowledges the leave-taking, and so on. A discourse structure rule containing four main phases and fourteen sub-phases can explain the structure of leave-taking after dinner in Persian where each formula is carefully indexed for its role inside the discourse. For a full account of leave-taking, refer to chapter five.

2.9 Overview of politeness

Anecdote has it that French Marshal Ferdinand Foch once had a guest suggest to him that there is nothing in French politeness but wind. To which Foch is said to have humorously replied: "Neither is there anything but wind in a pneumatic tire, yet it eases wonderfully the jolts along life's highway" (as cited in Fraser, 1990, p. 219). Put another way, the rules and conventions of politeness act as social lubricant that make the social wheels turn smoothly.

Decades of scholarly interest and research in the field has produced no consensus about the meaning and/or the very nature of the term politeness. However, competent members of any speech community do have clear metalinguistic beliefs about politeness and can differentiate polite and tactful behaviour from rude and offensive behaviour (Pizziconi, 2006, p. 679). Based on the speech and behaviour of a person, and depending on contextual and situational factors, competent members of any speech community can easily determine when someone is

behaving politely or otherwise. People are quite conscious about the rules and conventions of politeness, so much so that one of the more important aims of socialization and enculturation is to learn how to behave appropriately or politely in various social situations (see Kasper, 1990). Likewise, Watts (2003) states we are not born with polite behaviour (or polite language), instead we need to learn and to be socialised into it (p. 9). In all societies, those who are responsible for children (e.g., parents, caretakers) explicitly instruct children on how they should behave and talk in different social encounters. Some examples are directives such as 'behave yourself', 'say thank you to NP', 'say please when requesting something', etc. Along with a myriad of different definitions and interpretations, politeness has also been linked with the use of specific linguistic forms and conventionalized formulae (see Eelen, 2001), which is the focus of this study.

2.9.1 Definitions of politeness

The social way of life makes close contact among members of society almost inevitable, necessitating a set of social obligations and rights. Social interaction involves an inherent degree of threat to one's own and others' face or self-image (Pizziconi, 2006, p. 680). Therefore, all societies are believed to have developed some behaviour or conventions (verbal and non-verbal) and norms of social conduct to reduce friction in personal interaction (Lakoff, 1973, 1974); to avoid conflict (Leech, 1980, p. 19); to soften face threats (Brown and Levinson, 1987); to defuse danger and minimize antagonism (Kasper, 1990, p. 194); to promote interpersonal supportiveness (Arndt and Janney, 1985, p. 282); to show consideration for the other person's feelings, to establish levels of mutual comfort and promote rapport (Hill et al., 1986, p. 349); to promote smooth harmonious communication (Ide, 1989, p. 22; Wouk, 2006, p. 277); to consider each other by satisfying shared expectations (Sifanou, 1992, p. 86); to maintain social cohesion; and to foster in-group solidarity.

The scholars above define politeness as a pragmatic means of conflict avoidance, which are actually definitions of politeness$_2$ or the scientific, abstracted view of politeness rather than politeness$_1$, which is the 'lived experience' of politeness (see Watts, 1992, 2003; Eelen, 2001). More recent definitions of politeness (postmodern approaches to politeness) encompass commonsense notion of politeness (or politeness$_1$), which are derived from folk conceptions of what constitutes (im)polite behaviour. This new approach fosters a socio-

cultural and socio-psychological perspective to politeness (see Eelen, 2001; Watts, 2005; Janney and Arndt, 2005) and is based on the argument that in order to gain a more realistic picture of (im)politeness, both speakers' utterances as well as the evaluations of real hearers have to be examined. The concept of politeness in this study is based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) model, which defines linguistic politeness as a kind of protocol to maintain the face wants of hearer.

2.9.2 Research on linguistic politeness

Since the 1970s, a colossal amount of research on politeness has emerged in the disciplines of pragmatics and sociolinguistics, yet there is little agreement among researchers on what exactly constitutes linguistic politeness (see Fraser, 1990, p. 234). The early and pioneering studies on politeness in the 1970s are characterised by the search for universals in politeness behaviour (Lakoff, 1973; Brown and Levinson, 1978/1987; Leech, 1983). This universalistic view was based on Grice's co-operative principle (CP) and Austin's speech act theory. The second wave of research, which emerged out of the criticism of the universalistic approach, is primarily concerned with the search for linguistic and cultural relativity (Ide, 1989; Matsumato, 1988; Spencer-Oatey, 2000, 2005; Terkourafi, 2001, 2005). The third wave produced the most recent approaches, known as the Post-modern or discursive approaches (Eelen, 2001; Locher, 2004; Mills, 2003; Watts, 2003; Watts, Ide and Ehlich, 2005), which pay closer attention to evaluations made by participants through interaction, cognizant that different participants may have different interpretations of the same interaction.

2.9.2.1 Universalistic approach to politeness

Scholars in the field have long attempted to present a theoretical and abstract notion of politeness as being cross-culturally valid (Pizziconi, 2006, p. 680). Reviewing literature on politeness, Fraser (1990) identifies four major perspectives that embody the universalistic approach to politeness: (i) the social-norm view; (ii) the conversational-maxim view; (iii) the face-saving view; and (iv) the conversational-contract view.

2.9.2.1.1 The social-norm view of politeness

This approach reflects the historical understanding of politeness manifested and codified in books of etiquette more specifically within the English-speaking world (Fraser, 1990, p. 220). One such example is 'The English Theophrastus: or the manners of the age' published in 1702 (see Watts, 1992). This view assumes that each society has a particular set of social norms and values that members should observe. Etiquette manuals in any society offer a variety of normative or prescriptive rules, encouraging or discouraging certain behaviour in special contexts (e.g., at a party, men should be introduced to women by the host/hostess). Here, politeness is mainly associated with speech style (spoken or written) where a higher degree of formality can imply greater politeness (Fraser, 1990, p. 221). Behaving in accordance to these prescribed norms or etiquettes simply implies good manners or politeness and its lack impoliteness. The social norm view is regarded as pre-pragmatic as opposed to the recent definitions offered within pragmalinguistic or sociolinguistic literature (see Pizziconi, 2006; Watts, 1992).

2.9.2.1.2 The conversational-maxim view to politeness

This view of politeness is derived from Grice's cooperative principle (CP) (1975). Grice associates the CP with a set of more specific maxims and sub-maxims, which he assumes interlocutors always follow. Based on this theory, people are intrinsically cooperative and aim to be as informative as possible in daily communications. Grice's four maxims are maxim of quantity, quality, relation and manner. However, there are times that speakers deliberately violate these maxims, signalling certain intentions ('conversational implicatures'). That is, infringing any of the maxims results in the addressee having to infer the speaker's intended meaning and thus restoring the CP.

Lakoff (1973) was among the first to adopt Grice's CP to account for politeness phenomenon. Lakoff is also credited as the mother of modern politeness theory since she was the first to study it from a pragmatic perspective (Eelen, 2001, p. 2). Following the framework of Grices's co-operative principle, Lakoff (1973) introduced three rules of politeness: 'Don't impose' (rule 1), 'Give options' (rule 2) and 'Make A feel good, be friendly' (rule 3) (p. 298). According to Lakoff (1973), the CP maxims are flouted when a person expresses politeness. Her three proposed rules for politeness can control the flouting

of the CP maxims. Lakoff (1989) defines politeness as those forms of behaviour which have been developed to reduce friction and the risk of confrontation in personal interaction (p. 102). This approach to politeness indirectly claims universality (Watts, 1992). Lakoff's rules of politeness have a good deal in common with Brown & Levinson's positive and negative politeness strategies. In evaluation, Fraser (1990) comments that Lakoff's definition of politeness is not sufficiently explicit. Sifianou (1992) also points out that Lakoff's failure to define her terminology may cause misinterpretation (p. 22).

Leech (1983) also adheres to the conversational maxim approach to politeness. His theory situates politeness within the framework of Interpersonal Rhetoric, i.e., the speaker's goals rather than his/her illocutionary goals (Fraser, 1990, p. 224). Leech (1983) defines politeness as those forms of behaviour, which are aimed at establishing and maintaining comity in an atmosphere of relative harmony (p. 104). Leech (1983) developed the conversational-maxim view by adding a Politeness Principle (PP) to the CP. Leech (1983) considers the PP to be an essential complement because it explains motivations for people to violate Grice's maxims. Leech (1983) suggests a set of maxims motivated by interactional goals and aimed at the establishment and maintenance of harmony during interaction (p. 119). These interpersonal maxims parallel Grice's four maxims:

- Tact Maxim (minimize hearer costs; maximize hearer benefit)

- Generosity Maxim (minimize your own benefit; maximize your hearer's benefit)

- Approbation Maxim (minimize hearer dispraise; maximize hearer praise)

- Modesty Maxim (minimize self-praise; maximize self-dispraise)

- Agreement Maxim (minimize disagreement between yourself and others; maximize agreement between yourself and others)

- Sympathy Maxim (minimize antipathy between yourself and others; maximize sympathy between yourself and others).

These maxims apply differently in different cultures. For example, as Holmes (2006) notes, in some Asian cultures, the Modesty Maxim takes precedence over the Agreement Maxim (pp. 690-1). In some Western cultures; however, it is the Agreement Maxim that overrides Modesty Maxim. For this reason, while a Malay student living and studying in New Zealand rejects a compliment, a New Zealander usually accepts a compliment. Therefore, Leech's

maxims "provide a way of accounting for a number of cross-cultural differences in politeness behaviour, as well as in perceptions of what counts as polite in different cultures and subcultures" (Holmes, 2006, p. 691). Each maxim is interpreted according to a set of different scales (cost-benefit, optionality, indirectness, authority and social distance) along which degrees of politeness can be measured. Leech's model shares some assumptions with Brown and Levinson's approach to politeness; however, instead of focusing on 'face needs', Leech (1983) addressed the issue of "why people are often so indirect in conveying what they mean" (p. 80). Like Brown and Levinson, Leech (1983) sees his theory as providing the framework for future comparative studies (p. 231). There are some objections to Leech's approach to the analysis of politeness. The main critique is that there is no way of limiting the number of maxims, i.e., in facing a new problem, a new maxim can also emerge, and hence the theory of politeness becomes vacuous (see Brown and Levinson, 1987; Fraser, 1990; Holmes, 2006). Watts (1992) also suggests that Leech's maxims may derive from British attitude towards politeness (p. 46).

2.9.2.1.3 The face saving view to politeness

It is almost impossible to talk about politeness without referring to Brown and Levinson's theory (1978, 1987) (hereafter B&L). The face saving view of politeness developed by B&L is still one of the most influential works on politeness which exceeds being a mere extension of the Gricean maxims. B&L compared data from three unrelated languages (English, Tamil, and Tzeltal) to show that similar universal principles are at work in superficially dissimilar realizations. One of the major claims of B&L is that politeness is a universal feature of language use, i.e., all languages possess the means to express politeness (Watts, 2003, p. 12). Like Lakoff, B&L see politeness in terms of conflict avoidance; however, they offer a different explanation giving centrality to a universal notion of 'face' (adopted from Goffman (1967)). The 'Model Person', from which B&L's model of politeness sprang, thinks rationally and chooses appropriate strategies in order to minimise any face threats. B&L view and define politeness as a complex system for softening face-threatening acts (FTAs). In any interaction, as B&L (1987) write, face is something that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and any threat to face must be constantly monitored (p. 61). This face-saving view is based on the assumption that there are two universal face wants/needs (B&L, 1987):

Negative face: "[T]he want of every 'competent adult member' that his action be unimpeded by others" (p. 62).

Positive face: "[T]he want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others" (p. 62).

The organizing principle for B&L's (1987) politeness theory is the idea that "some acts are intrinsically threatening to face and thus require softening (...)" (p. 24). In other words, certain speech acts threaten the negative face or positive face (or both) of the speaker and/or the hearer. Moreover, speakers co-operate in protecting each other's face. In assessing the relative weight (W) of different FTAs, B&L recognize the importance of three fundamental sociocultural variables: (i) the social distance (D) between the participants; (ii) the power (P) that the addressee has over the speaker; (iii) the ranking of the imposition (R) expressed in the utterance in the relevant culture. Then, to calculate how face threatening a speech act is, one can use the formula below where the weight of a threat 'x' is a function of the power of hearers over speakers, as well as of the social distance between speakers and hearers, combined with an estimation of the ranking (of the seriousness) of a specific act 'x' in a specific culture (x denotes a speech act, S the speaker, and H the hearer):

$$W_x = P\,(H, S) + D\,(S, H) + R_x$$

B&L's model of politeness has primarily been criticized for its individualistic or Anglo-centric approach to the concept of face, which I shall return to soon. Secondly, it has also been criticised for its reliance on decontextualised utterances, since there is no way of assessing exactly why the utterance is interpretable as a FTA. Thirdly, the focus is primarily on the speaker, neglecting the role of the hearer. As we shall see, postmodern approaches to politeness are hearer-oriented, i.e., they depend on hearer's evaluations rather than only on speaker's intention. Fourthly, B&L's data as they (1987) admit is "an unholy amalgam of naturally occurring, elicited and intuitive data" (p. 11). Fifthly, Holmes (2006) notes that, "(...) a theory of politeness based on intention recognition cannot apply cross-culturally and universally" (p. 689).

In spite of some criticism of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, it is still one of the most influential theories on politeness. Although more up-to-date approaches to politeness (e.g., postmodern approaches) have provided a better understanding of the intricate nature of the politeness phenomena, they do not provide researchers with a clear

methodology (see Xie et al., 2005, p. 449). Therefore, this study on RPF in Persian is developed within the broad context of Brown and Levinson's (1978/1987) theory of politeness. The concepts of face (negative and positive) are the basis to justify the use of RPF in Persian.

2.9.2.1.4 The conversational-contract view to politeness

This approach to politeness was proposed by Fraser (1990) and Fraser and Nolen (1981). It adopts Grice's Cooperative Principle and Goffman's notion of face, but differs from Brown and Levinson's face-saving view. Fraser (1990) provides a very broad outlook on politeness, i.e., being polite is taken as the default setting in conversational encounters (p. 233). According to Fraser (1990), upon entering a given conversation, each participant brings a set of rights and obligations that determine what the participants can expect from each other in that encounter (p. 232). For Fraser politeness is the result of a conversational contract (CC). The CC is not static and can be renegotiated over the course of time, or because of a change in context. That is, "the two parties may readjust just what rights and what obligations they hold towards each other" (Fraser, 1990, p. 232). Participants establish the rights and obligations or the terms of the contract on various dimensions: conventional, institutional and situational. Conventional terms are very general, they apply to all ordinary conversations and are seldom negotiable (e.g., the rules of turn-taking, to employ a mutually intelligible language, etc.). Institutional terms concern rights and duties imposed by social institutions and are seldom renegotiable (e.g., rights of speaking in court, silence in church). Situational terms are "determined by previous encounters or the particulars of the situation" for each specific interaction and are renegotiable (Fraser, 1990, p. 232). Politeness, then, constitutes acting within the then-current terms and conditions of the conversational contract (CC), while impoliteness implies violating them. In other words, "to be polite is to abide by the rules of the relationship. The speaker becomes impolite only in the instances where he violates one or more of the contractual terms" (Fraser & Nolen, 1981, p. 96). Utterances or languages are not *ipso facto* polite. Instead, by abiding by the terms and conditions of the CC, it is only the speakers who can be (im)polite. In evaluating the CC, Fukushima (2003) says conversational-contract view is not sufficiently well formulated for empirical research.

2.9.2.2 Cultural relativity approach to politeness

The cultural relativity approach arose as a critique to the universalist approach to politeness. As aforementioned, one of the major criticisms of B&L's (1978/1987) theory is that it maintains an individualistic view of the concept of face and does not account for non-western societies that foster collectivity (Ide, *et al.*, 1992; Eelen, 2001; Watts, 2003). The theory of politeness based on B&L's Model Person does not account for non-western collectivistic societies such as the Japanese (Matsumoto, 1988, 1989) and the Chinese (Gu, 1990; Pan, 2000). Therefore, contrary to B&L's claim of universality, their model is neither applicable cross-culturally, nor universally.

Scholars such as Spencer-Oatey (2002, 2000) firmly hold the view that culture is an important factor in determining whether a speech act is performed appropriately or not. She states that politeness is judged culturally and this judgement is what makes an utterance appropriate in a particular context. For example, while accepting an offer from somebody in the first instance is regarded as appropriate in English (offer ... acceptance), in Iranian culture, one may reject offers once or twice (offer$_1$ ... rejection$_1$ ... offer$_2$ ... rejection$_2$ ... offer$_3$ ... acceptance). An English speaker may be frowned upon for accepting an offer immediately and a Persian's behaviour in rejecting an offer a few times before accepting it may be evaluated as insincerity or hypocrisy. In this example, what makes English and Persian speakers' behaviour appropriate or polite is their own cultures because there is nothing intrinsically in these speech acts to make them polite or impolite. Therefore, both English and Persian speakers are being polite according to their respective cultures. Other researchers who support a cultural approach include Matsumoto (1988), Wierzbicka (1985), Ide (1989), Goddard (1997) and Clyne (1994).

2.9.2.3 The postmodern approach to politeness

In recent years, researchers have adopted a postmodern approach to the study of politeness. Terkourafi (2005) makes a distinction between the traditional approach (reliance on classical Gricean framework as well as the speech act theory) and postmodern approach to politeness (emphasis on participants' own perceptions of politeness and regarding interaction as a dynamic discursive struggle). The postmodern approach fosters the necessity to pay closer attention on how participants perceive politeness in social interaction; this approach also

questions the idea that people necessarily agree on what constitutes polite behaviour; this approach also underlines the subjectivity of judgments of what counts as polite behaviour (see Eelen, 2001; Mills, 2003; Watts, 2003, 1992; Locher, 2004; Watts, et al., 2005; Holmes, 2006).

The focus of the postmodern approach is on the participants' situated evaluations of politeness, not shared conventionalised politeness or shared notions of politeness. Pan (2008) also maintains that linguistic politeness should be a dependent variable because it depends on contextual and situational factors. Similarly, Watts (2003) argues, "whether or not participant's behaviour is evaluated as polite or impolite is not merely a matter of the linguistic expressions that s/he uses, but rather depends on the interpretation of that behaviour in the overall social interaction" (p. 8). Then, by adopting this approach to politeness, "interaction is regarded as a dynamic discursive struggle with the possibility that different participants may interpret the same interaction quite differently" (Holmes, 2006, p. 691).

Postmodern approaches to politeness are primarily hearer-oriented, i.e., they depend on hearer's evaluations rather than only on speakers' intentions. Similarly Eelen (2001) states, "In everyday practice (im)politeness occurs not so much when the speaker produces behaviour but rather when the hearer evaluates that behaviour" (p. 109). Therefore, meaning is co-constructed and politeness is nothing but a matter of negotiation between speaker and hearer. Hearers, according to Locher (2004), interpret (im)politeness based on their own norms (frames, appropriateness, expectations, personal style, etc.) (p. 90). The postmodern approach abandons the idea of developing a universal theory of politeness altogether (Locher and Watts, 2005). A number of researches, who have contributed the most to this approach, will be introduced briefly.

Watts (2003) begins by challenging the existing notion of politeness assumed by researchers. He distinguishes between two interpretations of (im)politeness: folk or lay interpretation known as 'first-order (im)politeness' (or (im)politeness$_1$ following Eelen, 2001) and technical/scientific interpretation known as 'second-order (im)politeness' (or (im)politeness$_2$ following Eelen, 2001) (Watts, 2003, p.4). Politeness$_2$ is "the scientific conceptualization of politeness$_1$" (Eelen, 2003, p. 45). Watts (2003) believes that the study of politeness should start from commonsense notion of (im)politeness or (im)politeness$_1$. In other words, investigating first order politeness is the only valid means of developing a social theory of politeness. The other major contribution of Watts to research on linguistic politeness is a

distinction that he makes between politic behaviour and strategic politeness. Politic behaviour is that verbal or non-verbal behaviour, "which the participants construct as being appropriate to the ongoing social interaction" (Watts, 2003, p. 20). Watts (2003) makes use of the terms institutionalised, appropriate, non-salient and expectable in relation to politic behaviour (pp. 256-7). Politic behaviour seems to appear in routine and familiar situations. Put differently, the more familiar the situation is to interlocutors the more automatic the choice of politic strategy. According to Watts (2003) politic behaviour is not equivalent to polite behaviour. Politic behaviour is what the participants would expect to happen in a situation and is not necessarily polite (Watts, 2003, pp. 258). Polite behaviour, on the other hand, is the behaviour "beyond what is perceived to be appropriate to the ongoing social interaction (...)" (Watts, 2003, p. 21). Polite behaviour is a marked behaviour (or marked version of politic behaviour), indicating the speaker's wish to express concern or respect for the addressee (see Locher, 2004). As regards politic and polite behaviour, Watts associates polite behaviour with B&L's conceptual model of politeness. Watts (2003) also argues that impoliteness is the explicit breach of politic behaviour termed 'non-politic behaviour. The following example shows how Watts' (2003) theory of (im)politeness works, and demonstrate that politic behaviour is not equivalent to polite behaviour: Person A has booked a ticket to see a play and it is numbered P51. Going to seat P51, A finds out that someone else (person B) is already sitting there. The appropriate mode of behaviour makes A to tell B that the seat belongs to him/her and that there must be some mistake. A can say any of the following:

- Excuse me, I think you're sitting in my seat.
- Excuse me but that is my seat.
- I'm sorry. I think there must be some mistake.
- I'm sorry, but are you sure you've got the right seat? (pp. 257-8)

By saying any of these utterances, A has started the verbal interaction within the framework of the politic behaviour expected in this type of situation (a socially appropriate behaviour). Some would evaluate A's verbal behaviour as polite, but others take it as politic since there is not much else one can say in this situation. B also sees A's verbal behaviour as politic since it meets with his/her expectations. B would have hardly expected A to say 'hey, get out of my seat', which is evaluated as non-politic behaviour or impolite. If A had said:

- I'm so sorry to bother you, but would you very much mind vacating my seat?

from A's viewpoint, this utterance is justified. However, for B it is beyond what can be expected in that situation. Therefore, it is likely to be perceived by B as unnecessarily aggressive, albeit polite. As previously mentioned, in postmodern approaches to politeness, the hearer's evaluations are more important than the speakers' intentions. That is why, Watts (2003) negates any direct association of certain linguistic expressions and speech acts with politeness strategies. He (2003) holds that "no linguistic structures can be taken to be inherently polite" (p. 168). Therefore, politeness is a matter of negotiation between participants, and there is a possibility that, at the end of the day, different participants interpret the same interaction differently. Finally, as regards the above example, politeness is appropriately conveyed only when person A's conceptualization of politeness is matched by person's B's perception of politeness. And this introduces the concept of 'Community of Practice' (CofP) into politeness studies as discussed below.

Mills (2003) is among the postmodern theorists who question the homogeneity of politeness norms, assumed by the earlier approaches and she also rejects any attempts to develop a universal theory of politeness. Employing the notion of CofP proposed by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992), Mills (2003) contends that in a given interaction (im)politeness can only be analysed by the participants within particular communities of practice. CofP is defined as "an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavour. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices – emerge in the course of this mutual endeavour" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1992, p. 464). In evaluating the politeness of an act, Mills (2003) argues, one has to make a judgement of appropriateness either "in relation to the perceived norms of the situation, the CofP, or the perceived norms of the society as a whole" (p. 77). As seen in B&L's model of politeness, speaker's intention is at the centre; however, Mills (2003) proposes a model that gives priority to the judgement of appropriateness within particular communities of practice. Mills (2003) also rejects any direct association of certain linguistic expressions (e.g., politeness formulae) with politeness, contending that "politeness is a matter of judgement and assessment, rather than politeness residing in particular linguistic forms or functions" (p. 110).

In spite of what Watts (2003) and Mills (2003) write, there are obviously elements of politeness which are conventional. In English culture, a routine politeness formula such as 'sorry' is conventionally used to apologise. But in context, this polite expression can be re-interpreted as sarcastic or ironical. Needless to say, one needs to see how people interpret a

particular situation and what has been said but that does not mean that 'sorry' is not a conventional apology formula. As such, this study deals with the standard understanding of politeness formulae in Persian and not how they might be interpreted in various situations.

Persian is known for having a system of honorific speech. As such, RPF usually demonstrate three levels of politeness, namely, plain (or neutral), polite and honorific, which we shall discuss in the following section.

2. 10 Speech Levels in Persian

Language as the mirror of society can reveal parameters such as social status/rank, degree of intimacy, level of formality, etc., in human interactions. Iranians are highly conscious of social status and hierarchy in their daily interactions. Whereas some language communities, like Javanese, have developed elaborate honorific linguistic systems, others such as New Zealand English speakers, enjoy a more egalitarian and democratic system. The rest fall somewhere between these two extremes. A closer look at the Persian politeness system indicates that it tends more towards East Asian societies, which have systems of honorific speech. In Persian, different levels of speech/politeness are shown not only by its elaborate address system, but also in its grammar, e.g., verbs, that carry markers for politeness. Much like the Korean and Japanese languages (see Martin, 1964, pp. 408-9), there are two axes of distinction in Persian: the axis of address and the axis of reference. The axis of address includes plain/neutral, polite and deferential/honorific levels, and the axis of reference includes plain/neutral and humble. The highest level of politeness is achieved when a speaker uses the honorific form for addressing a hearer and a humble form for referencing to himself/herself. This politeness strategy is known as 'self-lowering and other-elevating' (see Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 178; Asjodi, 2001). Reviewing the politeness formulae in Persian, as in chapters 4 - 8, one sees this strategy indubitably in play.

In 'Some aspects of Persian style', Hodge (1953) draws attention to the phenomenon of 'politeness levels' in Persian claiming "morpheme substitution" or lexical choices to be responsible for producing different levels of politeness in Persian (pp. 366). With regard to politeness levels, he recognizes four categories of 'familiar', 'polite', 'deferential', and 'royal' in the Persian politeness system. As such, there are a number of options available in Persian for the verb 'to say', which communicates different levels of politeness.

Comparatively, in English, 'to say' is used regardless of the person addressed. In Persian, in referring to family members and close friends and peers, one can use '*goftæn*' ('to say'), and in referring to a superior (in terms of age, occupation and/or social status), one may employ '*færmudæn*' ('to command') as a deferential verb form to show deference to the addressee. To further demonstrate how levels of speech/politeness look, a simple sentence such as 'you said' in English is compared with its possible equivalents in Persian (table 1). Seven levels of politeness are conceivable ranging in formality from the least (sentence 1) to the most formal (sentence 7). Moreover, like other speech acts, the degree of politeness usually increases with the length of the formula, i.e., the longer the utterance, the more polite it is felt to be (see, Coulmas, 1981, p. 84; Martin, 1964, p. 411).

Table 1: Different levels of politeness in the verb *goftæn* ('to say') in Persian

	Persian	Literal meaning	Idiomatic sense	Level of politeness
1	*to goft-i*	you said	you said	least formal
2	*shoma goft-i*	you said	you said	
3	*shoma goft-id*	you said	you said	
4	*shoma færmud-id*	you ordered	you said	
5	*jenabali færmud-id (M)* *særkar-e ʔali færmud-id (F)*	your exalted Sir ordered	you said	
6	*hæzræt-e ʔali færmud-id*	your Excellency ordered	you said	
7	*æʔlahæzræt færmud-ænd (M)* *olyahæzræt færmud-ænd (F)*	your Majesty ordered	your Majesty said	most formal

Resembling some European languages (e.g., French), Persian has two different words for 'you' in English: *to*, the T-form (from Latin *tu*), is only used for addressing one person, whereas *shoma*, the V-form (from Latin *vos*), is used not only for addressing more than one person but also to address a single person to communicate respect, social distance, and/or formality (see Ardehali, 1990, p. 82). The substitution of *to* with *shoma* in addressing an individual person increases the level of politeness. Thus, as in table 1, in addressing an individual, sentence two is more formal than sentence one. In Persian, which is a pro-drop language, verbs are also inflected for person and number via verbal suffixes attached to them

(the verb endings /-i/ and /-id/ stand for *to* and *shoma* respectively). Without a doubt, sentence three is more formal than sentence two, since, in the verb *goft-i*, the verb ending /-i/ (second person singular pronoun) is substituted with /-id/ (second person plural pronoun). To achieve an even higher level of politeness, '*goftæn*', as a neutral verb form, can be substituted with '*færmudæn*' ('you commanded'), which is a deferential verb form. As a result, sentence four is more formal than sentence three. In sentence five, *shoma* ('you'), a subject pronoun, has been substituted with *jenabali* ('your exalted Sir') as a 'Super-V form' (Baumgardner, 1982) to further increase the level of politeness. A more deferential Super-V form such as *hæzræt-e ʔali* ('your Excellency') can replace *jenabali* to achive a higher level of politeness.

The highest level of politeness, however, is reserved for the king and queen, which, due to the political changes that happened in Iran since the 1979 revolution, is no longer in use unless sarcasm is intended. The honorific terms *æʔlahæzræt* and *olyahæzræt* ('your Majesty'), used for the king and queen respectively, convey utmost deference and distance. Moreover, in talking to a member of the royal family, in order to elevate the level of politeness, verb morphology changes from second person plural (/-id/) to third person plural *(/-ænd/)*, signifying plurality and indirectness simultaneously.

2.11 Terms of address in Persian

As established in section 2.10, in Persian, the speech level is defined by both grammar and terms of address. Although a notable feature of the Persian politeness system is its comprehensive address system, terms of address in Persian have not received adequate scholarly attention. Terms of address in most languages and cultures play a crucial role in the personal and social life of people defining emotional bonding, kinship ties, deference and social status. Persian cultural and social norms are fully reflected in its address system, resulting in a considerable variety of modes of address. Address forms have an important role in daily interactions among Persian speakers, as they do in most languages, and people are extremely sensitive to the ways they are addressed or the way they address others. The proper usage of terms of address calls for linguistic as well as socio-cultural knowledge. In different contexts, speakers indicate their relationships, feelings, and attitudes towards their interlocutors by choosing appropriate forms of address.

The system of address in Persian comprises (a) pronominal forms, as well as (b) nominal forms. Pronominal forms include second person pronouns, namely, *to* and *shoma*. Nominal forms include (i) names, (ii) honorific titles, (iii) kin titles, (iv) terms of endearment, (v) titles associated with religion, (vi) titles associated with profession, (vii) titles associated with ideology, (viii) titles associated with aristocracy and monarchy, and (ix) zero forms. With regard to the important role of terms of address in expressing speech levels in Persian, RPF are mostly preceded or followed by various types of terms of address. As we shall see in chapter eight, people usually avoid making direct requests. In informal situations, one safe way to soften the illocutionary force of requests is to precede or to follow them with terms of address. For example, person A in making a request from Person B can soften the illocutionary force of his/her request by simply preceding it with an endearment term as vocative:

A to B: *Mehrshad jun*, *dar-o bebænd*. ('Dear Mehrshad, close the door.')

In presenting 'formula structure' for RPF in data chapters, terms of address are shown as vocatives (VOC) either preceding or following the politeness formulae:

START (VOC) + direct request STOP

2.12 Summary

In the first part of this chapter, it is indicated that the RPF are a subtype of speech formulae and speech formulae, in turn, are a sub-type of phrasal lexical items (PLIs). Some of the principal characteristics of RPF are identified, to wit: (i) RPF are indexed for their socio-cultural roles, (ii) most RPF are fixed, usually having a restricted set of variants, (iii) some RPF have completely standard semantic readings, some do not, while others are in between, and (iv) RPF are indexed for their discourse roles. In the second part, three major approaches to this study are identified: universalistic, cultural relativity and postmodern. This study on RPF is developed within the broad context of Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) theory of politeness because, despite criticisms against it, it is still one of the most influential. In the third part, it is noted that most of the RPF in Persian can have three levels of politeness (i.e., neutral, polite, honorific) and that terms of address can precede or follow RPF, thus, enhancing their meaning.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology for the present study. The research aims and design are described in 3.2. Different instruments of data collection in reference to speech acts are discussed in 3.3., followed in 3.3.2.4 by a description of soap operas as a main source of data, their characteristics in 3.3.2.5, previous studies that have used soap operas as a source of data in 3.3.2.6, soap operas in Iran in 3.3.2.7 and preparing and processing soap opera data in 3.3.2.8. The description of the database comes in 3.4, the analysis, description and presentation of data in 3.5 and the overall summary in 3.6.

3.2 Research aims and design

This study investigates the RPF used for greeting, leave-taking, apologizing, thanking and requesting in Persian. It looks at the forms, functions and discourse contexts of RPF, representing them as dictionary entries. This study utilizes a qualitative research design as most linguistic studies in this area do. This takes the form of a phraseological and lexicographical description of RPF in Persian. This study, then, investigates the following research questions:

a. What politeness formulae are used in Persian for greeting, leave-taking, apologizing, thanking and requesting?

b. What are their canonical forms and variants?

c. What are their socio-cultural functions?

d. What are their appropriate conditions of use?

e. What are their patterns of response?

f. How might their sequencing be modelled?

3.3 Instruments of data collection

In recent years there have been many studies of speech acts, using different data collection methods including observation of natural interactions (ethnographic observation), corpus linguistics, questionnaires, discourse completion tests (DCTs), and role-plays. There are many arguments for and against the different methodologies used to collect data for speech acts. However, the main consensus among researchers is to collect natural data or real-life unscripted conversations (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Rintell & Mitchell, 1989; Kasper & Dahl, 1991; Cohen & Olshtain, 1994; Beebe & Cummings, 1995).

In the following sections, the advantages and limitations of various methods of data collection will be discussed with reference to the study of speech acts. However, it behoves one to heed Saville-Troike's (1989) cautionary advice that "There is no single best method of collecting information on the patterns of language use within a speech community" (117). Rose (2001) emphasises that there are weaknesses associated with every data collection method, including the collection of authentic or natural data (p. 319). For this reason, researchers usually prefer to use 'triangulation' to minimize researcher bias and to increase the validity of collected data (see Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985; Aijmer, 1996, p. 5). Triangulation is an approach to research that uses a combination of more than two research methods in a single investigation in order to overcome the limitations of a single method (see Denzin, 1970; Patton, 1999). This study utilizes multiple data sources, namely, soap operas, role-plays and native speaker linguistic and cultural intuitions obtained through introspection.

3.3.1 Naturalistic speech data

Scholars in anthropology and sociolinguistics have repeatedly called for the collection of naturally occurring data or natural speech data in every day interactions (see Wolfson, 1983, 1986, 1989). Secondary sources containing, for example, fictional representations of language (e.g., the sort found in novels and plays), as Manes and Wolfson (1981) contend, cannot reflect the exact complexity of actual speech use (pp. 115-6). Manes and Wolfson (1981) further note that "Secondary sources (...), because they are mediated by stylistic requirements of the artist, cannot be depended upon to reflect exactly the complexity of actual speech use" (pp. 115-6). Collecting natural or authentic data, itself, has both advantages and disadvantages. Cohen (1996) cites a number of the advantages as follows:

● The natural data is spontaneous;

● The data reflect what the speakers say rather than what they think they would say;

● The speakers are reacting to a natural situation rather than to a contrived and possibly unfamiliar situation;

● The communicative event has real-world consequences;

● The event may be a source of rich pragmatic structures. That is, structures as they are used in communicative functions in the real world (pp. 391-2).

The disadvantages are:

● The speech act being studied may not occur naturally very often;

● Proficiency and gender may be difficult to control;

● Collecting and analysing the data is time-consuming;

● The data may not yield enough or any examples of target items;

● The use of recording equipment may be intrusive;

● The use of note taking as a complement to or in lieu of taping relies on memory (pp. 391-2).

Thus, the ideal method for studying speech acts is the recording of naturally occurring talk-in-interaction (see Holmes, 1990). In examining speech acts and the related formulae, it is not always easy to collect naturally occurring data and collecting sufficient data of a specific speech act. Also controlling for variables such as power, status, gender and age differences between participants is challenging. Take, for example, apologies that, because of being context dependent, are very hard to observe and record as natural talk (Fahey, 2005). Studying leave-takings in an English-speaking community, Pawley (1974) asked 35 members of an undergraduate class attending the University of Hawaii to record and collect six instances of leave-taking that they witnessed as either a participant or an onlooker. Although the students had no difficulty in understanding what was required in the task, a number of them found it difficult to find six instances in a period of two weeks. In like manner, highlighting the difficulties in collecting naturally occurring data, Cohen (1996) refers to two other studies (pp. 392). In an extensive cross-gender study by Holmes (1989) on apology and

apology responses, her research assistants reported difficulty in collecting a corpus of 183 live apologies. In another study by Murillo et al. (1991), a number of students were asked to position themselves just outside the offices of faculty members so they would inadvertently bump into the students as they left the offices and would need to apologize. The entire process became very time consuming, because the faculty members' departure could not be predicted. Moreover, some apologies were not audible or were not clear enough to be captured on video tapes, making the collection of sufficient data a tricky task.

In order to collect natural speech data, researchers in various disciplines of linguistics usually make use of ethnographic observation. Further, with the advent of computer technology, language corpora have also appeared as a reliable source for data collection. In the following sections, I shall go through these natural data collection methods in brief.

3.3.1.1 Ethnographic observation

Many sociolinguists (see Ervin-Trip, 1976; Manes and Wolfson, 1981; Wolfson, 1983, 1986; Wolfson, Marmor and Jones, 1989; Holmes, 1990) place emphasis on using ethnographic observation (or ethnographic fieldwork) as the only reliable method of collecting linguistic data. "*Ethnographies* are based on first-hand observations of behaviour in a group of people in their natural setting" (italics original) (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 249). In all ethnographic approaches, continual and ongoing participant observation of a situation is a key tool for collecting authentic data (Fraenkle, Wallen & Helen, 2012, p. 507). In collecting natural data, the role of observer (researcher) can be full (full-participant observation), partial (partial observation) or none (onlooker). Both participant and nonparticipant observation have been employed in collecting linguistic data of various types. Duration of observations can vary: While a single observation of limited duration can take a few minutes, long-term observations have long durations and can take months or even years (Fraenkle, Wallen & Helen, 2012, p. 447). Depending on the role of the observer and depending on how s/he is portrayed to individuals being observed, the observer can take notes (field notes) and/or can audiotape or videotape the observation.

In spite of the apparent advantages of ethnographic observation as a reliable source of data, it was not possible to undertake a fully ethnographic investigation for the present study, which required a large sample of various politeness formulae. Observation (participant or non-

participant) is very time consuming and the researcher will be required to spend a long period of time in fieldwork. This creates practical limits on the amount of data that can be collected because sometimes observing even a single speech act can take months. Besides being time-consuming, some speech acts (e.g., apologies) are infrequent in natural context, meaning that even with an extensive ethnographic methodology, there are no guarantees that appropriate material can be collected in sufficient numbers. Moreover, as Liamputtong (2009) notes, "Information collected by means of ethnography from a relatively small number of people from one setting cannot be generalised to the wider population" (p. 167). What is more, as regards the observer effect or "observer's paradox" (Labov, 1972, p. 209), the participants may also be influenced by the simple fact that somebody is observing them, hindering them from behaving naturally. It is also difficult to control variables (e.g., age, sex, social status, etc.) in ethnographic observation. Therefore, taking the scope of this study into account, it would have been impossible to gather sufficient data by the observation of natural speech acts. Having said this, although ethnographic observation in collecting data in its classic sense was not employed, this research has an ethnographic approach in investigating RPF in that this researcher has been a participant observer of Iranian culture all his life. Although no notes were jotted down regarding the forms and functions of the RPF that this researcher observed in his lifetime, as a native of the Persian culture, these are easily accessible from active memory and can be written down at will. Had the same task referred to another culture, say, Papua New Guinea, this researcher would have similarly observed and/or participated in daily interactions and written down what he remembered from interactions with the natives. This topic will be revisited in relation to introspection and intuition shortly.

3.3.1.2 Corpus

A language corpus (e.g., Oxford English Corpus) is an online collection of written and spoken language from a wide range of sources, designed to represent a wide cross-section of both spoken and written language in electronic form. The advent of computers has paved the way for the compilation of a huge amount of authentic written and spoken language. Appropriate software enables researchers to investigate many linguistic features such as (i) the frequency with which every word in the corpus occurs, (ii) words that are unusually (in)frequent when compared with a reference corpus, (iii) all occurrences of a particular word, (iv) recurring larger structures (clusters, phrases), (v) grammatical frames, (vi)

collocations, (vii) occurrences of parts of speech and their combinations, to mention a few (Bednarek, 2010, p. 68).

Unlike much of linguistics, as Biber et al. (1998) point out, the field of dictionary making employed corpus-based methods early on (e.g., 'A Dictionary of the English Language' by Samuel Johnson in 1755), making lexicographers among the first to use language corpora or corpus-based methods for writing accurate and up-to-date dictionary entries (p. 21). Pragmatics researchers have also been keen on using spoken corpora for studying speech acts. As Aijmer (1996) indicates, "The use of a corpus is a fairly new method for studying speech acts and other routines (...)" (p. 3). Aijmer (1996) herself studied conversational routines in English including thanking, apologies, requests and offers based on empirical investigation of the data from the (original) London-Lund Corpus of spoken English (LLC). As an additional source of data, she (1996) also used other spoken corpora (Birmingham Corpus (BIR)). The LLC (original) consists of 87 texts with a variety of topics and settings including face-to-face conversation, telephone conversation, public speeches, news broadcasts, interviews, etc. (Aijmer, 1996, p. 5). It should be noted that the number of spoken corpora available to researchers is limited compared to written corpora (Aijmer, 1996, p. 5).

While English and many other European languages have differently structured corpora, such collections have not yet been constructed systematically for Persian. The linguistic Data Consortium (http://www.ldc.upenn.edu/) contains a spoken Persian corpus; however, it was not suitable for this thesis. In view of the fact that there were no suitable Persian spoken corpuses available, this research could not benefit from a language corpus as a source for investigating politeness formulae in Persian. This study, however, can be regarded as corpus-driven in that RPF were extracted from a new corpus of 1191 video clips and 359 transcription forms. This shall be elaborated on in the next sections.

3.3.2 Non-naturalistic or elicited speech data

Because of the problems involved in collecting naturally occurring data, some researchers have shown more interest in collecting non-natural or elicited speech data. In the following, some of these methods of data collection with special reference to speech acts are addressed.

3.3.2.1 Discourse completion test

The discourse completion test (DCT) is a popular tool in pragmatics to elicit scripted speech acts. According to Kasper and Dahl (1991), discourse completion tests along with role-play (written or spoken) are the main data collection instrument in pragmatics. For each DCT there is a brief description of setting and situation, followed by a short scripted dialog with an empty slot for the speech act under study. Participants are then asked to fill in a response that they think fits into the given context (Kasper and Dahl, 1991, p. 221). The DCT was first adapted by Blum-Kulka (1982) to investigate speech act realization in Hebrew. A few years later, the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), considered the most extensive study of speech acts so far, used the same DCT (Aijmer, 1996, p. 4). DCTs have some advantages and disadvantages. Golato (2003) discuses some administrative advantages for DCTs to include: (i) allowing the researcher to control different variables (e.g., age of respondents), (ii) gathering large amount of data quickly without any need for transcription, and (iii) easy statistical analysis of data (p. 92). However, the main concerns surrounding the DCT is that it may not be a true representation of what the speaker would actually say in naturally occurring situations, i.e., it does not always correspond to natural data (Holmes, 1991; Aston, 1995; Demeter, 2007). Another concern is that the participants may use portions of the written situation in their responses (Demeter, 2007, pp. 85-6). Taking the disadvantages into account, DCT was not used as a source of data in this study.

3.3.2.2 Role plays

In studying speech acts, the use of role-plays is a valid and effective method of collecting data. Tran (2006) defines role-plays as simulation of social interactions where participants assume and enact described roles within specified situations (p. 3). The main advantage of role-plays is that they provide spoken data that approaches real-life performance (Tran, 2006, p. 3). Role-plays provide as natural a setting as possible while also allowing control over certain variables (Demeter, 2007, p. 85). The researcher can choose what situations s/he wants to study so larger amounts of specific data can be collected (Aijmer, 1996, p. 4). Studying the speech act of invitation, Rosendale (1989) claims that role-play is a valid and reliable method that allows us to make inferences about real-life situations. Likewise, Kasper and Dahl (1991) assert that, compared to other forms of elicited data, role-plays can provide more naturalistic data: "They represent oral production, full operation of the turn-taking

mechanism, impromptu planning decisions contingent on interlocutor input, and hence, negotiation of global and local goals (...)" (p. 228). The other advantage of role-plays is that the methodology can be easily replicated (Tran, 2006, p. 3). Moreover, role-plays give researchers the opportunity to record and/or videotape them for further careful analysis (Abdolrezapour and Eslami-Rasekh, 2012).

One disadvantage of role-plays is that they might seem unrealistic to participants (Cohen & Olshtain, 1993). In other words, although participants may be interacting with each other, the context in which they enact roles is usually imaginary and, hence, not real (Golato, 2003, p. 93). According to Jung (2004), role-plays can result in unnatural behaviour at times. In addition, as Chang (2006) points out, "Subjects may exaggerate the pragmatic interaction in performing role plays, producing a speech behaviour which would not have occurred in a real-life situation (...)" (p. 7). Subjects are also apt to produce the item(s) that the researcher is interested in, threatening the validity of the study (Larson-Frreeman & Long, 1991). Lastly, role-play data need to be transcribed and are, hence, time-consuming (Kasper and Dahl, 1991).

In the present study, role-plays are not a major source of data; however, as a secondary source of data they are a useful method for validating soap opera data, as elaborated on below. As part of this study, I invited twelve native Persian speaking university students studying at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch to enact speech acts of greeting, leave-taking, apologizing, thanking and requesting. All of the participants were university students enrolled in different academic disciplines, one of whom was female and the rest being male, ranging between 25 to 40 in age. All spoke Persian as their first language, with Tehrani as their dialect. In the open role-plays, the researcher often played one role and the native Persian speakers played the other role. To see how it may affect the ways that RPF are used, the researcher and the participants often swapped their roles. All the role-plays were performed either in the researcher's office or in the participants' offices at the University of Canterbury. Participants were informed of the objectives of the study and consent forms were completed, as per the requirements of the UC Ethics Committee (see Appendix B). They were then briefed on the task and enacted their roles. Once the role playing was over, there were short chats with participants on the form and functions of the RPF used in the role-plays. These took a relatively unstructured form. The role-plays were audio taped and later transcribed into standard orthography on transcription forms for further coding and analysis.

The role-play data alongside the soap opera data, described below, was later incorporated into the database.

3.3.2.3 Introspection and intuition

Introspecting is a way of collecting data only about one's own speech community, and is an important skill that should be developed in researchers of language (Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 118). According to Sharifian and Jamarani (2011), "Introspective data is still natural in the sense that it is based on the recall of real experience (…)" (p.232). Commenting on the native speakers' intuition on the lexicon, Sinclair (1991) writes that "It has been fashionable among grammarians for many years now to introspect and to trust their intuitions about structure; why should not vocabulary be investigated in the same way?" (p. 39). Clearly, linguistic studies cannot be simply dependent on introspection and intuition alone, but to arrive at valid results, researchers of language need to use intuition and introspection along with other valid methods of data collection, especially when studying one's own language.

As a native speaker of Persian and as a participant observer of Iranian culture throughout his life, this researcher checked the soap opera data as well as the role-play data against his own intuition and that of other Persian speakers living and/or studying in Christchurch, New Zealand. Politeness formulae in Persian usually have a canonical form and a number of variants showing various degrees of formality/informality. There were times when the soap opera data only provided the canonical form of a politeness formula and not its variants or vice versa. Therefore, through the use of linguistic intuition this researcher was able to bring to light other variants. The use of intuition could not only be limited to that of the researcher himself/herself alone. Checking the politeness formulae and their function against the intuition of other native speakers helped significantly. During the phase of data collection and analysis, the intuition of other native speakers of Persian were consulted to further check the accuracy of the soap opera and role-play data and to further fix the canonical forms and variants of the politeness formulae. Every opportunity to turn friendly meetings and chats with other Persian speakers were taken advantage of and transformed into mini focus groups of three or four people discussing the various forms and functions of RPF in Persian. This procedure is in line with Saville-Troike's (1989) recommendation on checking the perception of others as follows:

(...) even when researchers are sure they 'know' about patterns of language use in their own speech community, it is important to check hypotheses developed on the basis of their own perceptions with the perceptions of others, and against objective data collected in systematic observation. (p. 119)

3.3.2.4 Scripted dialogue

In linguistics, the use of film dialogue as source of data is not always popular or recommended (see Bubel, 2008). Put differently, it has been claimed that linguists should only study real language, i.e., natural, unrehearsed and unscripted language (Pennycook, 2007, p. 61). According to Bubel (2008), language scholars have used film or TV dialogue as data, either when naturally occurring data has not been accessible, or when the film dialogues coincidently suit their line of argument (p. 55). Though scholars usually agree upon the artificiality of film and soap dialogues, there are also some researchers who have unearthed some degrees of similarity between artificially constructed dialogues of films and naturally-occurring speech. For example, using the popular television series *Friends* (an American TV series) as source of data, Tagliamonte & Roberts (2005) found that there is a similar use and patterning of intensification in dialogues in *Friends* and normal conversation. Likewise, in two separate studies, Quaglio (2008, 2009a; 2009b) and Rey (2001) showed that scripted language in TV series of *Friends* and *Star Trek* tends to capture and reproduce the linguistic characteristics of authentic face-to-face conversations. In comparing TV dialogue with natural conversation, Quaglio (2009a) analysed some features such as first- and second-person pronouns, discourse markers, intensifying adverbs, hedges, emphatics, slang terms, vocatives and familiarisers, etc. Quaglio (2009a) concludes that although the scripted language of *Friends* is not exactly the same as natural conversation, most of the linguistic features of naturally occurring conversation are shared by TV dialogue thus potentially making scripted language a valuable substitute for spontaneous spoken data in foreign language teaching (ESL/EFL purposes) (pp. 148-9). According to Sharp (2012), although a scripted television show is not spontaneous, "it is still a realistic imitation of spontaneous speech because it was written with the intention of being believable to the audience" (pp. 15-6).

Bednarek (2010) cites and summarises some features of artificially-constructed dialogue of television and film as opposed to naturally-occurring verbal behavioural patterns:

● it exhibits conventions of stage dialogue;

● it comprises certain stock lines;

● it avoids unintelligibility, that is, false starts, overlaps, interruptions, unclear words, abrupt topic shift etc. to favour intelligibility above acoustic fidelity and naturalism;

● it has a relatively even distribution of (short) turns;

● it has a low frequency of 'vague' language (e.g. *kind of*, *thing*(*s*) and *stuff*);

● it has a lower frequency of 'narrative' language;

● it has a higher frequency of emotional and emphatic language;

● it has a higher frequency of informal language;

● it is less varied linguistically (e.g. in terms of settings, interaction types, topics);

● it avoids repetitive discourse and fillers, because they do not advance the narrative;

● it contains aesthetic devices, for example, repetition, rhythm and surprise (p. 64).

The non-natural, rehearsed, scripted/constructed dialogues of soaps might seem of little value for researchers in many branches of linguistics; however, one particular attribute of soaps, i.e., being 'clichéd', 'predictable' or 'formulaic' make them a suitable source for researchers interested in formulaic speech (see Smith, 1991; Taylor, 2008).

For the present study, which is entirely dedicated to RPF, their form, function and context of usage, soaps are regarded as a valuable source of data. As such, the present study primarily draws on Persian soap operas as source of data, which shall be elaborated on in the following sections.

3.3.2.5 Soap operas and their characteristics

Soap operas were first broadcast on radio known as 'dramatic serials'. Because some soap manufacturers sponsored the shows, the serials eventually become known as soap operas. Soap opera is a popular cultural form, attracting millions of viewers each day. One factor contributing to the popularity of soaps is that they are broadcast via TV. Soaps, by definition,

are ongoing works of fiction, revealing the day-to-day lives of their characters, building the story over time. It usually takes viewers a while to get familiar with the characters who are featured at varying times. Viewers are attracted to soap characters because they seem real, and people can identify with them. The popularity and success of a soap opera is dependent on a myriad of factors including its plot, the way characters play their roles, the quality of filming, locations, and more importantly the language of the dialogues. The dialogues are usually written by skilled scriptwriters and enacted by professional actors/actresses. The language of TV dialogue is a reflection of the perception that scriptwriters/actors have of actual conversation (Rey, 2001). Although soaps are the product of a prewritten script, the language used is close to naturally occurring speech, and the dialogues of popular soaps are usually perceived as representative of real dialogues. As Rey (2001) notes, "While the language used in television is obviously not the same as unscripted language, it does represent the language scriptwriters imagine that real women and men produce" (p. 138). Successful soaps are then those that portray the world of the viewers more realistically and that closely resemble the ordinary language of everyday encounters. Likewise, Buckman (1984) remarks:

> The soap writer gives the audience what it wants, over and over again. What it wants is something entertaining, stimulating without being demanding, ordinary without being banal (...). The dialogue (...) must sound like ordinary, everyday speech, the sort of talk you can hear everywhere. (p. 98)

Scriptwriters are responsible for the language of dialogues, and, as speakers of the language, they depend on their own intuition. Alongside other factors, the language of dialogues is a crucial factor for identification of viewers with the story and characters and hence the overall success of soaps. In order to be accepted by the viewers, the scripted spoken language should essentially resemble their own. Scriptwriters, as native speakers of a given language, are familiar with the subtleties of that language, including the proper use of RPF and their knowledge of that language is based on their intuition and the conventions of scriptwriting.

Compared to other forms of art, soaps have been considered as cheap and low level (see Modleski, 1982, p. 87). One of the characteristics of soaps for which they have been looked down upon is that soaps are so "clichéd" or, in other words, "formulaic" (Smith, 1991, p. 15). Bednarek (2010) has referred to the same feature in soaps by saying that they comprise "stock lines" (p. 64). Similarly, describing the language of standardized exchanges such as

service encounters, telephone conversations and other ritual moves involving greetings and leave-takings, Taylor (2006; 2008) describes most of the dialogues taking place in film as "predictable". According to Smith (1991), this weak point attributed to soaps – being predictable and clichéd – makes them a useful source for the study of oral formulae in language (p. 15). Soaps are full of repetitive scenes in which people routinely greet each other, make requests, thanks for services, apologize for lapses or offences, and take their leave, among others. Each of these repetitive situations is associated with an array of specific RPF that can serve as an invaluable source of data. In soaps, for example, in a routine greeting scene, the greeting formulae is heard, or in situations in which apology is required the apology formulae that are specific to those environments will be heard/used. Therefore, as Smith (1991) notes, at the situational level, the formulaic character of soaps makes them a rich source of data for oral formulae (including RPF) (p. 16).

As previously mentioned, collecting authentic data on some speech acts (e.g., apologies) is hard and time-consuming. However, soap operas can provide an easy and reliable source for investigating speech acts and the related array of RPF. Moreover, McCarthy and Carter (1994) illustrate the significance of drama-based data in the following way:

> Data for everyday linguistic genres such as favour seeking are not always easy to obtain, since such events take place in intimate personal settings. But dramatized data such as plays and soap operas (...) are often an excellent source of data considered by consumers to be 'natural'. (p. 118)

During the past two decades, an increasing number of studies especially within the domain of cross-cultural pragmatics and formulaic genres have drawn on soaps and sitcoms as primary sources of data because of its advantages (e.g., Smith, 1991; Lipson, 1994; Rose, 2001; Wipprecht, 2005; Fahey, 2005; Barke, 2010; Sharp, 2012).

Fahey (2005), who has used soap operas as the main source of data in comparing the speech act of apologising in Irish and Chilean, summarises some of the advantages of soaps as follows:

● Soap operas are widely accessible and the quality of sound and recording is often good.

● Soap operas present scripted conversation as real conversation and the significance of the dialogue is entirely dependent on the context.

● Soap operas are carefully crafted in order to appear as spontaneous speech allowing at the same time the observation of pragmatic elements of a particular culture.

● The actors/actresses enact the dialogues and try to replicate the spontaneity of real speech and, most times, viewers of soaps perceive the language used as casual conversation.

Fahey also identified some disadvantages, to wit:

● Soap operas are artificially scripted and not as exemplary for speech acts as natural talk.

● Soap opera dialogues cannot represent casual spoken language because they are not spontaneous.

● The viewer needs to watch several episodes to gain contextual information (e.g., knowledge of the characters' personalities, their relationships and roles) (section six, paragraph one).

3.3.2.6 Soap operas in Iran

Soaps are cultural products and are viewed as true reflections of a nation's culture (Buckman, 1984, pp. 205-6). The Persian soaps, which are quite rich in RPF, reflect the daily life of Iranian families speaking Persian at home, at work, and in public places. As such, Persian soaps reveal the values and social conventions underlying Iranian society. Soap operas in Iran are known as 'television serials'. They are continuous weekly or daily TV serials screening on primetime, usually in one-hour episodes. In the last few decades, soaps have secured their place as a popular TV product in Iranian society. Persian soaps usually focus their plots and storylines on family life, personal relationships, emotional and moral conflicts and the issues related to the problematic transition of Iranian society from traditional to modern. The characters in soaps are mainly urban working class to middle class. Like viewers of soaps in other countries, Iranian viewers take soaps seriously and can identify with characters, events, and more specifically with the language of dialogues, so much so that a number of linguistic expressions or clichés have entered the casual everyday speech of people, lingering for some time.

Some Persian soaps (e.g., *Narges*: 69 episodes) were extremely popular. For example, Delap (2007), who was in Tehran during the time *Narges* ('primrose') was broadcast by Iran's

national TV, reminisces saying: during the time that *Narges* was shown, one could see that the streets of Tehran were deserted. Whole families sat down together after dinner to watch *Narges*. Even parties ground to halt at 10.45 PM so that they could all watch the serial. Each time that *Narges* was finished, it was the topic of hot discussions among family members and friends who carefully analysed the characters and their behaviour. Popular magazines and daily papers also magnified this enthusiasm by scrutinizing every detail of *Narges* in the days after the TV drama was shown. Delap (2007) further writes:

> It was clear from these experiences that *Narges* was a cultural sensation, one that had engulfed the entire nation, garnering enormous popularity and traversing the boundaries of class, gender and age, uniting the country in televisual pleasure. *Narges* was obviously a significant presence in the lives of the Iranians I met and I felt that understanding something about the place of this serial in people's social lives and imaginations could be a productive way of exploring the ways in which identities in contemporary Iran are constructed and contested. (p. 1)

Narges was not the only popular soap opera among Iranian viewers. Most of the soaps chosen as a source of data for the present study were highly admired during their time of broadcast. The selection of soaps for the present study was made on the basis of criteria and recommendations set up by Rose (2001), who stipulated the need to choose films that represent life in a setting that is as close to modern times as possible (p. 314). On this account, soaps made earlier than 1979 (Iran's revolution) were totally avoided. Fourteen Persian soaps (as shown in table 2) were selected as the primary source of data to extract RPF in Persian. Most of them were shown either weekly or daily on primetime (evenings). *Eghma* and *Fereshte* were two popular TV serials shown on evenings of the month of Ramadan (the fasting month for Muslims) for about thirty days.

Table 2 Soaps selected as source of data

	Name of soap opera	Episodes No.	Type	Extracted video clips No.
1	*Pedær salar*		weekly	269
2	*Arayeshgah-e ziba*	13	weekly	96
3	*Nærges*	69	weekly	82
4	*Miv-e mamnu'e*		weekly	65

5	*Eghma*	30	daily	59
6	*Be koja chenin shetaban*		weekly	180
7	*Fereshte*	30	daily	83
8	*Mesl-e hichkæs*		weekly	44
9	*Pæs æz salha*		weekly	74
10	*Reyhane*		weekly	98
11	*Sæfær-e sabz*		weekly	55
12	*Sahebdelan*		daily	28
13	*Tærane madæri*		weekly	27
14	*Zir-e tigh*		weekly	31

3.3.2.7 Data Preparation and processing

The soap opera corpus drawn on in this study is primarily taken from around 400-500 hours of Persian soap operas screened on Iran's national television (see table 2). All the soaps used in this study were downloaded from the Internet, and their formats were changed so they could be readable by the video editing software. All the soaps were viewed in their entirety and by using video editing software (QuickTime), RPF of various types (about 23 categories) were identified, extracted and stored as short video clips. The clips extracted from each particular soap opera were stored in special files, each was given an individual ID number. 1191 of such video clips were stored ranging in length from a few seconds to around one minute. All video clips were then transcribed into standard orthography in order to extract, categorize and analyse RPF and to investigate their canonical form, variants, formula structure and their discourse structure. Since this study was not interested in the prosodic characteristics of RPF, there was no need for a prosodic or narrow transcription of the video clips. A complete description of every formula would include the description of its prosodics. However, this would have required a great deal of additional attention including an agreed notation system for prosodic annotation. It was decided to leave this analysis to further investigation. Each video clip was transcribed on a special form, referred to as a 'transcription form'. The number of transcription forms is less than the number of video clips since the clips that contained identical formulae were not transcribed. That is, if more than one clip contained the same formula, only one of those clips was transcribed. Each transcription form usually represents one politeness formula and each form is referenced by a particular video clip ID number. This clip ID was generated for necessity and efficiency reasons and enabled this researcher to watch them as often as necessary in order to further

probe form, function and discourse context of the RPF. Transcription forms also contain another ID number connecting a particular RPF to its place inside the database (e.g., MES626). Moreover, the category of each RPF was labelled on the top of each transcription form for easy classification afterwards. The speech acts whose category I could not decide upon at the time were put aside to be sorted out at a later stage, or to be discarded as unspecified. In line with Coulmas' (1979) situational frames for routine formulae, some brief information about (i) participants (their sex, age, their social role, hierarchy, authority, familiarity), (ii) setting (time, place), (iii) the why and wherefore (time, reason), and (iv) contextual restrictions (sequentialization), were included in the transcription forms. Concomitant activity (e.g., body language), however, was not included in the transcription forms given that the meticulous and systematic investigation of body language (gestures, eye gaze, etc.) was not the aim of this study, although for the speech acts of greeting and leave-taking there is some general information. 23 different categories of RPFs were recognized, as shown in table 2. However, due to time limitations, this study was confined to the five speech acts of greeting, leave-taking, apologizing, thanking and requesting as they are most frequent in my data.

Table 3: Categories of routine politeness formulae

	Categories of routine politeness formulae	transcription forms No.
1	Greetings	100
2	Leave-taking	110
3	Apologizing	89
4	Thanking	113
5	Requesting	47
6	Complimenting	22
7	Congratulating	24
8	Welcoming	20
9	A welcoming surprise	12
10	Well-wishing	35
11	Inviting (inviting sb to take a seat, to proceed to a location, to come in, to accept/eat food, to feel at home)	44
12	Mitigating imposition on sb	7
13	Offering sth with deference	11
14	Offering of service	4

15	Thanking God for good outcome	7
16	Condolence	7
17	Hospitality request	2
18	A deference on payment by retailer	8
19	A deference on offering food by host	1
20	A wish for efficiency of prayers/alms	8
21	Asking for permission to enter a place	4
22	Imposition on negative face	2
23	Social distance reducer	2
24	Category unknown	97
	Total number of transcription forms	780

3.4 The electronic Database

Although the corpus of transcription forms accompanied by the related video clips sufficed for the purposes of the present study, a database was also constructed to meet other aims. The information on the transcription forms was used to construct an electronic database for the RPF in Persian. This database has a range of potential uses. It can be regarded as a multi-media dictionary useful for second/foreign language learners of Persian. Moreover, it can be useful for teaching Persian to non-Persian speakers. The database is briefly described below.

Using the database software FileMaker Pro 10, three tables were created, namely, a video clip table, a character table and a formula table. In its present status, when opening the database the three tables appear as follows.

3.4.1 Video clip table

In the video clip table, there are some fields for storing information about the video clips including: (i) the video clip itself that can be played, (ii) the video clip ID No. (e.g., MIV636), (iii) references to character(s) ID (e.g., NAM023), (iv) the name of the soap opera from which the video clip was extracted, (v) locale or the place where the dialogue is taking place (e.g., home, workplace, inside taxi, etc.), (vi) formality of situation (informal, semi-formal and informal, not applicable), (vii) time of day (afternoon, breakfast time, daytime, dinner time, evening, lunch time, midnight, morning, noon, not applicable), (viii) language

variety (Tehrani Persian), (ix) city (Tehran, Tehran (downtown), Tehran (midtown), Tehran (uptown)), (x) Interlocutor's relationship (e.g., mother-son).

3.4.2 Character table

In the character table, the fields contain information about the characters including the character's ID No. (e.g., NAM001), name, age, sex, job, and social status.

3.4.3 Formula table

In the formula table, the fields contain information about the RPF including (i) the formula ID No. (e.g. FOR077), (ii) the formula form as it appears in the clip, (iii) reference to a particular video clip in which the formulae has occurred, (iv) reference to particular character(s), (v) the written form of the RPF, since in Persian, spoken language is a bit different from written language, (vi) its politeness category if, for example, it is an apology or greeting, (vii) its literal and idiomatic sense, (viii) its formula variants either already found in other video clips or coming from role plays or coming from the researcher's own intuition, (ix) discourse structure rules and restriction notes telling where this formula is used, (x) the context in which the RPF has been used.

3.5 Analysis, description and presentation of data

In this study the linguistic units under investigation are seen as the phraseological units and as lexical items in the mental dictionary of speakers. They are also represented in the description to follow as entries in a phraseological dictionary. Moreover, some RPF have been analysed within the framework of Brown and Levinson's (1987) face-saving model of politeness. This study does not deal with the frequency of occurrence of the RPF but rather focuses on conditions of use (who says what to whom and under what circumstances) and investigates the forms and functions of RPF in Persian. Therefore, the analysis is socio-cultural rather than statistical.

Ferguson (1976, 1983) was among the first scholars who directed the attention of researchers to 'politeness formulae'. He (1976) complains that "At present most accounts of politeness

formulas are probably appendices of short chapters in grammars (...)", and that "Very rarely do we have a straightforward account of native customs which gives exact texts of the formulas and appropriate conditions of response" (p. 139). Having conducted some observation in the Middle East, Ferguson (1976) brings up a number of politeness formulae in Syrian Arabic and compares them with those of American English. The way that Ferguson describes and presents politeness formulae in Syrian Arabic is relatively in line with what Geertz (1973) calls "thick description", i.e., accurately describing a human behaviour (verbal/ non-verbal) within its appropriate context in such a way that it becomes meaningful to an outsider. In analysing and discussing politeness formulae in Syrian Arabic, Ferguson (1976) provides sufficient information including formula form, literal meaning, idiomatic sense, category/function, context of usage, patterns of response, variants/variation and diachronic considerations for each of the politeness formulae, which can be used as a model in making dictionary entries for RPF. In effect, in analysing and describing politeness formulae, Ferguson (1983) identifies who says what to whom, under what circumstances and for what purposes (p. 69), which has been partly imitated as a model for the analysis of RPF in the present thesis.

Over the past three decades, Kuiper and his associates have provided an impressive body of analytic work on oral formulaic speech in English (Pawley, 2009, p. 17). These studies deal with oral formulaic genres, ranging from auctions (1992), livestock auctions (1984), tobacco auctions (1985), various sports commentaries (1985; 1990; 1991) through to weather forecasts (2009) and ritual talk at the supermarket checkout (2000). In describing a particular formulaic genre, Kuiper usually begins with an elaborate outline of the participants and setting. This includes an exhaustive (micro/macro) description of the situation in which formulaic speech is used based on observation. Moreover, for each text type analysis of a formulaic genre, Kuiper usually presents three crucial aspects: (i) discourse structure rules, (ii) prosodic character, and (iii) formulaic syntax. Likewise, in analysing and describing RPF in the present study, wherever necessary, discourse structure rules have been presented.

This thesis has a lexicographical basis in that a dictionary was created for the collection of RPF, providing explanations of their meaning and use in the way that lexicographers do. As articulated in chapter one, standard dictionaries usually deal with the form, meaning and grammatical function of single words. Dictionaries for multi-word units, e.g., phrasal verbs, idioms and restricted collocations were developed much later in English. In the past few decades, in spite of all the efforts to create more inclusive dictionaries, multi-word

expressions (including RPF) have not yet received adequate attention (see Pawley, n.d.). What Pawley (2009) names speech act formulas/expressions have received little attention by dictionary makers. Further as mentioned in chapter one, in making dictionary entries for speech act expressions/formulas (e.g., 'pleased to meet you') and in analysing and describing them, Pawley (2007) proposed a bundle of seven or eight components, which has been partly employed in presenting RPF in this study (p. 19).

This study has a phraseological basis in that the phraseology of Persian is investigated in the same way that European phraseologists do for European languages (e.g., Burger, 2010). That is, (i) the RPF were treated as a sub-set of phrasal lexical items (PLIs), (ii) their canonical forms and variants were provided, (iii) they were classified according to their function and placed within the cultural context of the Persian speaking community.

Lastly, RPF have been analysed within the theoretical framework of the face-saving model of politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), which was introduced in detail in chapter two. As will be discussed in the data chapters and in chapter nine, since they live in a positive-politeness-oriented society, Persian speakers usually prioritize positive politeness over negative politeness in using RPF.

The data chapters, 4-8, more or less follow the same structure. Each data chapter starts with a specific review of literature, then moves on to an ethnographic account of the related speech act and introduces RPF as separate dictionary entries with notes on their context of use. The rituals of greeting, leave-taking, thanking, apologizing and requesting are introduced in chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 respectively.

3.6 Summary

This study uses a qualitative approach. It describes RPF from five frequently-used speech acts and represents these phraseological units as dictionary entries. Further, RPF are analysed on the basis of the face-saving model of politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987). To increase its reliability, this research employs multiple data sources, namely, soap operas, role-plays and introspection.

CHAPTER 4
GREETING

4.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with the definition, functions, and properties of greeting as well as a review of literature in 4.2, followed by the greeting rituals in the Persian speaking community in 4.3. Next, some non-verbal elements of the rituals of greeting are presented in 4.3.1. Discourse structure rules for a greeting sequence are introduced in 4.3.2, succeeded by time-of-day greetings in 4.4, day time greetings in 4.5, celebratory greetings in 4.6 and summary in 4.7.

4.2 The definition, functions and review of literature on greetings

Greeting, as the archetypical forms of politeness, has been the subject of intensive studies in various disciplines. Greetings, as Kendon and Ferber note (1973), "(...) have an important function in the management of relationships between people" (p. 592). Apart from certain American Indian societies such as the Western Apaches studied by Basso (1972), there is sufficient evidence that most speech communities observe the rite of greeting when they come together (see Kendon and Ferber, 1973; Duranti, 1997, p. 89).

Although there is no "generalizable definition of greetings" (Duranti, 1997, p. 63) so far, scholars from different disciplines have attempted to either define them or to introduce a set of criteria for identifying greetings across languages and cultures. According to Duranti (1997), greetings are a crucial aspect of communicative competence of every mature member of a speech community (p. 63). In effect, to establish, maintain and enhance interpersonal relationships, exercising appropriate greeting behaviour is vital (LI, 2010, p. 56). Holmes (2001) attributes an affective (or social) function to greetings as it is their role to establish contact between participants (p. 259). Greetings are said to be among the first speech acts that children and second language learners acquire/learn (Duranti, 1997, p. 63; Youssouf et al., 1976). The Ganda people who live in South-central Uganda teach their children greeting and parting formulas as well as the necessary bodily gestures and postures even before they develop their speaking abilities (Mair, 1934; as cited in Firth, 1972, p. 33). In learning a second/foreign language, "the more speakers understand the cultural context of greetings, the better the society appreciates them, and the more they are regarded as well behaved" (Schleicher, 1997, p. 334). Failure to greet people properly can lead to responses varying

from unease, bad feelings, to being deemed as having a poor upbringing (as in the Yoruba community in Nigeria, see Akindele (1990)). Even physical harm is a real possibility (as among the Tuareg nomads of the Sahara desert, see Youssouf et al. (1976)).

Greeting behaviour also occurs in animal species. Comparative ethologists who study one type of behaviour in various species, were among the first to attempt comparing greeting behaviours between various animals and human beings (see Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1968, 1970, 1977; Kendon and Ferber, 1973). Firth (1972) writes, "Formalised use of body and limbs in signals of greeting and parting very strongly suggests analogies in animal behaviour" (p. 2). The act of touching in humans demonstrated in the form of handshakes or handclasp, kissing (lip-to-cheek, lip-to-lip, kissing the hand, kissing the feet), and nose rubbing (among the Maori of New Zealand, see Salmond (1989)) is obviously related to the behaviour of other animals (see Firth, 1972, p. 31). By referring to the activities of geese, stickleback fish and chacma baboons, Ferguson (1976) considers a biological basis for the exchange of politeness formulas among humans, attributing it to the bowings and touching in other species (p. 138). In the ethological tradition, as Duranti (1997) points out, "greetings are defined as rituals of appeasing and bonding that counteract potentially aggressive behaviour during face-to-face encounters" (p. 64). Duranti (1997) further notes that both animals and human beings live under the constant threat of "potential aggression" or "fear of aggression" and greeting behaviour is a way to deal with this instinct (p. 64). Similarly, describing a typical greeting ritual in an American context, Firth (1972) portrays handshaking as "a disclaimer of aggression" and an explicit gesture of mutual trust (p. 5). In the harsh and hostile environment of the Sahara desert where encounters among unfamiliar nomads can naturally entail potential or real threats, body contacts, such as handshakes, may be taken as disclaimer of aggression and mutual trust (Youssouf et al., 1976, p. 805).

According to Duranti (1997), although the act of greeting is usually recognized by specific conventional formulae, such as 'Hi' in English, 'Ciao' in Italian, etc., such expressions of greeting are not necessarily always present (e.g., among Samoans) (pp. 67, 74). That is, greetings are not always constituted by RPF. Addressing the difficulty in defining what constitutes a greeting exchange and building upon previous studies, Duranti (1997) proposes six criteria for identifying greetings across languages and speech communities: (i) Near-boundary occurrence, (ii) Establishment of a shared perceptual field, (iii) Adjacency pair format, (iv) Relative predictability of form and content of the formulae used for greetings. (v)

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Implicit establishment of a spatiotemporal unit of interaction, (vi) Identification of the interlocutor as a distinct being worth recognizing (pp. 67-71).

In his seminal work titled "Verbal and bodily rituals of greeting and parting", Firth (1972) provides a systematic study of greeting and parting rituals with many examples from numerous societies. Along the lines of ethology, Firth (1972) endeavours to draw an analogy between the formal use of body and limbs in humans with that of animals (pp. 2-3). Firth (1972) offers a definition for greeting and parting in which the notions of 'being socially acceptable', 'establishing or perpetuating a social relationship', and 'recognising the other person as a social entity' are central (p. 1). As such, Firth (1972) writes, "Greeting is the recognition of an encounter with another person as socially acceptable" (p. 1). Firth (1972) considers three major social functions for greeting and parting behaviour, connecting each with the notion of the personality of interlocutors (pp. 30-31). Attracting the attention of one's interlocutor is the primary object of greeting referred to as "attention-producing". Based on the second function, "identification", greeting and parting behaviour provides a framework for interlocutors to identify each other as individuals (or social entities) in order to enter into or continue social relationships. Third, everyday encounter with no interaction proves to be threatening, especially among those who do not know each other. Therefore, even a casual verbal and/or nonverbal greeting can aid immensely to do away with the unpleasant sense of uncertainty and insecurity ("reduction of uncertainty").

Goody's (1972) research on greeting behaviour among the Gonja people and the LoDagaa society in Africa is now regarded as a classic ethnographic study (Duranti, 1997). She compares the functions of greeting behaviour in the hierarchical and centralized society of the Gonja with that of the LoDagaa that is known to be non-stratified. Personal, social and political life among the Gonja is largely tied to the ways people greet one another. Similar to some other societies (see Irvine, 1974), in Gonja, the functions of greeting behaviour go far beyond phatic communion, as it is known in modern societies. Having this in mind, Goody (1972) claims that, "(...) in a society like that of Gonja, where greeting has been institutionalized as a way of affirming status, the proffering or withholding of greeting is in itself manipulative" (p. 41). Goody (1972) ascribes three general functions to greetings among the Gonja the first of which is to open a channel for communication (p. 40). Most languages across the world share this basic function of greeting formulae with the Gonja, according to which the basic function of greeting expressions is to set the tone for

communication; greetings are also thought to have no informational or cognitive content (see Malinowski, 1923). The functions of greetings, however, in a caste society like that of the Gonja go far beyond setting the tone for communication (Goody, 1972, p. 47). Indicating social rank and status is the crucial function of greetings conveyed via both verbal and non-verbal means. In a communicative encounter, the inferior should physically approach the superior individual and initiate greetings (e.g., children as juniors approach parents as seniors and initiate greetings). As Goody (1972) points out, "This greeting is not simply empty form; it conveys respect to senior, and it expresses subordinate/superordinate status relations" (p. 48). It is the inferior who physically places himself in a lower position (prostrating, kneeling, crouching and bowing) and maintain a physical distance out of deference to the superior; it is the inferior who removes an article of clothing (e.g., a hat); it is the inferior who assumes a wheedling tone of voice; and it is the inferior who, by employing certain forms of address, designates his/her addressee as superior. The second function for greeting behaviour as Goody (1972) concludes is to define and affirm social status, identity and rank (p. 40). In a non-egalitarian society like Gonja, greetings can be used with superior parties to bring about a specific outcome. Therefore, the third function of greetings is to manipulate a relationship in order to achieve a certain desired result. Correspondingly, the political arena in Gonja is characterised by a superior-inferior dynamic in which greeting has a central role (1972, pp. 57-58). Greeting to beg for a vacant chiefship or an office is an overt example of the manipulative function of greeting behaviour among the Gonja. In comparison, excluding the first function (phatic communion), the egalitarian society of the LoDagaa almost ignores the other two functions altogether (1972, pp. 65-66).

In another ethnographic study, Irvine (1974), describes a rather different type of manipulation in the Wolof greeting. The hierarchical and stratified society of Wolof is very similar to that of the Gonja (Goody, 1972); hence, some of the functions of greeting behaviour between both societies are identical. However, there are some peculiarities that are specific to Wolof society. For example, in a greeting exchange, whoever moves towards the other party and initiates the greeting discloses his/her relative rank and status as lower class (self-lowering). Conversely, to take the higher class role, one needs to avoid initiating the greeting right from the beginning (self-elevating). Interestingly, as Irvine (1974) argues, people of whatever rank will not necessarily wish to assume the higher position in an encounter (p. 175). "Although high status implies prestige, respect and political power, it also implies the obligation to contribute to the support of low-status persons. Thus high rank means a financial burden,

while low rank has financial compensations" (1974, p. 175). Therefore, it is a unique feature of greeting behaviour among the Wolof that it can readily be used to assume a desired lower or higher rank referred to as 'status manipulation'. Things become more interesting if one knows that "Even a noble talking to a griot [*sic*] may wish to take the lower-status role to serve some special purpose" (Irvine, 1974, pp. 175-176). In so doing, firstly, the noble party takes the initiative in preventing the Griot from assuming the lower rank. As such, the lower rank party can no longer solicit for gifts. Further, the nobleman may earnestly wish to elevate the rank of a certain Griot as worthy of respect and attention (Irvine, 1974, p. 176). Status manipulation in the Wolof greeting to achieve a certain result is a clear proof that greetings are not necessarily devoid of propositional content; rather they help to characterize the complex social life of the Wolof people. Below, it will be demonstrated how the ritual of greeting in an unfriendly and hostile environment can contribute to people's survival.

Studying the greeting behaviour among the Tuareg nomads inhabiting the Western Sahara in North Africa, Youssouf et al. (1976) depict a slightly different picture of greeting behaviour. Most studies conducted on greetings usually occur in friendly or, at least, neutral situations; however, Youssouf et al. (1976), "(...) present a special case of greetings which take place in a particularly hostile environment, hostile not only because of its physical properties, but also because of psychosociocultural characteristics" (p. 800). Unlike other human societies, Tuareg people have to live and take long journeys across the endless hostile desert in absolute loneliness and isolation. Given the harsh context, these encounters can be extremely risky. "The greetings which are part of such encounters are to a considerable extent ritualized and formulaic. They are also critically important, and lapses can have grave consequences for the offender or errant traveller" (Youssouf et al., 1976, pp. 800-801). Greetings are naturally the opening stage of encounters, and as one would expect, an important part of the communicative competence of a mature Tuareg man is to master the complex rules of verbal and non-verbal rituals of greetings. Although the functions of greeting behaviour among the Tuareg remain more or less the same as other human communities, the tactics employed are relatively different. That is, extraordinary attention is paid to the clues that usually go unnoticed in other more familiar urban societies (Youssouf et al., 1976, p. 800). Stage one of a greeting ritual among the Tuareg commences with the exchange of *salaam* ('hello') and handshake. As a summons, *salaam* can be repeated more than once until it draws the attention of addressee. Interestingly, *salaam* and the formulaic response for that can be pronounced in two different forms revealing some information about the region the

interlocutors come from as well as their characters. *salām ʿaleykum* with glottal stop /ʾ/ at the beginning reveals more Islamic influence, but *salām γaleykum* with /γ/ conveys less adherence to Islamic teachings. While this distinction among family, friends and acquaintances is interpreted as random variants, with total strangers, it conveys vital information about the character of the interlocutor. That is, the party who uses the non-Islamized variety resembles a person who does not fear God and hence might be dangerous.

In a different approach to greetings, Alharbi and Al-Ajmi (2008) complain about the lack of scholarly attention that has, so far, been bestowed on formulaic expressions used for politeness purposes, such as greetings in the Arabic spoken in the Persian Gulf. The authors direct the readers' attention to an extant dilemma: on the one hand, due to the increasing strategic and economic importance of the Persian Gulf region, there is an unprecedented demand to learn and use the Gulf Arabic. But on the other hand, there is very limited linguistic knowledge available on this Arabic dialect. Assessing the treatment of the greeting formulae in one contemporary bilingual dictionary, the *Glossary of Gulf Arabic* by Qafisheh (1996), Alharbi and Al-Ajmi (2008) assert that it suffers from some serious weaknesses. For example, taking *guwwa* ('strength') into account, as a greeting formula the usage of which distinguishes the Gulf Arabic from other dialects of Arabic, the authors touch upon the following issues: Firstly, *guwwa* has been equated with 'How are you?' and 'Good morning', which is misleading. Actually, *guwwa*, as an expression to open a conversation, is traditionally used in the context where one greets people who are engaged in physical or manual work, expressing a wish that God gives them strength. Secondly, it is not made known to the user that *guwwa* is a short form of *allah ya'aTiik al guwwah* ('God give you strength'). Thirdly, the formulaic response to *guwwa* is either *alla ygawwik* or *gawwik*, but the latter has not been mentioned in this dictionary. In sum, Alharbi and Al-Ajmi (2008) suggest that greeting rituals have to be independently treated and their dictionary listing must be supplemented with: (i) explanatory definition, (ii) actual articulation, (iii) adjacency pairs, (iv) authentic context, (v) etymology and (vi) cross-reference to the related entries.

4.3 Greeting ritual in the Persian-speaking community

In the Persian language and culture, much like others, offering and responding to *hello* (called *sælam æleyk kærdæn*) and asking about one's health, well-being, state of affairs and news (called *æhval porsi kærdæn*) are often, though not always, employed prior to daily social

encounters. Age, social status and interlocutors' relationship are the main factors determining the use of greeting formulae in Persian. The context as well as the presence of bystanders is also important. Elders among family members, relatives, acquaintances and/or strangers should be paid the respect due to them. Younger persons are expected to initiate the greeting sequence by proffering *sælam* to older family members, relatives, acquaintances and/or strangers as a show of respect, although there are particular cases where elders initiate a greeting exchange. Children before school age are not usually expected to initiate greetings; when they are in their parents' company, and if they come across some elders (e.g., relatives, friends), children are quietly urged by parents to politely offer *sælam*. When children fail to do so, the encountered elders usually take the initiative by offering greetings to the child, pretending that the child had already offered *sælam* to ease the parents' embarrassment, to overcome the child's shyness and to save the child's face. Here, the child may receive a light reprimand from the parents, whereupon the other party may intervene to appease the situation by affirming that the child did say *sælam* in a low tone/volume, or in his/her heart, hence, in both instances, inaudible to others! Due to its high social value, greetings are taught even to children who are only a few months old regarding them as "proper conversationalists" (in Sack's terms, 1975) (see also Duranti, 1997). As previously mentioned, the politeness formulae are among the few linguistic skills that parents consciously and explicitly teach their children and for that reason, it is claimed that the RPF is acquired differently from the rest of language (see Gleason & Weintraub, 1976).

As in other societies, an important aspect of socialization and acculturation in Persian is to know how, when and in what manner to greet others. From school age on, children are expected to defer to seniors by properly offering *sælam*, conveying respect to seniority. This places emphasis on status and rank in Iranian society as I shall elaborate on in chapter nine. Since offering greetings indicates proper socialization, failure by children and teenagers to do so is usually regarded as a manifestation of poor upbringing and a reflection of poor parenting skills. Therefore, parents, especially mothers, consider it their duty to teach children to greet elders properly. In the event that a younger party has not yet seen the older party, the latter usually initiates greetings, whereby, the younger should immediately and humbly apologise by commencing a particular apologizing formulae, such as *bebækhshid*, *sælam æz bændæs* ('Please excuse me, it is the duty of this humble fellow (me) to offer you *sælam* first'), or *sælam æz mast* ('It's our (my) duty to offer *sælam* to you first'). In instances where the younger person does initiate the greetings in a dyad, the older party usually takes

over the flow of the greeting sequence by enquiring about the health, wellbeing and state of the younger person and that of his/her family. The younger individual, in turn, then responds to the inquiries with the appropriate ritual formulae. Once the elder appears to be finished, and depending on the age difference and the context of the situation, the younger individual (not a child or teenager) can assume the role of the interrogator, addressing the same inquiries to the older party. As an exception, the age factor is ignored during an encounter between a host/hostess and a guest. As a welcoming protocol, it is usually the host/hostess who commands the flow of the greeting sequence.

In cases where age and social status are contradictory, e.g., an encounter between a subordinate older person and a young boss, it is usually the younger boss who initiates the greeting sequence. In such context, however, it is not unusual for the older subordinate to initiate the greetings simply out of respect for the younger party's achievements (e.g., higher education or skills). Among equals in age and social status, competing on who offers *sælam* first is regarded a virtue and the first party who establishes eye contact initiates the greeting sequence. There are many cultural and religious cues that direct people to greet each other warmly, as well as to compete to see who can offer *sælam* first.

Responding to *sælam* is even more important than offering it. Based on *Ahadith* (narrations from the Prophet Muhammad), it is widely held among believers that offering *sælam* is *mostæhæb* (recommended or optional) but responding to it is *vajeb* ('incumbent or obligatory'). Similarly, the Koran (*Surah An-Nisa*, 4: 86) urges Muslims to return a greeting with a better one by intensifying it, or to reciprocate at least with the same level of greeting. There is no limitation on the number of times one can offer *sælam* to others. For example, during a party if one has already exchanged greetings with everybody present and, s/he goes out for a while, it is recommended to re-offer *sælam* to the whole party again upon his/her return. It is not, however, necessary for everybody in the room to hear the re-offer of *sælam* as it is usually uttered in a lower tone/volume and in a humble manner. Depending on the age and status of the person who has been out and back again, some or all people in the room will usually reply with *sælam*, along with other routine welcoming formulae such as *bɛæfrma'id* ('Come in please'/'Take a sit please') and/or *yallah* ('O God'). Likewise, in work places and during a single day, it is customary for colleagues who might regularly pass each other in corridors to briefly greet each other with *sælam* as well as a conventional popular formula such as *khæste næbashid* ('May you not be tried'). This repetitive exchange of greetings does

not imply that Iranians are wasteful of their time and energy. Owing to the dominance of positive over negative politeness in Iranian culture, this repetitive exchange of *sælam* is actually a way through which people can maintain and strengthen their sense of solidarity and concern for one another – known in the literature as "positive face strokes", i.e., they function as gentle strokes or pats on the positive face of interactants (see Smith, 1991, p. 68). I shall elaborate on this in chapter nine.

4.3.1 Some general non-verbal elements of the ritual of greeting in Persian

Initiating and responding to greetings is usually accompanied by facial expressions, bodily gestures and postures. According to Ventola (1972) everyday encounters are not merely performed through language; in fact, we talk to each other with our whole bodies (p. 267). Although body language is a crucial element of every face-to-face verbal interaction, in passing greetings, that is, during morning or evening rush hours where there is no chance for verbal greetings, facial expressions and bodily gestures such as eye contact, eyebrow raising, smiling, nodding and tossing of the head, as well as waving are the only means of greeting available to interactants before they hurry away.

As with other languages and cultures, Persians use a wide variety of bodily gestures whose forms and functions might share similarities with other cultures, or which might be indigenous to Persian. Some of these gestures and postures in the course of greeting rituals (short or extended) are: physically approaching one another, standing up from a sitting position upon somebody's arrival, extending the right hand (one-handed or two-handed handshakes), waving to each other (especially when there is distance between the interlocutors), putting the right hand palm to the chest for a few seconds accompanied with a slight bow, hand kissing (usually done in greeting the elderly amongst family and relatives), two or three kisses on the cheek (same sex), embracing/hugs, smiling, nodding and tossing of the head, establishing eye contact, or raising/flashing the eyebrows. Direct and continuous eye contact with the opposite sex (especially non-relations and strangers) is not favoured: people, especially believers in Islam, usually try to lower their gaze when talking to the opposite sex. Owing to religious edicts that prohibit any kind of body contact with the opposite sex, no handshakes or kissing may be exchanged between men and women. This rule, however, does not include one's blood relations including parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles. Elderly men and women can also join hands with young non-

kin women and men as a matter of fatherly or motherly affection. When interlocutors are in close proximity, handshakes among them are almost inevitable. When somebody's hand is dirty (e.g., a mechanic's oily hand), he still proffers his clenched fist for a partial handshake with humble apologies, wherein the other party usually clasps the forearm right above the wrist, pumping it two or three times. If one's hand is wet, especially due to ablutions prior to daily prayers, one usually proffers his/her pinched thumb and forefinger and the other party gently grabs them with the tips of all his/her fingers. During a greeting encounter, if one party is carrying something not very heavy, s/he would put it down to shake hands as regards the social importance of handshaking. Shaking hands more than a few seconds, or more than two or three quick pumps (up and down movements of the grasped hands) make people feel embarrassed and uncomfortable. The amount of pressure should also be moderate: not too firm or too weak. Friends and peers, however, might firmly grip hands longer, pumping several times. For expressing utmost cordiality, often a one-handed handshake swiftly turns into a two-handed handshake with one party, usually the older one, joining his free left hand, a gesture imitated by the other party. During the same day, the same people can exchange handshakes repeatedly upon coming together, despite having already shaken hands previously. This is a way that Persians attend to each other's positive face, maintain and strengthen their friendship ties and social bond (see positive face strokes in chapter nine).

Pulling hands away is as important as joining them. People usually know when to pull their hands away and it is usually done by easing the pressure simultaneously. A forced and hasty pulling away of hands is interpreted as impolite and hostile. During a handshake between an older and younger person, it is usually the older party who, by easing the pressure, signals the pulling away of hands (a sign of the dominance of age); the other way round would be interpreted as rudeness. During the handshake, eye contact is also meaningful. Young people shaking hands with seniors usually try to avoid direct eye contact by slightly tossing their head down or by lowering their gaze to show respect. Among equals and friends, eye contact is maintained throughout the handshake and evading eye contact is interpreted as shyness, lack of confidence, or at worst, annoyance. In fact, handshakes can reveal many things about people and their intentions. Refusal or reluctance to offer or accept a handshake can be interpreted as pride, rudeness and/or open hostility.

When a young person and a senior (in terms of age and/or social status) catch each other's eyes while both are in a standing posture, it is the younger person in the dyad who should

physically approach the older party and initiate greetings. The older also tries to take a few steps forward to reciprocate the show of respect. Even though couches and tables are common, Iranians prefer to live and eat on floors carpeted with *Farsh* ('Persian carpet'). Therefore, when somebody enters a room where people are already seated, depending on the age and social status of the person and the formality of the situation, people rise to their feet to greet him/her. For example, when an elder person appears in the doorway, everybody in the room should stand up, and while getting up they say *ya ællah* ('O God') once or twice as a polite welcoming formula and as an acknowledgment of the arrival. For a child, usually nobody stands up, though his/her arrival is warmly recognised and welcomed by the people in the room. Since it is difficult for elderly people to get up onto their feet each time somebody arrives, especially during parties where people keep coming in, they usually try to demonstrate a pretence of getting up by a slight movement in their sitting posture and by saying *ya ællah* ('O God') a couple of times. In general, when a person enters a room where everybody is already seated, s/he earnestly implores people, especially the older ones, not to stand up. However, most of the people usually rise to their feet waiting to be greeted one by one if the number of people in the room is manageable. In such context, the newcomer would swiftly and humbly go towards the senior person(s), who are customarily seated at the end of the room (away from the entrance door) first and try to prevent them from rising to their feet by gently taking their hands or arms and/or by putting their hand on the older persons shoulder. During this phase, the usual verbal greeting formulae are quickly exchanged between them. When the newcomer is finished with the most important people in the room (the eldest), it is then time to greet others who have been standing waiting to be greeted. The rest of the people in the room are often, but not always, greeted by age, or just randomly (starting from the person who is closer on either side). In this process, teenagers and children are usually greeted last but surely not the least. Since greetings are exchanged quite hastily, when all parties are seated, the newcomer and the people in the room might go through the greeting stages once again. There is no need to repeat the salutations of phase one since this phase is basically non-recursive. In bigger occasions involving a larger number of people, it is customary and acceptable for the newcomer not to shake hands or greet everybody one by one. In an instance like this, s/he greets everyone by using a special formulaic expression such as *sælam be hæme/hæmegi* ('Hello to all') and swiftly seeks an empty place to sit down. Upon being seated, s/he will then exchange greetings verbally with those who are near him/her, or shake hands. If they are not close enough to verbally communicate with, bodily gestures (e.g., eye contact, raising/flashing the eyebrows, smiling, nodding head, miming,

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waving) are used. Later, however, during the party there will be an opportunity for people to approach and greet one another more elaborately.

In work places, depending on the number of people who require service, employees might more or less adhere to this code of behaviour. That is, upon the arrival of a person to one's office, one might get up (completely, halfway or just pretend) and verbally welcome and greet clients. In work places that are constantly busy servicing many clients, such as banks, workers are entitled to remain seated and usually a quick exchange of greetings is appropriate.

4.3.2 Discourse structure rules for a greeting sequence in Persian

Greeting behaviour should not simply be treated as spontaneous emotional reaction to the coming together of people. On the contrary, greetings are highly conventional and follow patterned routines (Firth, 1972, pp. 29-30). First, a greeting sequence has a definite discourse structure comprising some constituents (or phases) which are sequential in nature. Second, similar to other RPF, greetings are typically dyadic/reciprocal in nature, where each of the interlocutors has an obligatory share in the process of greetings. That is, when one party initiates an exchange with a formula (e.g., 'how are things?') the other automatically replies with another conventional formula dependent on the first (e.g., 'fine, thanks') (see Schegloff and Sacks, 1973; Firth 1972; Ferguson, 1976; Duranti, 1997; Alharbi & Al-Ajmi, 2008; Kuiper, 2009). According to Kuiper (2009), "Such sequential formulaic dependencies are governed by *discourse structure rules*" (italic original) (p. 7). With this in mind, and based on the soap opera and role-play data, the following discourse structure rules can be proposed for the verbal exchanges representing a greeting sequence in Persian:

R.1   Greeting sequence ---> Phase 1 + (Phase 2) + (Phase 3)

R.2   Phase 1 ---> the exchange of salutations

R.3   Salutation exchange ---> $turn_1$ (opening) + $turn_2$ (response)

R.4   Phase 2 ---> Second person information elicitations: enquiries on health, well being and happiness + enquiries on news, state of affairs and whereabouts

R.5   Enquiries on health, well being and happiness ---> Sub-group 1 + Sub-group 2 + Sub-group 3 + Sub-group 4 + Sub-group 5 + Sub-group 6

R.6   Enquiries on news, state of affairs and whereabouts ---> Sub-group 1 + Sub-group 2 + Sub-group 3 + Sub-group 4

R.7   Phase 3 ---> Third person information elicitations: enquiries on health, well being and happiness + enquiries on news, state of affairs and whereabouts

R.8   Enquiries on health, well being and happiness ---> Sub-group 1 + Sub-group 2

R.9   Enquiries on news, state of affairs and whereabouts ---> Sub-group 1 + Sub-group 2

Below, the different phases of a greeting sequence, namely, phases one, two and three, are discussed in more detail. Moreover, the RPF indexed for each of these phases are introduced as separate dictionary entries elaborating on their forms and functions.

4.3.2.1 Phase one of a greeting sequence: The exchange of salutations

All greeting sequences from passing (short) greetings to normal (extended or full) greetings, should start with an exchange of salutations. *sælam* ('Peace') and its variants, as salutations, are the most common expressions used to initiate greetings in Persian. In Persian, exchange of salutations, which consists of two turns, can stand by itself (although infrequently), representing a passing or short greeting, that is, when people are in a hurry and quickly pass by. Investigating Wolof greeting behaviour, Irvine (1974) evaluates the passing greeting as "too brusque and rude" and she justifies the use of a passing greeting only if people are in a hurry for some legitimate reason such as rushing to catch a bus or to deal with some important business (pp. 170-4). Other than that, 'normal greeting' is much more favoured. This also holds true in Persian, and greeting exchanges should at least develop into phase two of a greeting sequence.

Salutations can largely determine the success or failure of social encounters and refusal to offer or respond to salutations, or even cold and unfriendly offers or responses can be socially interpreted as unwillingness to start or enter into any social interaction. For example, when people are not on good terms, they simply avoid saluting each other. Or, if one salutes, the other party might ignore it, or respond in an unfriendly and cold manner. Unlike phase two, exchange of salutations is generally non-recursive. In other words, when interlocutors have already caught each other's attention (especially visually), they offer *sælam* only once (e.g., A: *sælam*! B: *sælam*!). However, as a summons (in Schegloff's terms, 1968) or attention-producer (in Firth's terms, 1972) *sælam* and its variants can be repeated more than once until interlocutors make their presence known to each other and show attention. Therefore, as the starting point, salutations have two functions: as a means of attention-getting, as a means of

identifying the interlocutors in terms of age, social status, and so on. In the following, the use of *sælam* and its variants are introduced as dictionary entries.

Formula form: *sælam*

sælam is originally Arabic (also compare with *shalom* in Hebrew). The native Persian equivalent for *sælam* is *dorud* ('Praise'), used mainly in radio and TV programs by announcers and newscasters. In such a context, *dorud* is preceded by *ba* ('With'), appearing as *ba dorud* ('With praise'), *dorud bær shoma* ('Praise be upon you'), or it can even combine with *sælam*, making a compound form (*ba sælam-o dorud*: 'With peace and praise'). In various Persian dialects and in other Iranian languages spoken around the country, as well as across different social groups, people might utter *sælam* differently. *sælam* is widely used in both informal and formal situations by all age groups, but its variants such as *sælam ʔæleykom* and *sælamon ʔæleykom* are more formal and solely used by adults. Combinations such as *sælam ʔærz mikonam* ('I offer *sælam*'), *sælam ʔærz shod* ('*sælam* was offered'), *sælam ʔærz kærd-æm/im* ('I/we offered *sælam*'), *ʔærz-e sælam* ('I offer *sælam*') and *sælam-o ʔærz-e ædæb* ('I offer *sælam* and respect') are also mainly used by adults in formal situations. *sælam ʔærz shod* ('*sælam* was offered') is used as a summons where one has already offered *sælam* but it has gone unnoticed. In Persian, *sælam* and its variants are widely preceded or followed by terms of address, communicating some meanings such as recognising the social status of the addressee, emphasizing kinship ties, expressing love and affection or manipulating others. I shall elaborate on this phenomenon later in this chapter. See list of salutations (opening), table 4.

The response to *sælam* is either (i) *sælam* ("full echo response" in Ferguson's terms, 1976, p. 143), (ii) *æssælam* (an emotional response), or more formal forms such as (iii) *sælam ʔæleykom* ('Peace be upon you'), (iv) *sælamon ʔæleykom* ('Peace be upon you'), (v) *ʔæleyk-e sælam* ('Upon you be peace'), (vi) *væ ʔæleykomo sælam* ('And upon you be peace'), (vii) *væ ʔæleykomo sælam væ ræhmætollah* ('And peace and mercy of Allah be upon you') or (viii) *væ ʔæleykomo sælam væ ræhmætollah væ bærækato* ('And peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you'). Small children and teenagers are mainly responded to with *sælam*, and the use of *sælam ʔæleykom* and *sælamon ʔæleykom* for them is usually bizarre unless one

wishes to joke with them. Thus, small children and teenagers also return the greetings with only *sælam*.

Elders among the family, relatives and friends might affectionately respond to *sælam* from children, teenagers and young adults with *sælam*+NP, e.g., *sælam dokhtæræm* ('*sælam* my daughter'), *sælam ʔæzizæm* ('*sælam* my dear') to show more affection. Moreover, in response to children, adults might affectionately employ some rhythmic formulaic expressions such as *sælam-o sæd sælam*/*sælam-o sædta sælam* ('One hundred *sælams*'), or *sælam be ru-ye mahet* ('*sælam* to your face that is as beautiful as moon'). This is a case of intensifying the illocutionary force of the greetings. On the other hand, in some cases *sælam* as a response could also be accompanied by terms of reproof to express discontent and unhappiness towards family members, close friends and peers. For example, in responding to *sælam* from a teenage boy or girl who has come home late at night, an irritated mother might say *sælam-o zæhr-e mar* ('*sælam* with snake's venom') with a threatening overtone. Similarly, to show discontent and anger, one might say *che sælami* ('What/Which *sælam*?'), *che sælami, che ʔæleyki* ('What/Which *sælam*?'), *kodum sælam, kodum ʔæleyk* ('What/Which *sælam*?') or *sælam ke sælam* ('What/Which *sælam*?').

ʔæleyk-e sælam ('Upon you be peace') is used mainly by elders in response to *sælam* from younger people. It is quite archaic and is gradually becoming infrequent in usage. A young person would never use it in response to another young person. There are times, especially in familiar contexts, when a person might try to avoid meeting a particular person for whatever reasons. If unexpectedly caught sight of, the other party who is usually older and outraged by this rude behaviour initiates the greetings by *ʔæleyk-e sælam* ('Upon you be peace'), which is actually a response and not an initiating greeting formula. This is intended to indicate that s/he has been seen, and to chastise his/her impolite behaviour in ignoring an elder.

As a response, *æssælam* is only used by adults and seniors in informal situations with/for family members, relatives, close friends and peers, and is usually uttered with happy overtones, showing joy and happiness at one's arrival. In this usage, it takes on a welcoming meaning and overtone. See list of salutations (response), table 5.

Formula form: *sælam ʔæleykom*

sælam ʔæleykom ('Peace be upon you'), as a variant, is more formal than *sælam*. The original Arabic expression is written as *'æl-sælamu ʔælæykum*, but is pronounced as *'æs-sælamu ʔælæykum* as a result of regressive assimilation. In Persian, this formula has different phonological variants and its pronunciation can vary depending on the gender, level of education and religious background of the speaker. Some phonological variants such as *sælamælekom, sælamæleyk, samo ʔæleykom, samæleykom, samæleyk* are mainly used by people with little or no education, as well as by working class people. In the past, the use of some of these variants was a noticeable linguistic characteristic of a social group called *jahel* or *lat* ('roughnecks and thugs'). Moreover, these variants are never used by women . *sælam ʔæleykom* is not used by children and young people. The response to *sælam ʔæleykom* can be (i) *sælam*, (ii) *æssælam*, (iii) *sælam ʔæleykom* (full echo response), (iv) *sælamon ʔæleykom*, (v) *væ ʔæleykom-o sælam* ('And upon you be peace'), (vi) *væ ʔæleykom-o sælam va ræhmætollah* ('And peace and mercy of Allah be upon you') or (vii) *væ ʔæleykom-o sælam va ræhmætollah væ bærækato* ('And peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you').

Formula form: *sælamon ʔæleykom*

sælamon ʔæleykom ('Peace be upon you'), as a variant, is more formal than *sælam* or *sælam ʔæleykom*. The original Arabic (Koranic) expression is written and pronounced as *sælamun ʔælæykum* and is mentioned in two chapters in the Koran. According to the Koran (*Surah Ar-Ra'ad*, 13: 24), in paradise, angels will welcome believers by saying *sælamun ʔælæykum*. The Koran (*Surah Al-An'am*, 6: 54) also prescribes to Prophet Mohammad that when believers approach, he must greet them with *sælamun ʔælæykum*. Similarly, in Persian usage, *sælamon ʔæleykom* is more formal than both *sælam* and *sælam ʔæleykom*. It is, however, less frequently used and usually by religious people and clergymen. Owing to their literacy and their familiarity with scriptures, religious people often insist on the use and the accurate Koranic pronunciation of this greeting formula. Accordingly, imitating the exact Arabic (Koranic) pronunciation conveys utmost loyalty towards Islam. Needless to say, it is only used by adults. The response to *sælamon ʔæleykom* could be (i) *sælam*, (ii) *sælam ʔæleykom*, (iii) *sælamon ʔæleykom* (full echo response), (iv) *væ ʔæleykom-o sælam* ('And upon you be peace'), (v) *væ ʔæleykom-o sælam væ ræhmætollah* ('And peace and mercy of Allah be upon

you') and (vi) *væ ʔæleykom-o sælam va ræhmætollah væ bærækato* ('And peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you').

Table 4: Salutations (opening)

	Formula form	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Variants
1	*sælam*	Peace	hello	*æssælam*
2	*sælam ʔæleykom*	Peace be upon you	Hello	*samo ʔæleykom* *samæleykom* *samælekom* *samæleyk*
3	*sælamon ʔæleykom*	Peace be upon you	Hello	*sælamon ʔælæykom*
4	*sælam ʔærz mikonam*	I am offering *sælam*	Hello	
5	*sælam ʔærz kærd-æm/im*	I/we offered *sælam*	Hello	
6	*ʔærz-e sælam*	Offer of *sælam*	Hello	
7	*sælam ʔærz shod*	I offered *sælam*	Hello	
8	*sælam-o ʔærz-e ædæb*	I offer *sælam* and respect	Hello	

Table 5: Salutations (response)

	Formula form	Type
1	*sælam* ('peace')	full echo response
2	*æssælam* ('peace')	
3	*ʔæleyk-e sælam* ('upon you be peace')	
4	*sælam ʔæleykom* ('peace be upon you')	
5	*sælamon ʔæleykom* ('peace be upon you')	
6	*væ ʔæleykomo sælam væ ræhmætollah* ('and upon you be peace and mercy of Allah')	
7	*væ ʔæleykomo sælam væ ræhmætollah væ bærækato* ('and upon you be peace, mercy and blessings of Allah')	
8	*sælam o sæd sælam* ('one hundred *sælam*')	
9	*sælam be ru-ye mahet* ('*sælam* to your face which is as beautiful as moon')	
10	*sælam o zæhr-e mar* ('*sælam* with snake's venom')	
11	*che sælami, che ʔæleyki* ('what/which *sælam*?')	
12	*kodum sælam, kodum ʔæleyk* ('what/which *sælam*?')	
13	*sælam ke sælam* ('what/which *sælam*?')	

4.3.2.2 Phase two of a greeting sequence: Second person information elicitations

Daily routine greetings among the Persians call for a number of RPF enquiring after the other's health, well being and happiness, as well as news, state of affairs and whereabouts known as *æhval porsi kærdæn*. Depending on variables such as the context, the interlocutors' relationship, age, and social status, these can vary from the most formal to the least formal formulae. As aforementioned, unless there is a legitimate reason for limiting the greeting ritual to phase one (as in passing greetings, or greeting the people whom we know slightly), typical (normal) greetings usually start with phase one (exchange of *sælam*) and then develop smoothly into phase two by enquiring about the co-participants' health, well being, happiness, news, state of affairs, whereabouts as well as that of their family (third person(s)). At this phase, if the encounter is formal, the questions and replies are mostly reciprocal. Informal greetings, however, show far less reciprocity. Further, as in conversations, exchanges in a greeting sequence comply with turn taking roles; although, overlaps and pauses are inevitable. Depending on the context, in the second phase, two general types of enquiries are made. This does not necessarily mean that, in a single greeting encounter, interlocutors will use all these enquiry types. Neither do they necessarily follow the order presented here.

Like other languages, the greeting formulae used by Persian speakers in phase two are mainly 'phatic communion' and people usually do not interpret them literally. In general, context is used to determine how these formulaic enquiries will be read. This can be intentional, i.e., the speaker can intend the information elicitation to be taken as genuinely solicitous or not. The hearer can also interpret the information elicitation either way. One can get interesting situations when a speaker intends the information elicitation to be phatic, but the hearer takes it to be solicitous. Schleicher (1997) retells a case in America where a total stranger takes 'how are you?' to be solicitous and instead of simply replying by 'fine', she starts relating all her problems, causing her co-participant to become embarrassed because people usually do not expect this question to be interpreted literally (pp. 335). However, in a different context, e.g., at a dinner table in the corner of a restaurant, once the initial greetings are over, the same inquiry is indeed taken to be intended as a sincere request by the same interactants. Likewise, Saville-Troike (1989) notes, "If English speakers *really* want to know how someone is feeling, they repeat the question after the routine is completed, or they mark the question with contrastive intonation to indicate it is for information, and not part of the routine" (italics in original) (p. 43). In contrast, in a different culture, e.g., among the Yoruba, in response to

báwo ni? ('How are you?'), one might tell his/her interlocutor the hardships that s/he had been through. In fact, Yoruba people expect others to take this formulaic question literally (Schleicher, 1997, p. 335).

Soap opera and role-play data show that during a greeting encounter (formal or informal) two general types of enquiries can be asked in phase two of a greeting sequence.

4.3.2.2.1 Type one of the second person information elicitations: Enquiries about health, well being and happiness

Enquiries on health, well being and happiness are the first and the most widely asked questions during formal and informal greetings. Based on their form and meaning, they are divided into six sub-groups. In an encounter, after salutations are over, co-participants initiate phase two of a greeting sequence mainly by making a number of enquiries from the six sub-groups of type one of the second person information elicitations. All greeting exchanges with varying levels of formality are initiated with enquiries from sub-groups one to six, or their combinations. Depending on the formality of the situation and the interlocutors' relationship, these enquiries may be later followed by more enquiries from type two of the second person information elicitations since they are usually more informal.

As the soap opera data shows, short formal greetings are mainly limited to enquiries from type one of the second person information elicitations. In lines 03 and 04 in SOD01 (below), the enquiries are mostly limited to sub-groups one and two. In Persian, employing more than one greeting formula in one turn by co-participants is very common and most of the enquiries about health and well-being appear as double or triple greetings. That is, more than one formula (usually up to three) are employed. In line 03 of SOD01, speaker A employs two successive enquiries ('double greetings'), namely, *hal-e shoma chetore?* from sub-group one, immediately followed by *khubin inshalla?* from sub-group two. Notice that *khubin?* ('Are you fine?') is followed by *inshalla* ('May God desire so') as a benedictory formula restricted only to adult usage.

SOD01: A's daughter is living in the second floor of an apartment. Entering the front yard, A (a senior female) comes across her daughter's landlord (B) who lives in the first floor (a senior female). Both know each other well.

01	**A**: *sælam æleykom*	**A**: Hello there
	('Peace be upon you')	
02	**B**: *sælam æleykom*	**B**: Hello
	('Peace be upon you')	
03	**A**: *hale shoma chetore? khubin inshalla?*	**A**: How are you? Are you fine?
	('How is your health?' 'Are you fine may God desire so')	
04	**B**: *khubæm, shoma chetorin? befærma'in*	**B**: I'm fine, how are you? Come in please!
05	**A**: *ghorbun-e shoma, shoma befærma'in*	**A**: Thank you, you come in please
	('Your sacrifice, you come in please')	

As regards double greetings, both formulae are usually from two different sub-groups; however, they can also be from the same sub-group. For example, line 01 in SOD02 below contains a case of double greetings in which both of the greeting formulae are from sub-group one.

SOD02: A and B are long-term acquaintances living in the same street. Both are male seniors.

01	**A**: *chetori NP? halo æhvalet chetore?*	**A**: How's things NP? How are things with you?
02	**B**: *ey, hæstim, migzære*	**B**: Still alive, not bad
	('Sigh of sadness, still I am alive, life goes by')	

Unlike the soap opera data in which exchanges are mostly dyadic, the role-play data clearly shows that the reciprocity rule is largely ignored by the interlocutors who repeatedly enquire about each other without expecting or providing replies. In RPD01 below, person A does not reply to any of B's enquiries. This observation leads to two speculations. First, in informal greetings among family members, close friends and peers, response(s) to enquiries are not essential. Secondly, informal greetings are less dyadic in nature than formal greetings. In RPD01, after the exchange of *sælam* is over, B starts phase two of the greeting sequence by a double greeting from sub-groups one and two of type one of second information elicitations (line 02). Person A overlooks the enquiry, and makes an enquiry about B's health in return (line 03) to which B replies by double thanking (line 04). A enquires after B's health again by a double greeting from sub-groups four and two (line 05). B ignores the information elicitations and instead welcomes A by a welcoming formula (line 06), which is immediately followed by A's expression of gratitude (line 07). B continues by enquiring into A's state of affairs from type two of the second person information elicitations (line 08). A replies by thanking B (line 09). There is a short pause as A and B take their seats. Once seated, A

continues with the greeting sequence by an enquiry from sub-group two (line 10). B replies by double thanking, and then enquires about current news from type two (line 11). At this stage, A shifts the direction of enquiries from B himself to his household (phase three: third person information elicitations) (line 12). B, in turn, replies using a thanking formula (line 13). Knowing that B has a son, A proceeds to enquire about the latter's health (line 14), to which B replies using triple thanking. Because A does not have a family, B enquires about A's health and well being from sub-group one of type one (line 15). A thanks B in reply (line 16), as B continues enquiring into A's state of affairs from sub-group three of type two (line 17). A thanks B (line 18). B thanks A back and welcomes him again (line 19). A thanks B again (line 20) and the greeting finishes.

RPD01: A enters the office of his friend, B. Both are male and in their late thirties studying at the university of Canterbury, New Zealand.

01	**A**: *sælam*	**A**: Hello
	('Peace')	
02	**B**: *agha sælam, æhvaletun chetore? khubid?*	**B**: Hello, how are you? Are you fine?
	('Mister, peace; how's your health? Are you well?')	
03	**A**: *hale shoma khube ælhæmdolelah?*	**A**: Are you fine?
	('Is your heath good, praise be to God?')	
04	**B**: *ghorbunet beræm, shokre khoda*	**B**: Cheers, thank you
	('Your sacrifice, praise be to God')	
05	**A**: *sælamætin? khubin shoma?*	**A**: Are you well? Are you fine?
	('Are you healthy? Are you fine?')	
06	**B**: *kheyli khoshumædin*	**B**: You are very welcome
07	**A**: *khahesh mikonæm*	**A**: Thanks
	('I make request')	
08	**B**: *owza æhval chetore?*	**B**: How are things with you?
	('What are the circumstances?')	
09	**A**: *sælamæti shoma*	**A**: Thanks
	('Your health')	

A short pause happens as A and B take their seats. Once seated, A continues with the greeting sequence:

10	**A**: *khob, khubi shoma?*	**A**: Well, are you fine?
11	**B**: *shokr-e khoda, kheyli mæmnun; che khæbæra?*	**B**: Thanks, thanks a lot, what's up?
	('Praise be to God, thanks a lot; what's the news?')	

12	**A**: *khanevadeye mohtæræm khubæn?*	**A**: Is your household (wife) fine?
	('Is your respected family (wife) well?')	
13	**B**: *ælhæmdolelah*	**B**: Thanks
	('Praise be to God')	
14	**A**: *agha pesær?*	**A**: How is your son?
	(Mr. Son?)	
15	**B**: *ælhæmdolelah, mersi, ghorbunet beræm, shoma chetorid?*	**B**: Thanks, how are you?
	('Praise be to God, mercy, your sacrifice, how are you?')	
16	**A**: *mochchæker*	**A**: Thanks
	('Thanks')	
17	**B**: *owza æhval khube?*	**B**: Is everything ok with you?
	('Are circumstances good?')	
18	**A**: *sælamæti shoma*	**A**: Thanks
	('Your health')	
19	**B**: *khahesh mikonæ; kheyli khoshumædin*	**B**: Thanks, you are very welcome
	('I beg; you are very welcome')	
20	**A**: *sælamæt bashid*	**A**: Thanks
	('May you be healthy')	

In the following, type one of the second person information elicitations are introduced as dictionary entries. That is, the formula form, function and structure are elaborated upon. Regarding the crucial role of terms of address, they usually precede or follow the RPF used in phases two and three. Some greeting formulae can also be followed by benedictions or 'benedictory formulae' (mostly from Arabic) such as *ælhæmdollah* ('Praise be to *Allah*') and *inshallah* ('May God desire so') to further increase the cordiality of the enquiries.

Formula form: *hal-e shoma chetowre?*

This formula and its variants, as the first sub-group, are the most widely used formulae used in enquiring about the health and well-being of one's interlocutor in formal situations. It means 'how is your (V-form) health?', which corresponds to 'how are you?' in English. In informal situations, however, family members, peers and friends usually prefer to use its informal variants, namely, *chetowri?* or *halet chetowre?* ('How is your (T-form) health?').

The response to *hal-e shoma chetowre?* can be formulated following the discourse structure rule in which saying that one is 'fine' or 'not (too) bad' is optional but thanking the other party by the expressions of gratitude and/or benedictions is compulsory. The expressions of gratitude usually appear as double or even triple thanks. (*kheyli*) *mæmnun* ('thank you very

much'), *mochæker* ('thank you'), *sælamæt bashin* ('May you be healthy'), or their combinations, are the most common expressions of gratitude used as response. Responses are also followed by enquires about the health and well-being of the other party.

R1   (*khubæm/bæd nistæm*) + thanking[n] + (benedictions) + *shoma chetowr-in-/id?*

R2   thanking[n] + (benedictions) + (*khubæm/bæd nistæm*) + *shoma chetowr-in/-id?*

Therefore, whereas in English, in replying to 'how are you?', the respondent should first say that s/he is 'fine/(very) good/very well' or 'not (too) bad' and then thank the other party with a generic gratitude expression such as 'thanks/thank you', in Persian, the respondent simply needs to thank the other party with generic expressions of gratitude and/or benedictions, such as *ælhæmdolelah* or *shokr-e khoda* ('Praise be to God'). Having said that, in an English context, when Persian speakers are greeted by 'how are you?', they might simply reply with an expression of gratitude such as 'thanks' or 'thank you' as a case of negative transfer or L1 interference.

Benedictions (mostly from Arabic) are almost automatically used in response to *hal-e shoma chetowre?*, especially by religious people and elders, wherein, in this application, there may be other connotations. For believers not to reveal their shortcomings, misfortunes and sufferings to others and to show thankfulness to God in all conditions, good or bad, is seen as a virtue. As such, by saying *ælhæmdolelah* or *shokr-e khoda* ('Praise be to God') in response to *hal-e shoma chetowre?* ('How are you?'), the responder demonstrates his/her total submission to God's will, even when s/he is feeling awful. See list of variants, table 6.

Formula structure (opening):

START {*hal-e/æhval-e/hal-o æhval-e*} *shoma chetowre?* + (VOC) STOP

START {*haletun/æhvaletun/hal-o æhvaletun*} *chetowre?* + (VOC) STOP

START {*halet/æhvalet/hal-o æhvalet*} *chetowre?* + (VOC) STOP

START {*chetowrin?/chetori shoma?/chetowri?*} + (VOC) STOP

Formula structure (response):

START ({*khubæm/bæd nistæm*}) + thanking formula[n] + ({*ælhæmdolelah/shokr-e khoda/khoda ro shokr*}) + ({*shoma chetorin?/shoma haletun chetore?/shoma chetori?/to chetori?*}) STOP

Table 6: Sub-group one of type one of the second person information elicitations (enquiries about health and well being)

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Variants	Formality
1	*hal-e shoma chetowre?*	How is your (V-form) health?	How are you?	*æhval-e shoma chetowre?* *hal-o æhval-e shoma chetowre?*	formal
2	*haletun chetowre?*	How is your (V-form) health?	How are you?	*æhvaletun chetowre?* *hal-o æhvaletun chetowre?*	formal
3	*chetowrin?*	How are you (V-form)?	How are you?	*chetowrid?* *chetorin shoma?*	formal
4	*chetowri shoma?*	How are you (T/V-form)?	How are you doing?		in between
5	*halet chetowre?*	How is your (T-form) health?	How are you doing?	*hal-o æhvalet chetowre?* *æhvalet chetowre?*	informal
6	*chetowri?*	How are you (T-form)?	How's things?	*chetowri to?*	informal

Formula form: *hal-e shoma khube?*

This formula and its variants, as the second sub-group, are widely used in enquiring about one's health and well being. It means 'is your (V-form) health good?' corresponding to 'how are you?' in English. The formulae in the second sub-group are usually followed by 'benedictory formulae' (mostly from Arabic) such as *ælhæmdollah* ('Praise be to Allah') and *inshallah* ('May God desire so') to increase the amity of enquiries. This usage is restricted to adults and seniors. The patterns of response is the same as *hal-e shoma chetowre?*. See list of variants, table 7.

Formula structure (opening):

START {*hal-e/æhval-e/hal-o æhval-e*} *shoma khube?* + ({*ælhæmdollah/inshallah*}) + (VOC) STOP

START {*haletun/æhvaletun/hal-o æhvaletun*} *khube?* + ({*ælhæmdollah/inshallah*}) + (VOC) STOP

START {*halet/æhvalet/hal-o æhvalet*} *khube?* + ({*ælhæmdollah/inshallah*}) + (VOC) STOP

START {*khubin?/khubi shoma?/khubi?*} + ({*ælhæmdollah/inshallah*}) + (VOC) STOP

Formula structure (response):

START ({*khubæm/bæd nistæm*}) + thanking formula[n] + ({*ælhæmdolelah/shokr-e khoda*}) + ({*shoma chetorin?/shoma haletun chetore?/shoma chetori?/to chetori?*}) STOP

Table 7: Sub-group two of type one of the second person information elicitations (enquiries about health and well being)

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Variants	Formality
1	*hal-e shoma khube?*	Is your (V-form) health good?	How are you?	*æhval-e shoma khube?* *hal-o æhval-e shoma khube?*	formal
2	*haletun khube?*	Is your (V-form) health good?	How are you?	*æhvaletun khube?* *hal-o æhvalet khube?*	formal
3	*khub hæstin?*	Are you (V-form) good?	How are you?	*khub hæstin shoma?*	formal
4	*khubin?*	Are you (V-form) good?	How are you?	*khubid?* *khubin shoma?*	formal
5	*khubi shoma?*	Are you (T/V-form) good?	How are things?		in between
6	*halet khube?*	Is your (T-form) health good?	How are you doing?	*æhvalet khube?* *hal-o æhvalet khube?*	informal
7	*khubi?*	Are you (T-form) good?	How are you doing?	*khubi to?*	informal

Formula form: *hal-e shoma?*

This formula and its variants, as the third sub-group, are used in enquiring about one's health and well being. It means 'your (V-form) health?' corresponding to 'how are you?' in English. The formulae in this sub-group are less formal than the first and second sub-groups and are commonly used among people who know each other well. The patterns of response is the same as *hal-e shoma chetowre?*. See list of variants, table 8.

Formulaic syntax:

START {*hal-e/æhval-e/hal-o æhval-e*} *shoma?* + (VOC) STOP

START {*hal? æhval?/hal-o æhval?*} + (VOC) STOP

START {*æhval-e/hal-e*} *shærif?* STOP

START *æhval-e* NP? STOP

START *æhvalet?* + (VOC) STOP

Formula structure (response):

START ({*khubæm/bæd nistæm*}) + thanking formula^n + ({*ælhæmdolelah/shokr-e khoda*}) + ({*shoma chetorin?/shoma haletun chetore?/shoma chetori?/to chetori?*}) STOP

Table 8: Sub-group three of type one of the second person information elicitations (enquiries about health and well being)

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Variants	Formality
1	*hal-e shoma?*	Your (V-form) health?	How are you?	*æhval-e shoma?* *hal-o æhval-e shoma?*	formal
2	*hal? æhval?*	Health?	How are you?	*hal-o æhval?*	formal
3	*æhval-e shærif?*	Your honourable health?	How are you?	*hal-e shærif?*	formal
4	*æhval-e NP?*	Health of NP?	How is NP?		informal
5	*æhvalet?*	Your (T-form) health?	How's things?		informal

Formula form: *sælamætin?*

This formula and its variants, as the fourth sub-group, are used in enquiring about one's health and well being. It means 'feel healthy?' or 'are you (V-form) healthy?'. The formulae in this sub-group cannot stand by themselves and should follow the formulae from the sub-groups one, two or three. The typical response to this formula is *sælamæt bashin* ('May you be healthy'), which is accompanied by the expressions of gratitude and benediction. See list of variants, table 9.

Formula structure (opening):

START {*sælamætin?/sælamætin shoma?/sælamæti shoma?/sælamæti?*} + (VOC) STOP

Formula structure (response):

START *sælamæt* {*bashi/bashin*} + thanking formula[n] + ({*ælhæmdolelah/shokr-e khoda*}) + ({*shoma chetorin?/shoma haletun chetore?/shoma chetori?/to chetori?*}) STOP

Table 9: Sub-group four of type one of the second person information elicitations (enquiries about health and well being)

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Variants	Formality
1	*sælamætin?*	Are you (V-form) healthy?	NEE	*sælamætin shoma?*	formal
2	*sælamæti shoma?*	Are you (T/V-form) healthy?	NEE		in between
3	*sælamæti?*	Are you (T-form) healthy?	NEE	*sælamæti to?*	informal

Formula form: *behtærin?*

This formula and its variants, as the fifth sub-group, are used in enquiring about health and well being. It means 'are you (V-form) better?' or 'feel better?'. The formulae in this sub-group cannot stand by themselves and should follow the formulae from the sub-groups one, two or three. Similar to the other formulae in phase 2 (enquiries on health, well being and happiness), *behtærin* and its variants are phatic communion and are not interpreted literally. That is, interlocutors do not wish to know if someone feels ill or not. The response to this formula is *sælamæt bashin* ('May you be healthy'), which is accompanied by the expressions of gratitude and benediction. See list of variants, table 10.

Formula structure (opening):

START {*behtærin?/behtæri shoma?/behtæri?*} + (VOC) STOP

Formula structure (response):

START *sælamæt bash-i/-in* + thanking formula[n] + ({*ælhæmdolelah/shokr-e khoda*}) + ({*shoma chetorin?/shoma haletun chetore?/shoma chetori?/to chetori?*}) STOP

Table 10: Sub-group five of type one of the second person information elicitations (enquiries about health, well being and happiness)

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Variants	Formality
1	*behtærin?*	Are you (V-form) well?	NEE	*behtærin shoma?*	formal
2	*behtæri shoma?*	Are you (T/V-form) well?	NEE		in between
3	*behtæri?*	Are you (T-form) well?	NEE	*behtæri to?*	informal

Formula form: *khosh migzære?*

This formula and its variants, as the sixth sub-group, are used in enquiring about happiness. It means 'do you feel happy?', or 'are things going well/happily?'. The formulae in this sub-group cannot stand by themselves and should follow the formulae from sub-groups one, two or three. The formulae in this sub-group are informal and their use is limited between close peers and friends. The typical response to this formula is *be khoshi shoma* ('If things are (going) well/happy with you'), or *ey bæd nistim* ('Not (too) bad') accompanied with expressions of gratitude and benedictions. See list of variants, table 11.

Formula structure (opening):

START {*khosh migzære?/khoshi?*} STOP

Formula structure (response):

START {*be khoshi shoma/ey bæd nistim*} + thanking formula[n] + ({*ælhæmdolelah/shokr-e khoda*}) + ({*shoma chetorin?/shoma haletun chetore?/shoma chetori?/to chetori?*}) STOP

Table 11: Sub-group six of type one of the second person information elicitations (enquiries about health, well being and happiness)

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Formality
1	*khosh migzære?*	Do you feel happy?	NEE	Informal
2	*khoshi?*	Do you feel happy?	NEE	Informal
3	*sær hali?*	Do you feel good?	NEE	Informal
4	*dæmaghet chaghe?*	Do you feel good?	NEE	Slang
5	*ruberahi?*	Are you ok?	NEE	Slang
6	*bærghærari?*	Are you ok?	NEE	Slang
7	*mizuni?*	Are you ok?	NEE	Slang
8	*rædifi?*	Are you ok?	NEE	Slang

4.3.2.2.2 Type two of second person information elicitations: Enquiries on news, state of affairs and whereabouts

Formal greetings are largely limited to enquiries on health and well being (type one of the second person information elicitations). However, if people are close enough, and if there is sufficient time to greet more elaborately, co-participants resort to the second type of information elicitations by enquiring about news, states of affairs and whereabouts. These enquiries entail much more solidarity and closeness and attend to the addressee's positive face. Based on their form and meaning, type two of the second person information elicitations is further divided into five sub-groups.

Formula form: *che khæbær?*

This formula and its variants, as the first sub-group, are widely used in enquiring about current news. It means 'what's the news?'/'what are your news'/'what news do you have?' corresponding to 'what's up?' or 'what's new?' in English. During a casual normal greeting, *che khæbær?* can be employed more than once. Initial enquiries are usually taken as phatic by both speaker and addressee, but the subsequent ones might be truly intended as a sincere request, inviting the addressee to introduce the first topic, mostly on the issues related to the

hearer. In so doing, the speaker shows that s/he is concerned with what the addressee has been doing or going through since their last visit or conversation, attending to the addressee's positive face. However, if the addressee takes the initial enquiry (or enquiries) as phatic, the speaker will have to repeat the formula again until the addressee takes it as a sincere request. In response to *che khæbær?*, there are a number of conventional formulae or their combination including *hichi valla* ('Nothing in particular'), *sælamæti/sælamæti shoma* ('Wishing good for you'), *shoma che khæbær?* ('Anything new about you/yourself?'), *khæbær-e sælamæti* ('Wishes for you'), *khæbær-e khosh* ('Good news'), *khæbæra (ke) pish-e shomast* ('You tell me'), *khodet che khæbær?* ('Anything new about yourself?'), *hich khæbær* ('No news'), *hichi* ('Nothing in particular'). See list of variants, table 12 and see list of responses, table 13.

Formula structure (opening):

START *che {khæbær?/khæbæra?}* STOP

START {*che hal? che khæbær?*} STOP

START (*æz*) *ruzegar che khæbær?* STOP

Formula structure (response):

START (*hichi valla*) + {*sælamæti/sælamæti shoma/sælamæti, shoma che khæbær?/khæbær-e sælamæti/khæbær-e khosh/khæbæra (ke) pish-e shomast/shoma che khæbær?/khodet che khæbær?/hich khæbær*} + thanking formula[n] STOP

Table 12: Sub-group one of type two of the second person information elicitations (enquiries about news, state of affairs and whereabouts)

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Variants
1	*che khæbær?*	What's the news?	What's up?/what's new?	*che khæbæra?* *(khob) dige che khæbær ?*
2	*che hal? che khæbær?*	What's the news?	What's up?/what's new?	
3	*ruzegar che khæbær?*	What's the news from the world?	Is there anything new?	*æz ruzegar che khæbær?*

Table 13: Response to type two of the second person information elicitations (enquiries on news, state of affairs and whereabouts)

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic translation	Variants
1	*sælamæti* (+ thanking formula[n])	Peace/Health	Thanks	
2	*sælamæti shoma* (+ thanking formula[n])	Wishing good for you	Thanks	
3	*sælamæti, shoma che khæbær?*	Your health, what's the news from you?	Thanks, you tell me	*sælamæti shoma, shoma che khæbær?*
4	*khæbær-e sælamæti*	The news is your health	Thanks	
5	*khæbær-e khosh*	Good news	Thanks	
6	*khæbæra (ke) pish-e shomast*	The news is with you	You tell me	
7	*shoma che khæbær?*	Anything new about you?	You tell me	
8	*khodet che khæbær?*	How about you?	You tell me	*che khæbær khodet?*
9	*hich khæbær*	No news	Nothing in particular	*hichi*

Formula form: *owza æhval chetowre?*

This formula and its variants, as the second sub-group, are used in enquiring about states of affairs. It means 'how are the situations/circumstances?' standing for 'how's things?' in English. See list of variants, table 14.

Formula structure (opening):

START *owza æhval* (*chetowre*)*? +* (VOC) STOP

START *owza* {*æhvaletun/æhvalet*} *chetowre? +* (VOC) STOP

START *owza* {*æhval/æhvaletun/æhvalet*} *khube? +* (VOC) STOP

Formula structure (response):

START (*hichi valla*) + {*sælamæti/sælamæti shoma*} + thanking formula[n] STOP

Table 14: Sub-group two of type two of the second person information elicitations (enquiries about news, state of affairs and whereabouts)

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense
1	*owza æhval chetowre?*	How are circumstances?	How's it going?
2	*owza æhvaletun chetowre?*	How are your (V-form) circumstances?	How's it going?
3	*owza æhvalet chetowre?*	How are your (T-form) circumstances?	How's it going?
4	*owza æhval khube?*	Are circumstances good?	How's it going?
5	*owza æhvaletun khube?*	Are your (V-form) circumstances good?	How's it going?
6	*owza æhvalet khube?*	Are your (T-form) circumstances good?	How's it going?
7	*owza æhval?*	Circumstances?	How's it going?
8	*owza æhval æz che ghærare?*	How are circumstances?	How's it going?

Formula form: *chikar mikonin?*

This formula and its variants, as the third sub-group, are used to enquire about states of affairs. It means 'what are you (V-form) doing?' standing for 'how's it going?' in English. See list of variants, table 15.

Formula structure (opening):

START *chikar mikon-i/-in?* + (VOC) STOP

Formula structure (response):

START (*hichi valla*) + {*sælamæti/sælamæti shoma*} + thanking formula[n] STOP

Table 15: Sub-group three of type two of the second person information elicitations (enquiries about news, state of affairs and whereabouts)

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic translation
1	*chikar mikonin?*	what are you (V-form) doing?	NEE
2	*chikar mikoni?*	what are you (T-form) doing?	NEE

Formula form: *kar-o bar chetowre?*

This formula and its variants, as the fourth sub-group, are used in enquiring about state of affairs. It means 'how is your life going?' standing for 'how are things with you?' in English. See list of variants, table 16.

Formula structure (opening):

START *kar-o* {*bar/baret*} *chetowre?* + (VOC) STOP

START *kar-o* {*bar/baret*} *chetowr pish mire?* + (VOC) STOP

START *kar-o* {*bar/baret*} *chetowre?* + (VOC) STOP

START *kar-o* {*bar/baret*} *khube?* + (VOC) STOP

START *kar-o* {*bar/baret*} *khub pish mire?* + (VOC) STOP

Formula structure (response):

START (*hichi valla*) + {*sælamæti/sælamæti shoma*} + thanking formula[n] STOP

Table 16: Sub-group four of type two of the second person information elicitations (enquiries about news, state of affairs and whereabouts)

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic translation	Variants
1	*kar-o bar chetore?*	How's your work/life?	How are things with you?	*kar-o bara chetore?*
2	*kar-o baret chetore?*	How's your work/life?	How are things with you?	*kar-o barat chetore?*
3	*kar-o bar chetor pish mire?*	How's your work/life going?	How are things with you?	*kara chetor pish mire?* *kar-o bara chetor pish mire?*
4	*kar-o baret chetor pish mire?*	How's your work/life going?	How are things with you?	
5	*kar-o bar khube?*	How's your work/life?	How are things with you?	
6	*kar-o baret khube?*	How's your work/life?	How are things with you?	*kar-o bara khube?*
7	*kar-o baret khub pish mire?*	Is your work/life going well?	How are things with you?	*kar-o bar khub pish mire?*

Formula form: *koja'i?*

This formula, as the fifth sub-group, is used to enquire about whereabouts. It means 'where have you been?'. A typical response to this formula is *zir saye-ye shoma* ('under your shadow') accompanied by expressions of gratitude. See list of other formulae with the same function, table 17.

Formula structure (opening):

START {*koja'i (agha)?/koja'i? nisti?/kojaha'i?*} STOP

STAR {*æz in tæræfa/æz in væra?*} STOP

START *rah gom kærd-i/-in?* STOP

START *kæm peyda-'i/-'in?* STOP

START *nisti (agha)?* STOP

START *khæbæri {æzæt/æzætun} nist?* STOP

START *kodum væra'i?* STOP

START {*nemibinimit?/nemibinæmet*} STOP

Formula structure (response):

START (*zir-e saye-ye shoma*) + {*sælamæti/sælamæti shoma*} + thanking formula[n] STOP

Table 17: Sub-group five of type two of the second person information elicitations (enquiries about news, state of affairs and whereabouts)

	Formula form	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense
1	*koja'i (agha)?/koja'i? nisti?/kojaha'i?*	Where are you?	Where have you been?
2	*æz in tæræfa/æz in væra?*		What brings you here?
3	*rah gom kærdi?*	Have you lost your way?	NEE
4	*kæm peyda'i?*		I have not seen you much
5	*nisti (agha)?*		Where have you been?
6	*khæbæri æzæt nist?*	No news from you?	No news from you?/ No sign of you?
7	*kodum væra'i?*	Where are you?	Where have you been?
8	*nemibinimit?/nemibinæmet*	I cannot see you	Long time no see?

4.3.2.3 Phase three of a greeting sequence: Third person information elicitations

A normal (not passing) greeting in Iranian culture not only involves the interactants themselves but also their families, relatives and associates. Formal daily greetings are not complete unless interactants enquire after the health, wellbeing, news, state of affairs and whereabouts of the third person(s) including parents, children, siblings, spouses and even friends. It is part of social conventional norms to enquire after third parties properly.

Otherwise, the speaker will be regarded as a person who is not familiar with manners and rules of etiquette, or it might even be interpreted that problems with the third person(s) exist. Therefore, depending on the context, the availability of time and how well the interlocutors know each other, enquiring about third person(s) is a social obligation that rests on the shoulders of both parties in maintaining and strengthening the social bonds among interactants.

Similar to the second person information elicitations, initial enquiries about third persons are also taken as phatic. That is, even when the person enquired about is on a sick bed, enquires are taken as phatic and the speaker provides only conventional routine responses. However, as soon as the routine greetings are over, interlocutors will have the chance to make more enquires about third person(s) that will then be taken as genuinely solicitous. In making enquiries about family members, relatives and close friends, the speaker can directly refer to their name(s) by either referring to the first name alone (FN), their honorific title and first name (TFN/FNT) and their kinship terms (+ FN). With acquaintances, it is uncommon to refer to personal names of third person(s), especially a woman's first name, even if it is known to the speaker. In such cases, they are referred to by generic polite reference terms like *khanevade-ye mohtæræm* ('Respected household/family'). Based on their form and meaning, type one of the third person information elicitations is further divided into two sub-groups.

4.3.2.3.1 Type one of the third person information elicitations: Enquiries on health and wellbeing

Enquiries on health and well being of the third parties are the first and the most widely asked questions during formal and informal greetings. Based on their form and meaning, type one of the third person information elicitations is further divided into two sub-groups.

Formula form: *NP chetowræn?*

This formula and its variants, as the first sub-group, are used to enquire about the health and wellbeing of third parties. It means 'how's NP?' where NP stands for the name of a person. The response to this formula is also fixed and formulaic. A typical response to this formula is *sælam daræn khedmætetun* ('s/he extends his/her greetings to you'), or *dæst-e shoma ro mibusæn* ('s/he kisses your hand') accompanied by *khubæn/khube* ('s/he is fine'), *bæd*

nistæn/bæd nist ('not bad') as well as benedictions and expressions of gratitude. See list of variants, table 18.

Formula structure (opening):

START *NP* {*chetowræn?/chetowre?*} STOP

START *NP* {*haleshun/halesh*} *chetowre?* STOP

Formula structure (response):

START ({*khubæn/khube/bæd nistæn/bæd nist*}) + (*ælhæmdolelah*) + thanking formula[n] + {*sælam daræn khedmætetun/sælam* {*miresunæn/miresune*} (*khedmætetun*)} STOP

START ({*khubæn/khube/bæd nistæn/bæd nist*}) + (*ælhæmdolelah*) + thanking formula[n] + {*dæst-e shoma ro* {*mibusæn/mibuse*}/*dæstbus-e shomst*} STOP

Table 18: Sub-group one of type one of the third person information elicitations

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Formality
1	*NP chetowræn?*	How is NP?	How is NP?	formal
2	*NP haleshun chetowre?*	How is the health of NP?	How is NP?	formal
3	*NP halesh chetowre?*	How is the health of NP?	How is NP?	informal
4	*NP chetowre?*	How is NP?	How is NP?	informal

Formula form: *NP khube?*

This formula and its variants, as the second sub-group, are used to enquire about health and wellbeing of third parties. It means 'is NP well/fine?' where NP stands for the name of a person. The response to this formula is also fixed and formulaic. The formulae in the second sub-group are usually followed by 'benedictory formulae' such as *ælhæmdollah* ('Praise be to Allah') and *inshallah* ('May God desire so') to increase the amity of enquiries. This usage is restricted to adults and seniors. A typical response to this formula is *sælam daræn khedmætetun* ('S/he extends his/her greetings to you') or *dæst-e shoma ro mibusæn* ('S/he kisses your hand') accompanied by *khubæn/khube* ('S/he is fine'), *bæd nistæn/bæd nist* ('Not bad') as well as benedictions and expressions of gratitude. See list of variants, table 19.

Formula structure (opening):

START *NP* {*khubæn/khube*} STOP

START *NP* {*haleshun/halesh*} *khube?* STOP

Formula structure (response):

START ({*khubæn/khube/bæd nistæn/bæd nist*}) + (*ælhæmdolelah*) + thanking formula[n] + {*sælam daræn khedmætetun/sælam {miresunæn/miresune} (khedmætetun)*} STOP

START ({*khubæn/khube/bæd nistæn/bæd nist*}) + (*ælhæmdolelah*) + thanking formula[n] + {*dæst-e shoma ro (mibusæn/ mibuse)/dæstbus-e shomst*} STOP

Table 19: Sub-group two of type one of the third person information elicitations

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Formality
1	*NP khubæn?*	Is NP fine?	Is NP fine?	Formal
2	*NP khub hæstæn?*	Is NP fine?	Is NP fine?	Formal
3	*NP haleshun khube?*	Is the health of NP fine?	Is NP fine?	Formal
4	*NP halesh khube?*	Is the health of NP fine?	Is NP fine?	Informal
5	*NP khube?*	Is NP fine?	Is NP fine?	Informal

4.3.2.3.2 Type two of the third person information elicitations: Enquiries on news, state of affairs and whereabouts

Formal greetings are largely limited to enquiries on health and well being of third parties (type one of the third person information elicitations). However, if people are sufficiently close, and if there is enough time to greet more elaborately, co-participants revert to the second type of information elicitations by enquiring about news, states of affairs and whereabouts. These entail much more solidarity and closeness, and attend to the addressee's positive face. Based on their form and meaning, type two of the third person information elicitations is further divided into two sub-groups.

Formula form: *æz NP che khæbær?*

This formula and its variants, as the first sub-group, are used to enquire about news and states of affairs of the third parties. It means 'what's up from NP?' or 'what's the news from NP?', where NP stands for the name of a third party. A typical response to this formula is *sælamæti/sælamæti shoma* ('health'/'your heath'), *khæbær-e sælamæti* ('Good wishes for you'), *khubæn/khube/bæd nistæn/bæd nist* ('Not bad'), *sælam daræn khedmætetun* ('S/he has greetings for you'), or *dæst-e shoma ro mibusæn* ('S/he kisses your hand') accompanied by benedictions and expressions of gratitude. See list of variants, table 20.

Formula structure (opening):

START *æz NP che* {*khæbær?/khæbæra?*} STOP

Formula structure (response):

START ({*sælamæti/sælamæti shoma/khæbær-e sælamæti*}) + ({*khubæn/khube/bæd nistæn/bæd nist*})
+ (*sælam* {*daræn/miresunæn/miresune*} *khedmætetun*) + (*ælhæmdolelah*) + thanking formula[n] STOP

START ({*sælamæti/sælamæti shoma/khæbær-e sælamæti*}) + ({*khubæn/khube/bæd nistæn/bæd nist*})
+ (*dæst-e shoma ro* {*mibusæn/mibuse*}/*dæstbus-e shomst*) + (*ælhæmdolelah*) + thanking formula[n]
STOP

Table 20: Sub-group one of type two of the third person information elicitations

	Formula	literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Variants
1	*æz NP che khæbær?*	What's the news from NP?	How's NP?	*æz NP che khæbæra?*

Formula form: *NP chekar mikonæn?*

This formula and its variants, as the second sub-group, are used to enquire about the state of affairs of third parties. It means 'what's NP doing?' or 'what's NP been doing?' where NP stands for the name of a third party. A typical response to this formula is *sælamæti/sælamæti shoma* ('Health'/'Your heath'), *khubæn/bæd nistæn* ('Not bad'), *sælam daræn khedmætetun* ('S/he has greetings for you'), or *dæst-e shoma ro mibusæn* ('S/he kisses your hand') accompanied by benedictions and expressions of gratitude. See list of variants, table 21.

Formula structure (opening):

START *NP chekar* {*mikonæn/mikone*}? STOP

Formula structure (response):

START ({*sælamæti/sælamæti shoma*}) + ({*khubæn/khube/bæd nistæn/bæd nist*}) + (*sælam*
{*daræn/miresunæn/miresune*} *khedmætetun*) + ({*dæst-e shoma ro* {*mibusæn/mibuse*}/*dæstbus-e
shomst*}) + (*ælhæmdolelah*) + thanking formula[n] STOP

START ({*sælamæti/sælamæti shoma*}) + ({*khubæn/khube/ bæd nistæn/bæd nist*}) + ({*dæst-e shoma
ro* {*mibusæn/mibuse*}/*dæstbus-e shomst*}) + (*ælhæmdolelah*) + thanking formula[n] STOP

Table 21: Sub-group two of type two of the third person information elicitations

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic translation	Formality
1	*NP chekar mikonæn?*	What is NP doing?	How's NP?	Formal
2	*NP chekar mikone?*	What is NP doing?	How's NP?	less formal

4.4 Time-of-day greetings

Persian, like many other languages has a stock of time-bound greetings for different times of the day including morning, midday, afternoon and night. Though time-of-day greetings can stand by themselves, they usually appear as part of a larger greeting sequence. As with other RPF, time-of-day greetings can be preceded or followed by terms of address. Time-of-day greetings include a small closed set with an identical structure, i.e., 'time of day + *kheyr*' as in *sob bekheyr* ('May your morning be blessed'), *zohr bekheyr* ('May your noon be blessed'), *Ɂæsr bekheyr* ('May your afternoon blessed') and *shæb bekheyr* ('May your evening be blessed'). Time-of-day greetings are used only on the first encounter by interlocutors and are not repeated at subsequent encounters (see also Ferguson, 1976, p. 142). The discourse structure rule for time-of-day greetings is as follows:

R1   Time-of-day greeting sequence ---> (Phase one) + Time-of-day greetings + (Phase two)

R.2   Phase one ---> the exchange of salutations

R.3   Time-of-day greetings ---> morning, midday, afternoon and night greetings

R.4   Phase two ---> Second person information elicitations (type one: enquiries on health, well being and happiness) + Second person information elicitations (type two: enquiries on news and state of affairs)

4.4.1 Morning greetings and patterns of response

sob bekheyr ('May your morning be blessed') is the most popular time-of-day greeting used for greeting people in the morning and corresponding to 'good morning' in English. *sob bekheyr* is originally from Arabic (*sæba:h æl-khæyr*) and carries the same meaning and function. Its written form in Persian is *sobh bekheyr*, from which for ease of pronunciation the final glottal fricative phoneme, /h/, is usually omitted in the spoken language. 'Good morning' is regarded as a "welfare-wish" meaning 'may you have a good morning' (see

Ferguson, 1976, p. 141). The appropriate time of day for *sob bekheyr* is from dawn until almost nine or ten in the morning. In English, however, one can say 'good morning' until midday. Because Muslims should perform their Morning Prayer near dawn to a few minutes to sunrise, they usually wake up early in the morning and henceforth exchange morning greetings much earlier.

The first opportunity to use morning greetings is at home and with family members (parents, spouses, children, siblings). Away from home, they are used when meeting people (known or strangers) for the first time in the morning. Unlike *sælam* which can be repeated more than once upon seeing the same person again, *sob bekheyr* can not be repeated at subsequent encounters. As with the exchange of *sælam*, it is the younger person who initiates the morning greetings, or the first party who catches sight of the other party, irrespective of age.

sob bekheyr, as a neutral formula, is used both in formal and informal situations by all age groups. Other variants such as *sob-e shoma bekheyr* and *sobetun bekheyr* ('May your (V-form) morning be blessed') are formal, and *sobet bekheyr* ('May your (T-form) morning be good') is informal. Outside the home and with acquaintances or strangers, if it is not a passing greeting, it is necessary to exchange salutations before a morning greeting and to enquire about health and well-being afterwards. However, with family members, this is not usually necessary and instead, interactants might ask whether they slept well the previous night. See list of variants, table 22.

Depending on context and interlocutors' relationship, the appropriate responses to *sob bekheyr* and its variants are (i) *sob bekheyr* (full echo response), (ii) *sob-e shoma bekheyr* ('good morning to you (V-form) too') (by shifting the focal stress from *sob* to *shoma*), (iii) *sob-e shoma hæm bekheyr* ('good morning to you (V-form) too'), (iv) *sobetun bekheyr* ('good morning to you (V-form)'), (v) *sobet bekheyr* ('good morning to you (T-form) too'), or (vi) *sob-e to hæm bekheyr* ('good morning to you (T-form) too'). In addition to these formulae, in some cases, in response to a younger person, an elderly man or woman might respond with a formula such as *ʔaghebætet bekheyr* ('May you have a happy ending') out of affection, which is now almost outdated. See list of variants, table 23.

Table 22: Time-bound greetings for morning

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Formality
1	*sob bekheyr*	May your morning be blessed	Good morning	neutral
2	*sob-e shoma bekheyr*	May your (V-form) morning be blessed	Good morning	formal
3	*sobetun bekheyr*	May your (V-form) morning be blessed	Good morning	formal
4	*sobet bekheyr*	May your (T-form) morning be blessed	Good morning	informal

Table 23: Response to time-bound greetings for morning

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Formality
1	*sob bekheyr*	May your morning be blessed	Good morning	neutral
2	*sob-e shoma bekheyr*	May your (V-form) morning be blessed	Good morning	formal
3	*sobetun bekheyr*	May your (V-form) morning be blessed	Good morning	formal
4	*sob-e shoma hæm bekheyr*	May your (V-form) morning be blessed too	Good morning	formal
5	*sobet bekheyr*	May your (T-form) morning be blessed	Good morning	informal
6	*sobh-e ʔali bekheyr*	May your (Super-V) morning be blessed	NEE	formal
7	*ʔaghebætet bekheyr*	May you (T-form) have a happy ending	NEE	formal

4.4.2 Midday greetings

Midday greetings are not as popular as morning greetings. *zohr bekheyr* ('May your noon be blessed') and its variants are used around lunch time. It is mostly used in radio and TV programmes. The response to this formula can be *zohr bekheyr* (neutral), *zohr-e shoma bekheyr* (formal), *zohr-e shoma hæm bekheyr* (formal), *zohretun bekheyr* (formal), or *zohret bekheyr* (informal). Like morning greetings, they can stand by themselves or be combined with a normal greeting sequence. See list of variants and responses, tables 24 & 25.

Table 24: Time-bound greetings for midday

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Formality
1	*zohr bekheyr*	May your noon be blessed	NEE	neutral
2	*zohr-e shoma bekheyr*	May your (V-form) noon be blessed	NEE	formal
3	*zohretun bekheyr*	May your (V-form) noon be blessed	NEE	formal

Table 25: Response to time-bound greetings for noon

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Formality
1	*zohr bekheyr*	May your noon be blessed	NEE	neutral
2	*zohr-e shoma bekheyr*	May your (V-form) noon be blessed too	NEE	formal
3	*zohretun bekheyr*	May your (V-form) noon be blessed too	NEE	formal
4	*zohr-e shoma hæm bekheyr*	May your (V-form) noon be blessed too	NEE	formal
5	*zohret bekheyr*	May your (T-form) noon be blessed too	NEE	informal

4.4.3 Afternoon greetings

Ɂæsr bekheyr ('May your afternoon be blessed') and its variants are used as a greeting from midday until about five or six in the afternoon (sunset). It corresponds to 'good afternoon' in English. Akin to noon greetings, it is not very popular among people and it is mostly used in radio and TV programmes. The response to this formula can be *Ɂæsr bekheyr* (neutral), *Ɂæsre shoma bekheyr* (formal), *Ɂæsretun bekheyr* (formal), *Ɂæsret bekheyr* (informal). See list of variants and responses, tables 26 & 27.

Table 26: Time-bound greetings for afternoon

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Formality
1	*Ɂæsr bekheyr*	May your afternoon be blessed	Good afternoon	neutral
2	*Ɂæsr-e shoma bekheyr*	May your (V-form) afternoon be blessed	Good afternoon	formal
3	*Ɂæsretun bekheyr*	May your (V-form) afternoon be blessed	Good afternoon	formal

Table 27: Response to time-bound greetings for noon

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Formality
1	*Ɂæsr bekheyr*	May your afternoon be blessed	Good afternoon	formal
2	*Ɂæsr-e shoma bekheyr*	May your (V-form) afternoon be blessed too	Good afternoon	formal
3	*Ɂæsr-e shoma hæm bekheyr*	Good afternoon to you too (V-form)	Good afternoon	formal
4	*Ɂæsret bekheyr*	Good afternoon to you too (T-form)	Good afternoon	informal

4.4.4 Night greetings

shæb bekheyr ('May your evening be blessed') and its variants are used to greet people at night (sunset to midnight). It corresponds to 'good evening' in English. Similar to noon and afternoon greetings, it is mostly used in radio and TV programmes. Depending on the context and interlocutors' relationship, the response to this formula could be *shæb bekheyr* (neutral), *shæbe shoma* (*hæm*) *bekheyr* (formal), *shæbetun bekheyr* (formal), and *shæbet bekheyr* (informal). See list of variants and responses, tables 28 & 29.

Table 28: Time-bound greetings for night

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Formality
1	*shæb bekheyr*	May your evening be blessed	Good evening	neutral
2	*shæb-e shoma bekheyr*	May your(V-form) evening be blessed	Good evening	formal
3	*shæbetun bekheyr*	May your(V-form) evening be blessed	Good evening	formal

Table 29: Response to time-bound greetings for night

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense	Formality
1	*shæb bekheyr*	May your evening be blessed	Good evening	neutral
2	*shæb-e shoma bekheyr*	May your (V-form) evening be blessed	Good evening	formal
3	*shæb-e shoma hæm bekheyr*	May your (V-form) evening be blessed too	Good evening	formal
4	*shæbetun bekheyr*	May your (V-form) evening be blessed	Good evening	formal
5	*shæbet bekheyr*	May your (T-form) evening be blessed	Good evening	informal
6	*shæb to hæm bekheyr*	May your (T-form) evening be blessed too	Good evening	informal

4.5 Day time greetings

During the past two centuries, Iranians have been in regular contact with Europeans. Through these communications as well as direct translations from European languages, some new RPF have been introduced into Persian. *ruz bekheyr* ('May your day be blessed') seems to be a direct translation from 'good day' in English and/or '*bonjour*' in French. This formula is not used by commoners and is solely limited to higher class and educated people. It is also widely used in the movies dubbed into Persian from English. Interestingly, this formula is not limited to any particular time of day, thus, it can be used as a general formula as long as it is day. As regards its formality, *ruz bekheyr* is not used for family members, friends or acquaintances. It is merely used in communications with strangers as a form of courteous

behaviour. For example, when addressing a woman at an information desk, a distinguished educated person can greet her with *sælam khanum, ruzetun bekheyr* ('Hello Miss, good day'). *ruz bekheyr* can also be used for leave-taking. In this usage, it is also unpopular and limited to higher classes, and used merely with strangers in public encounters. As my data contains only a few tokens of *ruz bekheyr*, more research is needed to probe the usage and function of this formula in contemporary Persian. Similar to *ruz bekheyr*, *vækht/væght bekheyr* ('Good time') can be used as long as it is day. Likewise, it is not used with family members and friends. It is merely used to greet strangers in public encounters. See list of variants, table 30.

Table 30: Day time greetings

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic translation	Formality
1	*ruz bekheyr*	May your day be blessed	Good day	very formal
2	*ruzetun bekheyr*	May your day be blessed	Good day	very formal
3	*vækht bekheyr*	May your time be blessed	Good day	formal
4	*vækhtetun bekheyr*	May your time be blessed	Good day	formal

4.6 Celebratory greetings

Iran celebrates a number of national and religious festivals, the most important of which is *NowRuz* ('New day'). This holiday has been celebrated in Iran for 2571 years, marking the beginning of spring and the Iranian New Year. A few days before *NowRuz,* after a thorough cleaning of the house in every household, a traditional tablecloth is spread on the floor or on the table, containing seven specific items starting with the letter 'S' (e.g., *sib* ('apple'), *serke* ('vinegar'), *senjed* ('oleaster'), *sekke* ('coin'), *sæbze* ('wheat, barley, lentil sprout'), *sæmænu* ('sweet pudding'), *somagh* ('sumac fruit')) along with some objects (e.g., mirror, painted eggs, goldfish, candle) called *Sofre Haftsin*. A few hours before the arrival of the spring equinox (or the Persian New Year), the whole family wearing new clothes sit peacefully around *Sofre Haftsin*, waiting enthusiastically for the New Year to come. As soon as the start of the New Year is announced on the radio or TV, members of the family, amid hugging and kissing, wish one another the best for the upcoming year with ritual celebratory greeting formulae.

During the *NowRuz* holidays that last for almost two weeks, people pay their families, relatives, friends and neighbours short visits called *ʔeyd didæni* ('New Year visits'). These

visits usually start from the first day of *Nowruz* by visiting the most senior people in the family. Visiting friends, acquaintances and neighbours comes next in line, and might take the whole *NowRuz* holidays. The visits are later reciprocated in the same way. The exchange of celebratory greetings for *NowRuz* is not just limited to the holiday time and even after *NowRuz* holidays, people who have not met and greeted one another can still exchange greetings for the *NowRuz*.

ʔeyd-e shoma mobaræk ('May your (V-form) Eid be blessed') and its variants stand for 'Happy New Year' in English. *ʔeyd-e hæmegi mobaræk* ('May Eid of all be blessed') is used when one person addresses a group of people. The two other popular formulae used for *NowRuz* greetings are *sal-e now mobaræk* ('May your new year be blessed') and *sal-e khubi dashte bashid* ('May you have a good (new) year'). These celebratory greeting formulae can also be followed by some formulaic good-wishes for the New Year such as *sæd sal be in sala* ('Many happy returns of these years/times') *ta bashe az in shadiya* ('Many happy returns of these happy events')

Discourse structure rule for celebratory greetings:

R.1   Celebratory greetings sequence (familial) ---> Celebratory greetings + (Well-wishing formulae)

R.2   Celebratory greeting sequence (formal) ---> Phase one + Phase two + Celebratory greetings + (Well-wishing formulae)

R.3   Phase one ---> The exchange of salutations

R.4   Phase two ---> Second person information elicitations (type one: enquiries on health, well being and happiness) + Second person information elicitations (type two: enquiries on news and state of affairs)

Formula structure (opening):

START (VOC) + {*ʔeyd-e shoma/ ʔeydetun/ ʔeydet/ ʔeyd-e hæmegi*} *mobaræk* + (*bashe*) + (*inshallah*) + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *sal-e now mobaræk* + (*bashe*) + (*inshallah*) + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + ({*inshallah/omidvaræm*}) + (*ke*) + *sal-e khubi dashte bashid* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *sæd sal be in sala* STOP

START (VOC) + *ta bashe az in shadiya* (*bashe*) STOP

The patterns of response are also formulaic and more or less identical. The response to *ʔeyd-e shoma mobaræk* can be either *ʔeyd-e shoma mobaræk* by shifting the focal stress from *ʔeyd* ('Eid') to *shoma* (you (V-form)), or by placing *hæm* ('too'/'as well') after *shoma* as in *ʔeyd-e shoma hæm mobaræk* ('May your Eid be blessed too'). Likewise, the response to *sal-e now mobaræk* ('May your new year be blessed') can be *sal-e now shoma hæm mobaræk bashe* ('May your new year be blessed too'). Responses are usually preceded by general expressions of gratitude.

Formula structure (response):
START (gratitude expressions)^n + *ʔeyd-e* **shoma** (*hæm*) *mobaræk* (*bashe*) STOP
START (gratitude expressions)^n + *sal-e now* **shoma** (*hæm*) *mobaræk* (*bashe*) STOP

There are two other festivals in the Iranian calendar, which observe two major Islamic events: *Eid ul-Fitr* (marking the end of the fasting month of Ramadan) and *Eid ul-Adha* (the festival of sacrifice attributed to Abraham). In Iran, religious festivals are not as important and elaborate as national festivals (e.g., *NowRuz*). However, during these two festivals religious people might greet one another with celebratory greeting formulae such as *ʔeyd-e shoma mobaræk*, *ʔeydetun mobaræk*, *ʔeydet mobaræk* ('May your Eid be blessed'). The patterns of response are similar to other celebratory greetings.

4.7 Summary

Greeting plays an important role in establishing, maintaining and enhancing interpersonal relationships. In some societies, the functions of greeting behaviour go far beyond phatic communion since they have been institutionalized as a way of affirming status as well as for manipulation. Among Muslims, Greeting is deeply connected with Islamic teachings so much so that in using some greeting formulae one engages himself/herself in a religious act. A normal greeting usually has three phases the first of which is the exchange of salutations, followed by the second person information elicitations and, finally, the third person information elicitations. Like the rest of RPF, greeting formulae are indexed for their discourse roles within a greeting sequence. Moreover, they can show different levels of politeness and can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show more affection, deference or status. Lastly, Persian uses a variety of time-bound greetings corresponding to

the different times of the day, as well as celebratory greetings reserved for national and religious festivals.

CHAPTER 5
LEAVE-TAKING

5.1 Introduction

The functions and properties of the routine of leave-taking and a brief literature review appear in 5.2. The ritual of leave-taking in the Persian speaking community is presented in 5.3 as well as the discourse structure rules for a leave-taking sequence in 5.3.1. Phase one of a leave-taking sequence is discussed in 5.3.1.1, Phase two (verbal closure markers) in 5.3.1.2, Phase three in 5.3.1.3 and Phase four (exchange of terminals) in 5.3.1.4. Terminal Leave-taking Formulae appear in 5.4, investigating their form and functions followed by a summary in 5.5.

5.2 The functions, definition and literature review of leave-taking:

Though conversational routines such as parting (and greeting) are taken as rather empty and mechanical social behaviors, they are "(…) extremely important strategies for the negotiation and control of social identity and social relationships between participants in conversation" (Laver, 1981, p. 304). It is very unusual to find people not taking their leave from others when leaving their company. Even young children are taught by parents to wave and say bye-bye (see Pawley, 1974, p. 1; Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 241). Greetings and partings are known as access rituals, given that greetings usually signal the beginning of a period of increased access, whereas partings signal the start of a period of decreased access (see Goffman, 1971). This anticipation of lack of access, as Hargie et al. (1994) point out, contributes to part of the difficulty that many people experience at the time of leave-taking (p. 161). Leave-taking is seen as a special time for being supportive towards one another (Knapp et al., 1973, p. 185).

Generally, a normal social encounter/interaction has an opening (greetings), a body (conversation on various topics) and a closing (leave-taking). Depending on the occasion and context, each of these three stages might be elaborate, short or medium. For example, an official dinner function necessitates an elaborate greeting at the beginning, a long conversation in the middle, and a detailed leave-taking at its end. Unexpected encounters in the street, when people are in a hurry, have short/quick greetings, conversation and leave-takings respectively. However, there are some social encounters such as casual home visits

that come in between these two extremes. Therefore, pertaining to leave-taking rituals, a number of scenarios are imaginable. First, two people come across each other and, based on the context of the situation and their relationship, they might slow down to greet and bid each other farewell in passing. However, if they are not in a rush, they might engage in a short conversation on various topics brought up by either side. Second, one person is situated in a place such as home, shop or office (e.g., as a host/hostess, shopkeeper, secretary) and the other party takes his/her leave (e.g., as a guest, customer, someone making an enquiry). Congruently, in each of these cases, the leave-takings can be short, medium or elaborate.

Apart from special cases (e.g., emergencies), leave-taking is not a sudden and abrupt ritual (see Pawley, 1974, p. 4). In most cases, it takes some time to perform the ritual of leave-taking, and depending on variables such as context, type of occasion or function, the nature of the relationship between interlocutors and the number of people involved, the duration of a leave-taking might vary considerably from a few seconds to a few minutes.

Although leave-taking is actually the termination of an encounter, while going through the phases and sub-phases of a normal leave-taking and depending on context and occasion, some quick mini-topics known as interpolations might take place in order to avoid the probable phases of silence. For example, when the distance between the place where the guests are sitting and the main entrance is considerable, some quick topics might be introduced while the guests are being seen out. These are usually a myriad range of short contextual topics from the flowers in the garden to the probable results of the football game the following day. Any extended period of silence at the time of leave-taking might be regarded as a sign of unhappiness and discontent on both sides and thus should be avoided.

According to Hargie et al. (1994), while a person may carefully plan the best way to greet another person, s/he will hardly think about the proper way to say goodbye to that same person (p. 161). Therefore, leave-taking has been seen as an unplanned impromptu action rather than a planned ritual (Hargie et al., 1994, p. 161). The dearth of material on this highly ritualised activity shows that leave-taking has been taken for granted by scholars. For example, "while numerous aspects of interpersonal transactions have been scrutinized, the peculiar behaviours associated with how these transactions are terminated have been largely neglected by behavioural researchers" (Knapp, et al., 1973, p. 182). The highly conventionalized and routinized nature of parting (and greeting) signs should not make us

think of them as merely formal, meaningless and empty procedures (See Firth, 1972, pp. 2, 7). Instead, they should be viewed as an instrument in modifying the behaviour of the hearer (Firth, 19772, p. 2). For Bakken (1977) goodbyes may serve to regulate and maintain relationships among co-participants. In other words, as Hargie et al. (1994) note, "how we take our leave of another person will to a great extent determine our motivation for meeting that person again" (p. 161).

Some scholars have defined leave-taking in relation to greeting as a positive social quality in our daily relationships. For Firth (1972), parting and greeting forms are the devices or signs by which one's interlocutor is recognised as a social entity and social relationships are established or maintained (p. 1). Therefore, in a social context parting and greeting formulae are quite significant. For example, as Firth (1972) points out, not saying goodbye to one's interlocutor implies severance of a relationship or unwillingness to continue a social relationship (pp. 7, 16). Firth (1972) holds that parting (and greeting) forms are highly conventionalized and these conventions are specific to cultures, i.e., they are not universal (p. 29). He (1972) uses the term 'ritual' for parting and greeting behaviours since they follow "patterned routines" (pp. 29-30). Firth (1972) considers three major social themes for parting behaviour, which are closely connected to the concept of personality (pp. 30-1). The first function of a parting ritual is to focus attention on each other's personality, signalling that further contact at a later time is desired. The second is to provide a framework to identify each other used as a basis for future contact and the third is to bring the departure to a definite and unambiguous point as a means to reduce probable uncertainty and anxiety.

Knapp et al. (1973) suggest that in discussing the functions of leave-taking, it should be considered as "(...) still very much a *part* of the total transaction – not as a separate entity or as a sterile cluster of behaviours" (italic original) (p. 184). Reviewing the literature on leave-taking (e.g. Berne, 1964; Goffman, 1971), Knapp et al. (1973) consider the ritual of leave-taking as norm-bound and attribute three functions to it (p. 184). 'Signalling inaccessibility' is the first function and according to Goffman (1971), greeting and parting rituals signal various degrees of accessibility with greeting heralding a state of more accessibility and leave-taking, signalling a transition to less accessibility (either short-term or long-term). 'Signalling supportiveness' or signalling support for the relationship is the second function attributed to leave-taking. Since leave-taking signifies some inaccessibility in the future, even the most casual leave-takings reveal that interactions are being closed "on a supportive note"

(Knapp et al., 1973, p. 185). Leave-taking, as the termination of an encounter, and as a special time, provides interlocutors with this opportunity to express happiness for having been in contact, to reinforce their relationships, and to signal the wish for future contacts (1973, p. 185). Even though the interaction has been dull or distasteful, as Knapp et al. (1973) mention, leave-taking is still seen as a special time to be supportive (p. 185). The third function of leave-taking is as a 'summarizing function' or to summarize the substantive portions of the interaction. The closing phase of an encounter is an interpersonal summary of the whole interaction (1973, pp. 185-6). In other words, it seems "as if the last things we say to a person is the only thing he'll take away from the interaction" (Knapp et al., 1973, pp. 185-6).

Applying the concept of "felt probability of access" during the period of separation (see Goffman, 1971; Bakken, 1977) investigated leave-taking behaviour/rituals at two different locations: the departure lounges of Logan Airport and the student union at Boston University. According to Bakken (1977), the felt probability of access to one's participant was lower at the airport than the student union (p. 95). Therefore, the farewells in the airport setting appeared to be more supportive interchanges than those observed in the student union. Bakken (1977) concludes that his study supports Goffman's suggestion that goodbyes reaffirm that the relationship will survive during the period of decreased probability of access, and that the lower the probability of access, the greater the support in the goodbye (p. 6).

In a comparative study, Kinnison (2000) investigated the linguistic routines used by American and Chinese guests at after dinner leave-taking. She maintained that although Americans and Chinese use a number of the same speech acts, there is a significant difference in the way this speech event is structured ('difference in structure'), in the frequency of some speech acts ('difference in content'), and in the attitudes towards polite ways of leave-taking ('difference in attitude'). Kinnison (2000) considered three stages for leave-taking, including initial closing, pre-closing and closing respectively. As for difference in structure, Americans and Chinese use different speech acts in the three stages of leave-taking. For example, while Americans tend to lavishly express their thanks to the host/hostess in both the 'initial closing' and 'pre-closing' stages, the Chinese give thanks scantily merely in the pre-closing stage. As another example, while Chinese leave-takers invite the host/hostess for a reunion in the initial closing as well as the pre-closing stages, Americans do so only in the pre-closing stage.

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Given the difference in content or frequency of some speech acts, both speech communities show marked differences. For example, in making excuses to justify one's intention for leave-taking, American guests mostly use "I-patterned excuses", whereas Chinese favour "you-patterned excuses". According to Kinnison (2000), I-patterned excuses are oriented towards the self (e.g., 'my wife is getting a little restless'), and you-patterned excuses are oriented towards the other (e.g., 'You [host/hostess] have been busy for the whole day'). Finally, as for difference in attitude, the leave-taking statement with "+I" and "+thanks" were rated more highly among the Americans than the Chinese.

The ritual of leave-taking is more than simply uttering some popular stock phrases such as 'goodbye', 'so long', 'see you later' and so forth (Pawley, 1974, p. 4). Pawley (1974) also finds that leave-taking among the English speakers can contain up to ten pairs of initiating and response moves (adjacency pairs). In a word, "(...) this speck [leave-taking] may eventually tell us a good deal about the larger organism of human interaction with which it is associated, since unique and terribly human interpersonal forces are unleashed when people say goodbye to one another" (Knapp et al., 1973, p. 182).

5.3 Leave-taking ritual in the Persian speaking community

Like other RPF, leave-taking formulae are conventional routines used in recurrent situations. They clearly reflect the socio-cultural values and norms as well as codes of conduct governing Iranian society. Whereas some of these values and norms are shared by other languages and cultures, some others specifically belong to the Iranian culture. In the following, discourse structure rules for leave-taking in Persian are introduced. Later on in this section, terminal leave-taking formulae (TLT) or valedictions will be introduced as dictionary entries elaborating on their form and function.

5.3.1 Discourse structure rules for leave-takings in Persian

Greeting is the start of a social encounter and leave-taking its termination. As a result, these two highly conventionalised routines have many things in common, e.g., being sequential (orderly), mutual (dyadic), cooperative, formulaic and ritualistic. In Persian, as in other languages and cultures, it is not acceptable to abruptly terminate a conversation and to take leave, unless there are good reasons for that (e.g., in the case of emergencies). Therefore,

before the co-participants can terminate interactions, they should go smoothly through a number of phases, which are mostly an attempt to attend to the 'positive face' needs of the host/hostess, i.e., the wish to be liked, wanted and not to be rejected (see Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Depending on the occasion, daily social encounters vary in length from passing (short) to extended (elaborate). There is a relative similarity between greetings and leave-takings as to how elaborate they might be. That is, brief greetings at the beginning of an encounter usually lead to a passing leave-taking at the end. By contrast, elaborate greetings might necessitate elaborate leave-taking at the end (e.g., a dinner function). However short or elaborate the leave-taking ritual might be, it is structured; that is, "there is orderliness in the components of this last stage of a conversation" (Kinnison, 2000, p. 27). Coulmas (1981) also points out that a crucial feature of speech acts is their sequential character (p. 71). Similar to greetings, leave-taking is also mutual (dyadic). That is, it involves at least two parties, and depending on context and occasion, one party initiates a leave-taking exchange with a formula and the other replies with an appropriate corresponding formula, which finally turns out as a leave-taking sequence. Leave-taking, like other speech acts, complies with Grice's cooperative principle. That is, although a party who takes his/her leave initiates leave-taking, it cannot be fulfilled unless both speaker (e.g., a guest) and hearer (e.g. a host/hostess) behave cooperatively (Laver, 1975, p. 229; Laver, 1981, p. 303; Kinnison, 2000, p. 37). As regards the importance of leave-taking rituals in maintaining and facilitating vital social relationships among people, and given their high frequency of occurrence in daily interactions, on a par with greetings, they are highly conventionalized, ritualistic and formulaic.

As said earlier, the main purpose of conducting a successful leave-taking is to facilitate a smoother transition from a state of talk or contact to a state of separation (House, 1982, p. 54). A leave-taking (LT) sequence is initiated by one party who expresses verbally and non-verbally his/her wish to leave. Ignoring how short or elaborate a LT sequence might be, interlocutors should go through a number of non-verbal and verbal phases represented as a LT sequence. Between these phases, and depending on the context, some interpolations (some being situational) tend to occur, which might force the leave-taker to repeat some phases or parts of them over again. Given the role-play and soap opera data, the following discourse structure rules can be proposed for an extended or elaborate LT sequence in Persian. There are a number of conventional formulae that are indexed to the following

discourse structure rules for leave-taking in Persian and their list can be found in Appendix A.

R.01.   An elaborate LT sequence ---> phase one (non-verbal) + phase two (verbal) + phase three (verbal) + phase four (verbal/ non-verbal)

R.02.   Phase one ---> silence/ body language

R.03.   Phase two ---> use of verbal closure markers

R.04.   Phase three ---> sub-phase1 + sub-phase 2 + sub-phase 3 + sub-phase 4 + sub-phase 5 + sub-phase 6 + sub-phase 7 + sub-phase 8 + sub-phase 9 + sub-phase 10 + sub-phase 11 + sub-phase 12 + sub-phase 13 + sub-phase 14

R.05.   Sub-phase 1 ---> announcement of leave-taking by the person leaving

R.06.   Sub-phase 2 ---> persuading the leave-taker to stay longer

R.07.   Sub-phase 3 ---> turning down the offer to stay longer by giving a reason for the departure

R.08.   Sub-phase 4 ---> acknowledging the desire of the leave-taker to leave

R.09.   Sub-phase 5 ---> inviting the leave-taker to a future reunion

R.10   Sub-phase 6 ---> apology and acknowledgement by the leave-taker for the troubles that the host/hostess has gone through

R.11   Sub-phase 7 ---> apology by the host/hostess for not providing a better time and service for the leave-taker

R.12.   Sub-phase 8 ---> expressing appreciation and acknowledgment for the trouble taken by the host/hostess

R.13.   Sub-phase 9 ---> expressing happiness and delight in the visit (by the leave-taker)

R.14.   Sub-phase 10 ---> requests for expanding greetings to third parties (by both parties)

R.15.   Sub-phase 11 ---> don't-trouble-yourself request (by leave-taker)

R.16.   Sub-phase 12 ---> requesting to be in further contact (by both parties)

R.17.   Sub-phase 13 ---> well-wishing or consolidatory comments (by both parties)

R.18.   Sub-phase 14 ---> interpolations

R.19.   Phase 4 ---> exchange of terminal leave-taking formulae/valedictions + body language

5.3.1.1 Phase one of a LT sequence

According to Firth (1972), parting usually involves both verbal and non-verbal phases (p. 9). The first phase of a LT sequence is non-verbal known as "nonverbal closure markers" (Hargie et al., 1994, pp. 172-3). Silence as well as body language, body posture and facial expressions can indirectly indicate that the interaction is drawing to a close. The speech event of leave-taking by definition entails high degrees of risk to the face wants of interlocutors, especially the person who is being left behind (e.g., the host/hostess might feel neglected, rejected or shunned) (see Laver, 1981, p. 303). For this reason, the person leaving attempts to make his/her intention of leaving as indirect as possible and to prepare one's interlocutor for termination of the conversation step by step. Prior to announcing-leave-taking (ALT) formulae, interactants use indirect ways such as silence, body language and facial expressions, hoping that the other person picks up the leave-taking cues (see Knapp & Hall, 2002), effectively communicating the following: "I'm not saying this explicitly but I'm giving you signs that I'm thinking of leaving soon" (Pawley, 1974, p. 7). It should be noted that phase one of a LT sequence in Persian resembles that in many other languages.

During a social encounter, in order to keep a conversation going, interlocutors usually take turns. The party intending to terminate the conversation to take leave, will try to give up his/her turn(s) in a conversation and keep silent. As Kinnison (2000) contends, leave-taking cannot come about unless both guests and host/hostess cooperate with one another (p. 37). Thus, having Grice's cooperative principle in mind, it is not very difficult for interlocutors to make sense of periods of silence as clues for leave-taking ("feeling the goodbye in the air" in Knapp et al.'s terms, 1973). If one party continues to introduce more topics, the party who wishes to leave may shorten and/or ignore his/her turn(s) to increase the periods of silence until the point when they are understood as markers for leave-taking.

Along with silence, other clues such as body language, body posture, and facial expressions can characterise the desire to terminate an encounter by the person leaving. Some of the non-verbal leave-taking behaviours performed as goodbye cues are as follows: breaking off visual contact and looking down more often and for longer periods of time, failing to give verbal or gestural continuity signals when they are required, checking the wrist watch (sometimes several times), nervously searching for a wall clock, asking people for the time (if one does not have a watch and there is no clock), an obvious shift on the chair or sofa and placing hands on thighs, knees or chair handles for leverage in getting up, quickly looking around for

collecting possessions and making eye contact with other members of the family or group, signalling that departure is imminent, and so on (see Knapp et al., 1973; Pawley, 1974, p. 7; Laver, 1975, pp. 227-8; Hargie et al, 1994, p. 173; Knapp and Hall, 2002, pp. 437-8).

During functions, such as a dinner party, the host/hostess usually tries to ignore the non-verbal signals for leave-taking from the guest. Even when the guest makes his/her intention verbally clear, s/he tries to persuade the guest(s) to stay longer. Otherwise, it will be interpreted as evicting said guest, which goes against hospitality etiquette in Iranian culture. Often, regardless of the display of these non-verbal signals/behaviours, one party (e.g., the host/hostess) might still bring up a quick topic or point (e.g., 'Oh, just one more thing ...'), which might mean the leave-taker will need to go through the entire process or parts of it again (see Knapp and Hall, 2002, p. 438).

5.3.1.2 Phase two of a LT sequence (verbal closure markers)

No matter how significant the non-verbal cues for leave-taking might be, an interaction will not end unless it enters the verbal phase ('verbal acknowledgement of parting'). In Persian, the verbal phase of a LT sequence usually starts with *khob*, as an interjection. *khob* corresponds to 'well', 'right (then)', 'alright, 'ok (then)', 'now' in English with downward intonation contours. Hargie et al. (1994, p. 172) refer to these words in English as "verbal closure markers", and Schegloff and Sacks (1973, p. 303) as possible "pre-closings". Verbal closure markers, according to Hargie et al. (1994), signal to one's interactant that no new topic should be brought up (p. 172). In Persian, *khob*, with a falling intonation, is used to get the attention of the hearer(s). It signals that the speaker is about to do or say something (the intention of leave-taking), e.g., *khob*, *ba ejazætun mæn bayæd beræm* ('Right then, with your permission, I should be going'). *khob* may also be followed by *pæs* ('then') as *khob pæs* ('ok then'), or terms of address as vocatives ('*khob* NP') to communicate more affection, deference and status. *khob* may also be preceded by *kheyli* ('very'), an adverbial intensifier, appearing as *kheyli khob* ('very well'). Phase two is repeatable, and depending on the number of interpolations/interruptions during the leave-taking process, they might be employed more than once. Some of the non-verbal leave-taking behaviours may precede verbal closure markers, while some may accompany them. For example, when a leave-taker places his/her hands on his/her thighs/knees for leverage in getting up or when s/he slaps the thighs or knees when rising, s/he may also be using verbal closure markers. In Persian, a verbal closure

marker is sometimes preceded by clearing one's throat as another non-verbal signal, indicating the change of topic and the closure of interaction.

5.3.1.3 Phase three of a LT sequence

Depending on the occasion (e.g., a casual leave-taking vs. an after dinner leave-taking), context, and interlocutors' relationship, this phase includes various categories of speech acts realized in fourteen different sub-phases. Not all these categories can be employed in one single LT sequence. Nor is the order presented here always observed. These categories are partly adopted from Kinnison (2000) and Pawley's (1974) studies, and are largely based on role-play and soap opera data. These categories include: (i) announcement of leave-taking by the person leaving, (ii) persuading the leave-taker to stay longer, (iii) turning down the offer to stay longer and giving a reason for the departure, (iv) acknowledging the desire of the leave-taker to leave (by the host/hostess), (v) inviting the leave-taker to a future reunion, (vi) apology and acknowledgement by the leave-taker for the troubles that the host/hostess has gone through, (vii) apology by the host/hostess for not providing a better time and service to the leave-taker, (viii) giving thanks or expressing appreciation and acknowledgment for the trouble taken by the host/hostess, (ix) expressing happiness and delight in the visit (by the leave-taker), (x) requests for expanding greetings to third parties (by both parties), (xi) don't-trouble-yourself request (by leave-taker), (xii) request to be in further contact (by both parties), (xiii) well-wishing or consolidatory comments (by both parties), (xiv) interpolations.

5.3.1.3.1 Sub-phase 1: announcement of leave-taking by the person leaving

Before a leave-taker can say goodbye using the terminal leave-taking formulae, s/he should let the other party know that s/he intends to take his/her leave by employing proper announcing-leave-taking (ALT) formulae. The main communicative function of the ALT formulae is to signal that it is time for the speaker to leave (e.g., 'I'd better be going now'). Depending on the context, in response to ALT formulae, the hearer (e.g., a host/hostess) will try to persuade the speaker to stay a little longer (e.g., 'Oh, do you really have to go?'), since prompt acceptance of permission for leave-taking may be regarded as rude (to be dealt with under sub-phase two). In Persian, there are numerous formulae used as ALT with varying degrees of formality and conventionality/fixedness. To increase the level of politeness, ALT formulae mostly use the subjunctive mood, appearing as conditional sentences or polite

requests. Some ALT formulae attend to the negative face of hearer and some to positive face needs. There are also some ALT formulae which attend to both the positive and negative face of the hearer. 'Lowering oneself and elevating others' (see Brown and Levinson, 1987: 178-9) is the principal approach to the use of ALT formulae in Persian. This is achieved by linguistic devices such as substituting neutral/plain pronoun forms as well as neutral verb forms for deferential equivalents. Then, let us go over some ALT formulae in Persian to see how they look and function. *ejaze-ye morkhæsi be bænde mifærma'in?* ('Would you please allow this slave/humble fellow to leave your presence?') is a formal ALT formula in which the strategy of 'self-lowering and other-elevating' is prominent. *ejaze dadæn*, a compound verb, ('To give permission') implies a superiority-inferiority relationship where one party asks for permission and the other party gives permission. This attends to the positive face of the hearer since the speaker (leave-taker) presupposes that the hearer has the rank/status to refuse his/her request for leave-taking. Thus, the speaker is placing the hearer at a higher point in status than himself/herself. Second, with respect to levels of politeness inherent in Persian, to increase the politeness level, *ejaze dadæn*, a neutral/plain verb form, can be substituted with *ejaze færmudæn* ('to decree permission') as a deferential verb form. Third, *morkhæs shodæn* ('to be released') as a humble verb form compared with *ræftæn* ('to go'/ to leave'), a neutral/plain verb form, entails a superiority-inferiority relationship where one person has the authority over another to release him/her. Fourth, the use of *bænde* ('slave'/'humble fellow') as a humble form for *mæn* ('I') increases the distance between speaker and hearer, communicating more deference. Finally, the subjunctive mood of the sentence emerging as a question/request adds to its formality.

The second ALT formula that I intend to introduce attends both to the negative and positive face of the hearer (host/hostess) concurrently: *æge ejaze befærma'in, bænde dige yævash yævash zæhmæto kæm konæm* ('If you grant me permission, this slave would save the trouble of his/her presence little by little'). Attending to the positive face of the hearer, the speaker assumes that s/he cannot leave the presence of the hearer (e.g., host/hostess) unless allowed to. Asking permission to leave attends to the positive face of the hearer since it presupposes that the hearer has the rank/status to refuse, treating the hearer as superior. Therefore, the speaker attributes a higher status to the hearer relative to himself/herself. Moreover, in attending to the negative face of the hearer, the speaker assumes that s/he has put the hearer to a lot of trouble by his/her presence (trouble-sensitivity, see chapter nine), and will now put an end to all that trouble by leaving. Therefore, the second part of the formula presupposes

that the hearer has been negatively impacted by the speaker's presence where they would otherwise be doing something else.

The common notion of the speech acts employed as ALT formulae in Persian are: 'Would you please allow this slave/humble fellow to leave your respected presence?', 'If you grant me permission, I would leave your respected presence little by little', 'If you grant me permission, I would lessen/save you the trouble of my presence', 'With your kind permission, this slave/humble fellow is going to leave', 'If you kindly grant me permission, I would humbly take my leave', 'It is better for this slave/humble fellow to leave your honored presence', 'If I can be of service to you in no other way, I will leave', 'I'd better humbly leave your respected presence', 'Is there anything I can be of service with?', 'I'd better go now', 'I should go', 'I am leaving/going', 'I left'. For a complete list of the ALT formulae, refer to Appendix A.

As said earlier, leaving the company of others (as entering it) can be face-threatening. When entering the company of others, the negative face needs of the host/hostess are threatened, i.e., the desire not to be impeded. Whereas in leaving the company of others, the host/hostess might feel rejected, which threatens his/her positive face, i.e., the need to be liked/appreciated by others. Therefore, according to Laver (1975), in order to terminate an encounter comfortably, the potential sense of rejection that a participant might feel when his/her fellow participant makes the first move towards leave-taking must be mitigated (p. 230). This mitigation, as Laver (1975) notes, is one of the factors that can secure cooperation and consent in terminating the encounter (p. 230). Therefore, alongside the use of ALT formulae, to further limit the potential sense of rejection, the leave-taker instantly resorts to giving excuses as well. These excuses can be "I-patterned" or "You-patterned" (see Kinnison, 2000), real or invented (see Laver, 1975, p. 230). Justifying the aptness of You-patterned excuses over I-patterned excuses, Laver (1975) notes, "What better way to assuage the displeasure of the departure than to set its reason in the welfare of the other participant?" (p. 230). Therefore, the I-patterned or You-patterned excuses can immediately follow the ALT in sub-phase one, or they can appear later on in the process of leave-taking, which will be discussed again under sub-phase three.

Family members and friends do not have to employ formal ALT formulae before taking leave, given their close relationship. Generally, in informal and familial situations, intimates

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can enter or leave each other's personal space with little need for "face-redressive" or "face-saving" works (see Brown and Levinson, 1987), although even with intimates, one still needs to inform others that s/he is leaving. The common theme of the speech acts employed as informal ALT formulae in Persian are: 'Anything else? Is there anything I can be of service with?', 'I'd better go now', 'I am leaving/going', 'I am about to leave', 'I should go'/'I should be going' among others. There are, however, some ALT formulae between these two ends of the spectrum: they are neither too formal nor informal. For a complete list of the informal ALT formulae, refer to Appendix A.

5.3.1.3.2 Sub-phase 2: persuading the leave-taker to stay longer

As earlier stated, the ritual of leave-taking is orderly and dyadic in nature, i.e., interactants take turns in the exchanges. In effect, each party takes his/her interlocutor's response as a starting point to play his/her role. As indicated earlier, ALT formulae are employed by a leave-taker to bring short visits (e.g., a home visit), or organized functions (e.g., a dinner party) to an end. In response, it is not usual for the hearer (e.g., host/hostess) to immediately acknowledge the request or statement for leave-taking since this might be interpreted as evicting the leave-taker. Instead, by employing a number of conventional formulae indexed to this particular social task, the hearer tries to persuade the speaker to stay longer, communicating hospitality and concern.

Persuading the leave-taker to stay longer is mostly an empty and polite gesture, attending to the positive face of the leave-taker (the wish to be valued and appreciated). In informal and friendly situations, however, the persuasion might be quite genuine. Some of the themes common among these formulae (formal and informal) in Persian are: 'Please let us be in your respected presence longer', 'Let's spend this single night more humbly', 'Please stay longer', 'You could stay longer', 'Why are you rushing off for taking leave?', 'Let us stay/be together a little longer', 'It's early yet', 'The night is still young', 'Why are you going?', 'Do stay longer'.

Something noteworthy about the formal formulae employed to persuade the leave-taker to stay longer is that they fully abide by the strategy of lowering oneself and elevating others. For example, to elevate the hearer, the speaker may employ a deferential verb form for the hearer such as *tæshrif dashtæn* ('to be or to stay somewhere') as opposed to *budæn* which is a

neutral/plain verb form. Similarly, *dær khedmæt budæn* ('to be in the employment, service or presence of somebody') as a deferential verb form conveys utmost respect for the hearer (leave-taker) and utmost humility on the part of the speaker.

In service encounters or casual meetings it is not usual to persuade the leave-taker to stay longer and the mere acknowledgment of leave-taking is enough. The context, the occasion and the interlocutors' relationship usually determine if one party should persuade the other to stay longer or not. For the complete list of the formulae belonging to sub-phase two, refer to Appendix A.

5.3.1.3.3 Sub-phase 3: turning down the offer to stay longer and giving a reason for the departure

In sub-phase three, in response to a host/hostess who tries to persuade a guest to stay longer, the leave-taker politely reaffirms his/her intention to leave by employing a number of conventionalized and non-conventionalized formulae tailored to this purpose. Therefore, in Persian language and culture, sub-phase three contains a collection of different speech acts with the common theme of politely turning down the offer to stay longer by stating and restating gratitude to the host/hostess (e.g., 'many thanks'), acknowledging the trouble that the host/hostess went through (e.g., 'Thanks, I have already troubled you enough'), a wish to put an end to those troubles (e.g., 'Thanks, I do not wish to put you to more trouble'), and a wish not to take up any more of the hearer's time (e.g., 'Thanks, I do not wish to take your time more than this'/'We have been here for quite a while'). In sub-phase three, the leave-taker assumes that by being a guest, s/he has troubled the host/hostess and that the host/hostess has been troubled enough (trouble-sensitivity). In Brown and Levinson's terms (1987), the leave-taker assumes that the host/hostess's negative face has been imposed upon long enough. That is, the host/hostess desire to be alone (do his/her own things) has been imposed upon long enough.

According to Pawley (1974), "a reference to the reasons for leaving – leaving being a virtual offence – is required to reassure the rest of the company that the leaver has valid grounds for cutting himself off from them (…)" (p. 12). As such, to justify his/her intention for leave-taking, the leave-taker may also need to resort to some "accounts" (in Pawley's usage, 1974), termed "I-patterned excuses" and/or "You-patterned excuses" (see Kinnison, 2000).

Based on the role-play and soap opera data, in Persian, both types of reasoning for taking leave are employed. Like the Chinese culture (see Kinnison, 2000), to Iranians, the use of other-oriented excuses for leave-taking does not seem indirect and/or imposing. Instead, given the politeness strategy of 'precedence of others over self', other-oriented excuses are regarded as appropriate, caring and totally polite (see chapter nine). For a complete list of the formulae belonging to sub-phase three, refer to Appendix A.

5.3.1.3.4 Sub-phase 4: acknowledging the desire of the leave-taker to leave (by the host/hostess)

In formal situations, after the leave-taker reaffirms his/her intention to leave, the host/hostess usually acknowledges it. Acknowledgment of the desire of the leave-taker to leave is usually expressed by conventional formulae such as *khahesh mikonæm* ('Not at all'/'Well then'), *kheyli khoshamædin* ('You made me happy by coming to my house'/'thank you for coming'), *kheyli khoshhal shodim tæshrif avordin* ('We are so happy that you paid us a visit'/'It was really nice to see you'), *kheyli lotf kærdin ke tæshrif avordin* ('It was really nice of you to pay us a visit') *dær khedmætetun hæstim* ('We are at your service/presence'). These formulae assure the leave-taker that s/he can leave safely without making the other party feel rejected. In contrast, in informal situations and with family and close friends ('people of the inner circle'), it is not unusual for the host/hostess to further insist that the leave-taker stay a bit longer. If the leave-taker is not really in a hurry s/he usually yields to the host/hostess importuning him/her to stay, usually for a couple of minutes to an hour, out of respect for the host/hostess. As a non-verbal gesture, if the host/hostess is close enough to the leave-taker, s/he gently grips the hands of the leave-taker or puts his/her hand on his/her shoulder to prevent him/her from standing up and leaving. It is not uncommon to convince the leave-taker who has already risen to his/her feet to sit down again. In Brown and Levinson's politeness model (1987), this might be regarded as a threat to the leave-taker's negative face. However, in Iranian culture the leave-taker's face wants do not take precedence over those from whom s/he is taking leave ('precedence of others over self'). For a complete list of the formulae belonging to sub-phase four, refer to Appendix A.

5.3.1.3.5 Sub-phase 5: inviting the leave-taker to a future reunion

As indicated earlier, Firth (1972, p. 16) puts greeting and parting rituals on an equal footing, contending that greeting conveys a wish to establish a social relationship, and parting conveys that the relationship has been established and that it can/should be resumed at a later time ("hope for renewed contact" or "continuance of interaction" in Knapp et al.'s terms, 1973). For Knapp et al. (1973), the wish to renew the contact at the time of leave-taking is a means by which interactants express supportiveness for one another (p. 185). As Knapp et al. (1973) point out, "supportiveness in leave-taking often takes the form of an expressed desire to continue the interaction at a later date. After all, what could be more supportive than doing it all again?" (p. 185). Establishing a favorable relationship with the intention that interlocutors can look forward to a future reunion is a major function of a leave-taking ritual (Hargie et al., 1994, p. 163). At this sub-phase the host/hostess will invite the leave-taker for another visit sometime in the future (e.g., 'Drop in again when you have time.'). Laver (1981) considers these formulae as consolidatory comments making arrangements for the continuation of the relationship in future (p. 303). In Iranian culture, most of the time the invitation for a reunion is merely an empty polite gesture (*tæʔarof* or empty formality) with no definite or specific time reference in mind. This attends to the positive face of the hearer, telling them that their company has been greatly enjoyed, hence, negotiating solidarity and rapport. However, if the speaker's intention for a reunion is genuine, both would agree upon a definite time to visit each other again. As we shall see in chapter nine, in the Iranian culture, one striking characteristic of the use of certain RPF is to give the other party a good feeling about the interaction, strengthening social bonding ("positive face strokes" in Smith's terms, 1991, p. 68). It should be noted that 'inviting the leave-taker to a future reunion' in sub-phase 5 is a bit different from 'the request to be in further contact' in sub-phase 12, since the latter implies contact only through phoning, mailing or other means of communication and not personal visits. I shall elaborate on this in more detail in sub-phase 12.

In response to the offer of a future reunion, the leave-taker usually thanks the host/hostess and insists that it is time for the latter to repay the visit (e.g., 'Thanks, it is now your turn to pay us a visit'). It is uncommon for the leave-taker, who already feels indebted, to take the invitation for another visit from the host/hostess seriously knowing that the visit should sooner or later be reciprocated. Similar to the Chinese (see Kinnison, 2000), in Iranian culture, 'debt-sensitivity' and 'reciprocity of favors' in interpersonal relationships are

prominent. Reciprocity is regarded as a key principle of cooperative interaction. Eslamirasekh (1993) contends that one important aspect of positive or solidarity politeness in Persian is the assumption and assertion of reciprocity (p. 96). Likewise, Firth (1972) signifies that in all social relationships, reciprocity is significant (p. 2). Therefore, in Iranian culture, at the time of leave-taking, the leave-taker is obliged to invite the host/hostess for a reunion sometime, with or without a specific time reference, to repay the debt and to reciprocate the favor.

As a common politeness strategy, Iranians do not usually accept offers of any sort immediately unless they are insisted upon. When somebody is offered something, s/he politely refuses it a couple of times before accepting, because the immediate acceptance of offers (of any sort) is not regarded as appropriate or polite in Iranian culture. Therefore, if the leave-taker is genuine in his/her invitation for a reunion, s/he should insist on the spot and/or later on (e.g., by giving follow-up calls). On the other hand, attending to the positive face of the leave-taker, the host/hostess usually does not bluntly refuse the invitation for a reunion with a straightforward 'no'. Instead, s/he confirms that s/he will surely pay the visit back, but at a more suitable time in the future. This refusal from the host/hostess might also be accompanied by some excuses which can be regarded as self-oriented (e.g., 'For the time being we are a bit busy') and/or other-oriented (e.g., 'You are quite busy with your little kids'). However, if the leave-taker is determined to invite the host/hostess for a reunion, and if the host/hostess does not have a real excuse to decline the invitation, they will finally accept. For a complete list of the formulae belonging to sub-phase five, refer to Appendix A.

5.3.1.3.6 Sub-phase 6: apology and acknowledgement by the leave-taker for the troubles that the host/hostess has gone through

Attending to the negative face of the host/hostess, the leave-taker (e.g., a guest) lavishly apologizes for troubling the host/hostess by saying *bebækhshid dige, hesabi zæhmæt dadim* ('I am so sorry; we put you to a lot of trouble'/'I am sorry to have bothered you for so long'), or *bebækhshid dige, hesabi vækhtetun ro gereftim* ('I am so sorry; we wasted your time a lot'). This often triggers an automatic routine denial by the host/hostess by saying *khahesh mikonæm, che zæhmæti, kheyli khosh amædin* ('Please do not mention it, no trouble at all, you are always welcome here').

As we shall see in Chapter six, every verbalization of apology is directed to some action or event or their consequence, which is considered negative or unwanted for the recipient of the apology referred to in the literature as an "object of regret" (Coulmas, 1981, p. 75). Therefore, on the one hand, putting the host/hostess to a lot of trouble and wasting or taking their time, which otherwise could have been spent differently, is regarded as an object of regret for which the leave-taker apologizes. On the other hand, apology expressions in Persian can replace and function as gratitude expressions known as 'apologetic gratitude expressions' (see chapter six). Therefore, in Iranian culture, these apologies can also be interpreted as spontaneous sincere gratitude. For a complete list of the formulae used in sub-phase six, refer to Appendix A.

5.3.1.3.7 Sub-phase 7: apology by the host/hostess for not providing a better time and service to the leave-taker

Apology (especially ostensible apology) is the most widely used speech act in every day interactions in Persian. Koutlaki (2010) maintains Iranians should be considered the uncontested champions of the ostensible apology (p. 47). Koutlaki points out (2010) that apology in Persian serves a number of different functions, expressing humility, indebtedness or gratitude (p. 47).

Upon leave-taking (e.g., after a dinner party), the host/hostess might apologize for not being able to provide a better time and service by saying *bebækhshid dige æge bæd gozæsht* ('Sorry if you had a bad time'). In response, the leave-taker would promptly reply with formulaic responses such as *khahesh mikonæm, in hærfa chiye?* ('I beg, do not say this') and *kheyli hæm khosh gozæsht* ('Actually, I enjoyed myself a lot'). In fact, the apology by the host/hostess is in line with the pervasive strategy of self-lowering and other-elevating. Consequently, as Koutlaki (2010) contends, the Persian host/hostess apologizes that his/her hospitality is less than the guest deserves, thereby debasing himself/herself communicating utmost deference to the leave-taker(s) (p. 47).

5.3.1.3.8 Sub-phase 8: giving thanks or expressing appreciation and acknowledgment for the trouble taken by the host/hostess (by the leave-taker)

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), giving thanks and expressing appreciation are a performance of positive politeness directed towards the positive face of the addressee. That

is, these speech acts satisfy the addressee's desire to be liked and appreciated. For example, taking leave after a dinner invitation, a guest may thank the host/hostess by saying, "Thank you so much for the wonderful evening" (Coulmas, 1981, p. 83). Aijmer (1996) notes that thanking the host/hostess for his/her hospitality at the end of a visit before exchanging farewells might be regarded as a general rule (p. 69). Being thankful and appreciative of the favors that others do is an important part of the politeness system in Persian, as in many other cultures. Children from childhood are told by parents, caregivers and teachers to thank others properly for favors or services they receive and people often go to extremes to express their gratitude as a strategy to strengthen social bonds. For instance, if the guest and the host/hostess come across each other days or even a few weeks after a function (e.g., dinner party), the former might feel obliged to express appreciation and to acknowledge the trouble the host/hostess went through once again ('trouble-sensitivity'). In this case, the guest expresses appreciation to the host/hostess by a conventional formula such as *chikar mikonin ba zæhmæta-ye ma?* ('How are you with our recent trouble?'). This triggers a formulaic reply by the host/hostess, such as *khahesh mikonæm, che zæhmæti* ('Please do not mention it'/'my pleasure, no trouble at all'), which strongly denies going through any trouble.

5.3.1.3.9 Sub-phase 9: expressing happiness and delight in the visit (by the leave-taker)

Attending to the positive face needs of the hearer (e.g., host/hostess), the leave-taker expresses his/her happiness and enjoyment of the visit by saying *kheyli khosh gozæsht* (e.g., 'I/we had such a good time'/'Thank you so much for the wonderful evening'). In response the host/hostess also expresses his/her happiness and delight in the visit affirming enjoying the presence of the leave-taker. Laver (1981) refers to these appreciative comments as "consolidatory comments" addressed directly to the positive face needs implying esteem for one's interlocutor (p. 303). According to Laver (1975, as cited in Laver, 1981, p. 303) by emphasizing the enjoyable quality of the encounter at the time of leave-taking, participants can further consolidate their relationship (p. 231).

5.3.1.3.10 Sub-phase 10: requests for expanding greetings to third parties (by both parties)

Extending greetings to those who are not present (third parties), or "greeting transportation" (in Pawley's terms, 1974, p. 17) is also an important part of the leave-taking ritual. Laver

(1981) refers to this as "consolidation", attending to the positive face of the hearer (p. 303). According to Laver (1975), the consolidatory comments "usually anticipate that the listener will meet the common acquaintance before the speaker" (p. 231). Thus, as a crucial means in negotiating in-group solidarity, these tokens "remind the listener that he [*sic*] is bound in a web of social solidarity with the speaker by the ties of common acquaintance" (Laver, 1975, p. 231). Likewise, Pawley (1974) argues that both parties probably know that the message-carrier is unlikely to deliver the greeting message, but the intention is to show one another how much both parties care for mutual friends, thus strengthening social bonds (p. 17).

Third parties usually include immediate family members such as parents, children, siblings and spouses who are not present at the time of leave-taking. It is usually the host/hostess who asks the leave-taker to extend greetings to third parties (e.g., 'Please extend my greetings (to NP)'/'Say hello to NP for me'). Once the leave-taker replies with the appropriate formula, the leave-taker would also make the same request from the host/hostess (e.g., 'You too, please extend my greetings (to NP)'). In response, both thank each other with generic gratitude expressions and promise to extend greetings due to the third parties.

The response to requests for expanding greetings to third parties is also a formulaic expression such as *chæshm, hætmæn, bozorgitun-o miresunæm* ('Aye aye, sure thing, I will extend your greatness'). Among family members, relatives and intimate friends, it is customary to refer to the bearers of greetings by their first name (FN). However, since it is not common (or polite) to refer to people by their FN alone, the FN is mostly used with honorific titles, kin terms, religious titles or endearment terms. With acquaintances and/or non-intimate friends, it is not courteous to refer to third persons by their FN, especially the opposite sex. To avoid naming third parties directly, it is very common to just request the extension of greetings without designating specific name(s). Moreover, among acquaintances and non-intimates, instead of naming the people who are to be greeted, some general reference terms such as *khanevade* ('family/household') *khanevade-ye mohtæræm* ('respected family/household') are employed (e.g., 'Please extend my greetings to your respected family'). For the complete list of the formulae used in sub-phase ten, refer to Appendix A.

5.3.1.3.11 Sub-phase 11: don't-trouble-yourself request (by leave-taker)

As soon as the leave-taker gets up to leave, the host/hostess also stands up to see the leave-taker out. If the host/hostess is too old to get up, and if there are other people around to walk the leave-taker to the entrance door, the elderly person remains seated, though s/he makes a pretence of rising up to demonstrate his/her respect for the leave-taker. Depending on the type and shape of the house (houses vs. apartments), the host/hostess should walk the leave-taker to the main entrance, open and stand by the door until the leave-taker is out of sight. Closing the door right behind the leave-taker conveys disrespect and violates hospitality codes. In apartments, the host/hostess might accompany the leave-taker several levels down to the garage or apartment's front door and stay there until the leave-taker is well out of sight. It is not extraordinary to walk the leave-taker to the bus stop or taxi stand, if it is not too far away, before exchanging the terminal leave-takings (TLTs). In response to these non-verbal ritual behaviors, the leave-taker firstly implores the host/hostess not to stand up (e.g., 'Do not worry to rise') and secondly not to trouble himself/herself to see the leave-taker out (e.g., 'I'll see myself out'). However, as an important part of the leave-taking ritual and in spite of the leave-taker's requests, the host/hostess does rise up and does see him/her out. Often, in order to dissuade the host/hostess from walking the leave-taker to the door, the leave-taker, as an example, reasons that the weather is cold and the host/hostess might get cold, or it is very hot and the host/hostess might get hot. The common themes of the speech acts employed in this situation are: 'I swear do not bother yourself any more to see me out', I'll see myself out', 'We are no strangers, I know my way out', 'I already feel shame for the trouble that I have given you, so please do not make it worse by seeing me out'. In response to the leave-taker's importunities, the host/hostess asserts that s/he will accompany the leave-taker to the front door (e.g., 'please do not say this, I will walk you to the front door').

5.3.1.3.12 Sub-phase 12: request to be in further contact (by both parties)

According to Goffman (1971) leave-taking and greeting signal degrees of accessibility where leave-taking indicates a shift to a state of decreased access (p. 79). This anticipation of lack of access, as Knapp et al. (1973) state, is responsible for the uneasiness the interactants feel at the time of leave-taking, especially farewells (p. 184). Therefore, as Knapp et al. (1973) further point out, many of the behaviours related to leave-taking rituals are to simply assure the other party that the leave-taking is not going to be a threat to the relationship or friendship (p. 184). Thus, one way to ensure the continuation of the relationship is to request further

contact (e.g., 'Let's stay in touch'). Referring to the formulae used at this stage as "expressions of continuation", Pawley (1974) writes that their basic function is to express the speaker's interest in maintaining and continuing contact and friendship (p. 18). Similarly, in Iranian society, before people can separate from one another, they should plan the arrangements for possible future contact. Therefore, as part of the leave-taking ritual, they recommend staying in touch through phoning, mailing or other means of communication.

5.3.1.3.13 Sub-phase 13: well-wishing or consolidatory comments (by both parties)

As essential ingredients to well-wishing are words that express concern for the welfare of the recipient, including health, safety, good fortune, etc. (Pawley, 1974, p. 15). Well-wishing or "consolidatory comments", Laver (1981) points out, are addressed to positive face needs and are considered supportive moves (p. 303). They serve to consolidate the relationship between the two participants (Laver, 1975, p. 231). Given that leave-taking is a state of lack of access for a period of time (see Goffman, 1971), both parties wish each other good health (e.g., 'I hope that you are always healthy'/'take care'), happiness and fortune (e.g., 'I hope that you are always merry and happy'), benedictions (e.g., 'God bless (you)'), safety ('keep safe') and other good qualities. House (1982) refers to this sub-phase as a "sealing wish", stating that these wishes mostly arise out of the immediate situation. If, for example, one party (host/hostess or leave-taker) is known to be engaged in university exams, the other party, usually a senior, wishes him/her success, or if one party has a cold, the other party wishes him/her a quick recovery (e.g., 'I hope your cold gets better soon'). In Iranian culture, consolidatory comments and benedictions are usually reciprocated by showing gratitude or expressing the same good wishes. Additionally, if the leave-taker has a car or motorcycle, they are advised to drive with care. The common consolidatory comments in Persian include: *inshalla ke hæmishe sælamæt bashin* ('God willing, you may always be healthy'), *inshallah ke hæmishe khosh va khoram bashin* ('God willing, you may always be happy'), *moragheb khodetun bashin* ('take care'), etc.

5.3.1.3.14 Sub-phase 14: interpolations

Silence in situations where speech is conventionally expected can imply potential anger, hostility or brusqueness (see Laver, 1981, p. 301). Leave-taking is not an abrupt ritual, it usually takes some time to complete. If it is not a passing leave-taking, or if it is not very

formal, it is usual to have some interpolations amid the leave-taking process. These are usually very short topics (e.g., small-talk) brought up by either side of the leave-taking ritual (especially the host/hostess) mostly to defuse the threatening periods of silence. As said earlier, in Iranian culture it is customary to accompany the leave-taker to the front door before both parties can exchange terminal leave-takings (TLTs). Therefore, depending on the distance to the main entrance door, there might be some time to bring up some short topics which are mostly situational in nature such as the current weather situation, flowers in the garden, predicting the results of a football game to air the following day, etc. The main function of interpolations is to defuse periods of silence as they might be interpreted as face threatening acts.

The following example from the role-play data demonstrates the different phases and sub-phases of an after-dinner leave-taking routine among Persians.

RPD01: A is a female in her early thirties and B is a male in his early forties. A was B's guest for dinner and she takes her leave from B as follows:

01   A: *khob, dige kæm kæm æge ejaze bedin zæhmæt ro kæm konæm.*
         ('Alright, if you grant me permission, I would save the trouble of my presence little by little')
         All right, I'd better be going.
         Phase 2 (use of verbal closure markers) + Phase 3 (Sub-phase 1: Announcement of leave-taking by the person leaving)

02   B: *khahesh mikonæm; hæstin hala, tæshrif dashte bashin.*
         ('I beg you; stay longer, you could stay longer')
         Please stay longer.
         Phase 3 (Sub-phase 2: Persuading the leave-taker to stay longer)

03   A: *mersi, mæmnun, be ændaze-ye kafi zæhmæt dadim.*
         ('Cheers, thanks, we have troubled you enough')
         Thanks, I've got to be going.
         Phase 3 (Sub-phase 3: Turning down the offer to stay longer by giving a reason for the departure)

04   B: *khahesh mikonæm, che zæhmæti? kheyli khoshhal shodim ke tæshrif avordin.*
         ('I beg you, what trouble? We are so happy that you paid us a visit')
         Please do not mention it, no trouble at all; It was really nice to see you.
         Phase 3 (Sub-phase 4: Acknowledging the desire of the leave-taker to leave (opening))

05   A: *khahesh mikonæm.*
('I beg you')
Thanks.
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 4: Response)

06   B: *tæshrif biyarin baz, dær khedmædetun bashim.*
('Please do come to visit us again, let's be at your presence')
Drop in again when you have time.
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 5: Inviting the leave-taker to a future reunion (Opening))

07   A: *insha'ællah dige dæfʔe-ye bæʔd shoma tæshrif biyarin.*
('God willing, it is your turn to pay us a visit next time')
It's now your turn to pay us a visit.
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 5: Response/Opening)

08   B: *chæshm, dær khedmætetun hæstim.*
('Upon my eyes, we are at your service')
Yes, sure.
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 5: Response)

09   A: *mæmnun, mochæker, hesabi be zæhmæt oftadin.*
('Thank you, thanks, you were put to a lot of trouble')
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 6: Apology and acknowledgement by the leave-taker for the troubles that the host/hostess has gone through (Opening))

10   B: A: *khahesh mikonæm, zæhmæt kodume?*
('I beg you, what trouble?')
Please do not mention it, no trouble at all.
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 6: Response)

11   A: *dæstetun dærd nækone; sælam beresunin be khanevade.*
('May your hand not ache; extend my *sælam* to your family')
Thanks; please say hello to your family for me.
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 10: Requests for expanding greetings to third parties (Opening))

12   B: *chæshm, hætmæn, shoma hæm kheyli sælam beresunin.*
('Eye, sure, You too extend my *sælam*')
Sure, you say hello as well.
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 10: Response)

13   A: *kheyli khoshhal shodim.*
('We became very happy')
It was nice seeing you.
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 9: Expressing happiness and delight in the visit (Opening))

14   B: *khahesh mikonæm.*

('I beg you')
Thanks.
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 9: Response)

15   A: *hala insha'ællah dær tæmas hæshim.*
('God willing, let's stay in touch')
Thanks, let's keep in touch.
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 12: Requesting to be in further contact (Opening))

16   B: *insha'ællah*; *kheyli mæmnun, khoda negæhdar, khodahafez.*
('May God desire so; thank you very much, May God be your protector, May God protect you')
Absolutely, thanks a lot, goodbye.
Phase 3 (Sub-phase 12: Response) + Phase 4 (Exchange of terminal leave-taking formulae/valedictions (Opening))

17   A: *khodahafez-e shoma.*
('May God protect you')
Goodbye.
Phase 4: Response

5.3.1.4 Phase four of a LT sequence (exchange of terminals/valedictions + body language)

Phase four involves both verbal and non-verbal sub-phases. A LT sequence does not come to its end unless the terminals are exchanged between interlocutors. These include the use of terminal leave-taking formulae (TLTs) that will be introduced in the following section. In performing the non-verbal leave-taking ritual, interlocutors establish eye contact ("eye gaze" in Knapp & Hall's terms, 2002) once again, smile, shake hands, and slightly bow their heads while putting the right palm to the chest (most common among men) while exchanging the TLT formulae. If the leave-taker is departing for a journey, or if interlocutors are anticipating long-term separation, they will exchange hugs, kisses (lip-cheek) and tap each other on the shoulder or back. The opposite sexes do not embrace or kiss unless they are family members. Once enough distance has separated them, they usually wave at each other as a last gesture signalling care, concern and supportiveness. Hand waving involves extending the forearm with the palm displayed, oscillating from side to side. The host/hostess usually stays standing at the threshold until the leave-taker is well out of sight, which makes the leave-taker turn around and wave at the host/hostess a couple of times until they are well out of sight.

5.4 Terminal Leave-taking Formula (TLT formulae) or valedictions

Persian, like other languages, possesses a plethora of prefabricated and culturally loaded expressions for saying goodbye. In first and second language learning, the TLT formulae or valedictions are acquired and learned early. Some TLT formulae, or in Pawley's (1974, p. 15) terms, "valedictory expressions" were originally expressions of well-wishing (e.g., 'good-bye' is a contraction of 'God-be-with-you'). With regards to the LT sequence, the natural position for the valediction is in the final phase of interchanges (Pawley, 1974, p. 19). "Valedictions", Pawley (1974) adds, "are distinguished from other leavetaking moves in having no other basic function than to signal or acknowledge that leave has been taken" (p. 19). In the following, the TLT formulae in Persian are introduced as dictionary entries. We will look at their form, function and the situations where they might be appropriate. The most widely used formulae are introduced first.

Formula form: *khodafez/khodafes*

khodafez ('May God keep/protect (you)') is the most widely used formula for leave-taking in Persian. It corresponds to 'goodbye' in English that is believed to be a contraction of 'God be with you/ye' (Firth, 1972, p. 17). Likewise, *khodafez* is a contraction of the well-wishing formula *khoda hafez-e shoma bashe* ('May God be your protector'). It comprises two parts, namely, *khoda* and *hafez*. *khoda* is the Persian word for God and *hafez* is an Arabic word from the triconsonantal root '*hfz*' ('to keep/protect'). *khoda negæhdar* is the pure Persian equivalent of *khodafez* with the same meaning, but it sounds more formal. It is used in both formal and informal situations, and can be used for family members, relatives, friends, acquaintances and total strangers. It is used to open and to respond to leave-takings. Its written form is *khoda hafez*, which is largely used in formal situations and the media. It can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show more affection, deference or social status. It also appears as *khoda hafez-e shoma* ('May God be your protector').
Formula structure:
START (VOC) + *khodafez/khoda hafez-e shoma* + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *khoda negæhdar*

khoda negæhdar ('May God keep/protect you') has the same meaning as *khodafez*; however, it is more formal and is not usually used for family members, close friends and peers. *khoda negæhdar* is a contraction of the well-wishing formula *khoda negæhdar-et/etun bashe* ('May

God be your protector'). *khoda negæhdar* is used to open and to respond to leave-takings. It can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show affection, deference or social status. Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *khoda negæhdar* + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *ba ejaze*

ba ejaze literally means 'with (your) permission', and it is used for leave-taking in formal situations. As regards its formality, it is not used for family members and intimates. It is mostly used by seniors. *ba ejaze* is the reduced form taken from the preparatory leave-taking formula *ba ejaze bænde æz hozuretun morkhæs mishæm* ('With your permission, this slave will leave your respected presence'). As a terminal leave-taking formula, *ba ejaze* can also be accompanied by other generic terminal leave-taking formulae (e.g. *khodafez*, *khoda negæhdar*). *ba ejaze* attends to the positive face of the hearer presupposing that the hearer has the rank/status to refuse the request for leave-taking. It is only used to open leave-takings and can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show affection, deference or social status. It can also appear as *ba ejazætun* ('with your permission') or *ba ejaze-ye shoma* ('with your permission').

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (*khob*) (*pæs*) (*felæn*) + *ba* {*ejaze/ejazætun/ejaze-ye shoma*} (*dige*) + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *mærhæmæt ziyad*

mærhæmæt ziyad means 'May your grace and kindness be increased', and it is used for leave-taking in formal situations. In the online Persian dictionary of *Dehkhoda*, *mærhæmæt* is defined as 'grace', 'kindness' and 'favour'. Given these meanings, one can claim that these are positive qualities that interlocutors wish to have increased. *mærhæmæt ziyad* is merely used by seniors and adults and now regarded as old-fashioned and archaic. It can be used for both opening and responding to leave-takings and can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show affection, deference or social status.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + {*mærhemætet/mærhæmætetun/mærhemæt-e shoma/mærhemæt-e ʔali/mærhemæt-e særkar*} *ziyad* + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *be khoda sepordæmetun*

be khoda sepordæmetun means 'I leave you to God's mercy', and it is used for leave-taking in formal situations. It was originally a well-wishing formula, but has become a valediction from constant use. It is mainly employed by seniors and now regarded as old-fashioned and archaic. It can be used for both opening and responding to leave-takings. It can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show affection, deference or social status.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *be khoda sepordæm-et/-etun* + (VOC) STOP

5.4.1 The leave-taking formulae used for expressing short-term inaccessibility

Considering leave-taking as lack of access, we can differentiate between 'short-term inaccessibility' (in Knapp et al.'s usage, 1973) and 'long-term inaccessibility'. The LT formulae that have been introduced so far can imply both short-term and long-term inaccessibility, but there are certain LT formulae that refer only to short-term inaccessibility as follows.

Formula form: *fe:læn/feʔlæn* (+ leave-taking formulae)

When people say *khodafez* ('goodbye'), it is not clear if they are going to see each other relatively soon or much later. *fe:læn* ('For the moment/For now'), as an adverb, confines *khodafez* and other leave-taking formulae to a shorter period of time, ranging from a few minutes to a few hours. For Goffman (1971), rituals of greetings and farewells signal the degree of accessibility, where greetings signal a shift to increased access while farewells to a state of decreased access (p. 79). These periods of lack of access can be short or long. According to Hargie et al. (1994) if the chance of meeting in the future is very high, people tend to employ leave-taking formulae such as 'See you soon' or 'Bye for now' (p. 161). Other than that, 'goodbye' or 'bon voyage' is preferred in English. Depending on context, when people say *fe:læn khodafez* ('For now goodbye'), it means that they will see each other quite soon, usually within a few hours. Therefore, *fe:læn* can perform two functions: Firstly, it tells the hearer that the speaker does, for whatever reasons, intend to return soon. Secondly, it attends to the positive face of the hearer. By pretending that a reunion is likely, even if the speaker might not have any real intentions to return in the near future, the leave-taker makes the hearer feel liked and appreciated (see Brown and Levinson, 1987).

fe:læn usually precedes the generic leave-taking formulae such as *khodafez*, *khodanegæhdar* and *ba ejaze* entailing leave-taking for a short time (e.g., *fe:læn khodafez*). In this usage, there is no pause between the two parts of the compound formula. In informal and casual usage; however, *fe:læn*, as a colloquial form, can also be used alone. This usage is mostly common among young people (e.g., close friends and peers). *fe:læn* and its combination with common leave-taking formulae are solely used for opening farewells. It can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show affection, deference or social status.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *fe:læn* ({*khodafez/khodanegæhdar/ba ejaze*}) + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *mibinæmet*

mibinæmet ('I will see you') as a colloquial formula has more or less the same function as *fe:læn* and corresponds to 'I'll be seeing you', 'see you around', 'see you (later)' or 'see you soon' in English. It is used either by itself or in combination with other generic leave-taking formulae mostly used among young people (e.g., close friends and peers) in informal and casual situations. It is never used in formal situations and with strangers. This formula has two connotations: firstly, it conveys leave taking for a short period (usually a few hours to a few days). Secondly, it expresses willingness to get together, attending to each other's positive face, despite the possibility that people might not have any intention to return any time soon. *mibinæmet* can also be preceded by *bæʔdæn* ('later') as an adverb of time.

bebinæmet ('Let me see you') is another variety of *mibinæmet*, which is a directive and hence more casual, corresponding to 'Catch you later' in English. They can be used for both opening and responding to leave-takings and can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show affection, deference or social status.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + {*mibinæmet/bebinæmet*} + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *ta bæʔd*

ta bæʔd ('until later') as a colloquial formula has more or less the same function as *fe:læn* and *mibinæmet*, implying that interlocutors will be apart only for a short time. It is used either by itself or in combination with other generic leave-taking formulae. It is mostly used among young people (e.g., close friends and peers) in informal and casual situations, never in formal

situations and with strangers. It is only used to open leave-takings and can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show affection, deference or social status.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *ta bæʔd* + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *ya Ali*

ya Ali seems different from other leave-taking formulae, as its usage implies religious loyalty to the Shiite sect of Islam. By using particular politeness formulae, individuals can affirm their affiliation to a socio-cultural or religious group, given that, in some languages, routine formulae are heavily loaded with socio-cultural and religious meanings (see Coulmas, 1981, p. 10). *ya* (O') is an exclamation from Arabic, and *Ali* was the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Mohammad. Shiites consider *Ali* as the rightful successor to Mohammad and the first Imam (spiritual and political leader in the Shiite sect of Islam). The succession of the Prophet Mohammad after his death became a burning issue that eventually split the Muslim community into two rival groups of Sunnis and Shiites. Sunnis respect *Ali* as the fourth caliph (righteous Caliphs). However, Shiites (mainly in Iran, parts of Iraq and South Lebanon) consider the first three Caliphs before *Ali* unlawful, holding the belief that they violated *Ali*'s right as well as his children's right to succeed Prophet Mohammad. Persian, as the language of the majority of the Shiites, is full of routine expressions and benedictory formulae referring to *Ali* and his heirs (eleven Imams) seeking their help and support. *ya Ali* ('O *Ali*'), for example, may be used when somebody (seniors and adults) wants to stand up from a sitting position; when a group of people embark on a difficult endeavour together (e.g., lifting up something heavy or pushing a car); upon making deals, contracts or settlements, just to mention a few. Swearing on *Ali*'s name and his heirs (e.g., *be Ali ghæsæm* ('I swear by *Ali*'), or *be hæghe Ali* ('I swear by *Ali*'s right')) as the proof of what somebody says or claims (e.g., I swear by *Ali* + main clause) is a common practice.

ya Ali (O'*Ali*), as a colloquial terminal leave-taking formula, is used in informal and friendly situations, especially by males. In daily usage, people do not take its meaning literally, and it is used irrespective of its strong religious connotations. This leave-taking formula, however, is not used by Iranian Sunnis in their daily communications with Shiites. *ya Ali* can be used for both opening and responding to leave-taking and can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show affection, deference or social status.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *ya Ali* + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *chakerim*

chakerim ('we (I) are servants') and *chakeretim* ('we (I) are your servant') as a colloquial formula, can be used for leave-taking (and greeting) in informal situations among close friends and peers. The online Persian dictionary of *Dehkhoda* defines *chaker* as 'servant'. The origin of this formula and some others (e.g., *mokhlesim*) used as RPF are quite unclear; it appears as though they belong to a variety of language spoken by *jahel* ('roughnecks'/'thugs'). *jahel* is a social group that existed in the past and had a distinct way of behaving, dressing and speaking. Some peculiarities in their language (e.g., their conversational routines) are still currently used by young people, especially males, as a way of showing solidarity, closeness, in-group membership and/or simply as a display of cool behaviour.

There are two noteworthy things about *chakerim* as a strong self-humbling formula. Primarily, given its meaning, the speaker humbles himself as servant, and exalts the addressee as master (see Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 178; Tannen & Öztek, 1981, p. 41). This self-abasement satisfies the hearer's wants to be treated as superior (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 178). As in some Eastern societies such as Chinese (see Gu, 1990, Asdjodi, 2001), in Persian, lowering or humbling oneself and praising or exalting the addressee is a principal politeness strategy (see Hodge, 1951; Asdjodi, 2001). However, in the language of *jahel*, elevating others and diminishing oneself go to extremes often appearing as funny, irrational exaggerations. Secondly, given its plural subject, the speaker who is a single individual usually refers to himself as 'we' instead of 'I', implying more respect for the hearer. In the Persian politeness system, plurality is a linguistic device to express more respect for others. In fact, referring to oneself as 'I' is perceived as highly selfish and self-centred, but 'we' implies modesty, humility and being part of others, favouring collectivity over individuality (see chapter nine). The usage of other variants, such as *chakeræm* ('I am servant') and *chakeretæm* ('I am your servant'), are also prevalent. *chakerim* and its variants are used both for opening and closing leave-takings. *chakerim* and its variants can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show affection, deference or social status.

Other self-humbling forms such as *mokhlesim* ('I am your devoted (friend)'), *mokhlesetim* ('I am your devoted (friend)'), *mokhlesæm* ('I am your devoted (friend)'), *nokæretim* ('We are your servant'), *nokæretæm* ('I am your servant'), as colloquial forms, are used in the same way.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + {*chakerim/chakeretim/chakeræm/chakeretæm*} + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + {*mokhlesim/mokhlesetim/mokhlesæm/mokhlesetæm*} + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + {*nokæretim/nokæretæm*} + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *baɪ baɪ*

Owing to the high social importance of conversational routines, leave-taking is among the first speech acts that little children learn in their long process of socialization. They learn to wave bye-bye even before they can talk (see Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 241). In comparison with the generic Persian leave-taking formulae, *baɪ baɪ* (from the English bye-bye ('goodbye')) has a simpler syllabic structure. Moreover, it is rhythmic and starts with the bilabial phoneme /b/, which is relatively easier for small children to produce in the early stages of language acquisition. Once Persian children learn to pronounce common Persian leave-taking formulae (such as *khodafez*), they gradually stop using this non-native expression as it is regarded as childish, although teenagers, especially girls, may keep using it among themselves as cool behaviour.

Formula form: *shæb bekheyr*

The leave-taking formulae introduced thus far can be used any time of night or day. However, *shæb bekheyr* ('May your night be blessed') is solely used to bid people farewell at night corresponding to 'good night' in English. This formula is used in both formal and informal situations. It is also used when people go to sleep at night. It can be used for both opening and responding to leave-takings. It can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show affection, deference or social status.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + {*shæb/shæbet/shæb-e shoma/shæbetun/shæb-e hæmegi*} *bekheyr* + (VOC) STOP

5.4.2 Responding to TLT formulae

Some of the leave-taking formulae are used for both opening and responding to farewells; some are specifically used to open it while others are solely for responding to it. The following formulae (table 31) are distinctly used to respond to farewells. These formulae are used especially when one party is situated in one place, e.g., at home or the office and the other is taking his/her leave. In addition, a combination of these formulae can be used in response to somebody's leave-taking. Reviewing the TLT formulae, one arrives at a limited number of themes, namely: wishing people to reach their destination safely with the help of *khoda/Allah* ('God') and/or Imams, and expressing good wishes to the leave-taker.

Table 31: Formulae used as response to farewells

	Formula	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense
1	*be sælamæt*	You may go with health and safety/ Go in peace	Goodbye
2	*khoda be hæmrat*	May God be with you	Goodbye
3	*dæst-e hægh be hæmrat*	May the hand of God be with you	Goodbye
4	*dæst-e Ali be hæmrat*	May the hand of Ali be with you	Goodbye
5	*dær pænah-e khoda*	You may be under the protection of God	Goodbye
6	*dær pænah-e hægh*	You may be under the protection of God	Goodbye
7	*kheyrpish*	May you face good things	Goodbye
8	*be omid-e didar*	Hope to see you again	Goodbye
9	*ghorbunet*	Your sacrifice	Bye

5.5 Summary

Leave-taking proves to be a complex ritual, which helps to maintain and enhance social bonds among interactants. An elaborate leave-taking, as regards discourse structure rules, comprises a number of phases and sub-phases. Phase one of a leave-taking sequence is non-verbal, indirectly indicating that the interaction is ending. Phase two involves the use of verbal closure markers appearing as exclamations. Phase three is further divided into fourteen sub-phases, paving the way for the safe exchange of terminals in the final phase of a leave-taking sequence. Like the rest of the RPF, leave-taking formulae give direct/indirect reference to religious symbols, values and events and closely reflect Iranian culture, complying with the principal politeness strategy of 'self-lowering, other-elevating'.

CHAPTER 6:

APOLOGIZING

6.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the properties and functions of apology as a routine, followed by a brief literature review in 6.2. The ritual of apology in the Iranian community is then dealt with in 6.3. Explicit expressions of apology in Persian, including requests for forgiveness, offers of apology, expressions of regret and expressions of shame are introduced as separate dictionary entries elaborating on their form and function in 6.3.1. The fixed continuation patterns known as apology responders come in 6.4 and nine different methods through which apology expressions can be intensified are listed in 6.5. Then, ostensible and exaggerated apologies in Persian are introduced in 6.6 and 6.7. Finally, negative face imposition apologies, as well as positive face imposition apologies are addressed in 6.8 and 6.9 respectively.

6.2 The definition, functions, and properties of apologies and the literature review

During the course of everyday interactions, we might offend others in various ways (see Fraser, 1981, p. 256). Proximity among human beings makes differences, frictions, offences or lapses almost inevitable. These call for 'remedial work' to restore 'harmony' and 'social equilibrium' in interpersonal communication (see Goffman, 1971; Edmondson, 1981; Holmes, 1995; Wouk, 2006b). According to Leech (1983), the speech act of apologizing (and thanking) aims to restore equilibrium, or at least reduce disequilibrium, between speaker and hearer after some offence has occurred (p. 125). Such offences may include, for example, bumping into another in a doorway, sneezing in someone's face, misunderstanding someone, overlooking a person or being late for a meeting. Each of these scenarios implies imposition on the negative face of the offended persons or "victims" that in turn necessitates redressive or remedial work by the "offenders" (Goffman, 1971, p. 139).

Aijmer (1996) points out that in every society there are politeness rituals that help people cope with embarrassing situations like the above (p. 80). In such cases, remedial work is necessary to minimize friction in interpersonal communications and to maintain and enhance

the crucial social cohesion among people. The first scholar who paid especial attention to apology in face to face situations was Goffman (1971). He (1971) treated a remedial interchange as a unit consisting of four stages (moves): remedy, relief, appreciation, and minimization. Goffman (1971) considers apologies as ritualistic in nature to which Coulmas (1981b) concedes. Goffman (1971) cites a street incident where person A accidentally trips person B and immediately says 'Sorry' (p. 139). B automatically responds with 'Okay' and each goes their separate ways. The ritual of apologizing, as Goffman (1971) contends, "allows the participants to go on their way, if not with satisfaction that matters are closed, then at least with the right to act as if they feel that ritual equilibrium has been restored" (p. 140). Therefore, Goffman (1971) views apologies and their acceptance (or the continuation patterns) as remedial interchanges (acts) serving to bring back 'social harmony' when an offence (real or virtual) occurs (p. 139). In other words, "after the ritual work, the incident can be treated as though it were closed" (Goffman, 1971, p. 140). Likewise, for Norrick (1978) the social function of apologizing is to show good manners, to reduce the addressee's anger or "simply to get off the hook and be on one's way" (p. 280). In addition, Holmes (1990) defines apologies as social acts that convey affective meaning (p. 155).

Consistent with Goffman (1971), Fraser (1981) also looks upon apologies as remedial work (p. 259). Fraser (1981) identifies nine strategies that can be employed to carry out an apology (p. 263). He (1981) notes that the first four strategies are relatively direct (explicit), whereas the other five strategies are much more indirect (p. 263). Fraser's main interest (1981) in examining the use of apologies is to show whether factors such as the nature of the offence, the severity of the offence, the situation of the interaction, the familiarity of the individuals involved, and the sex of the individuals play any systematic and significant role in the choice of apology strategy (pp. 266-270). Fraser's (1981) data is primarily taken from participant observation, role-plays, reports provided by friends and colleagues and personal experience: As for the nature of the infraction, it seems that the formula 'excuse me' is appropriate when a social rule has been broken (more formal), while 'I'm sorry' is more appropriate when someone has suffered some personal injury. The severity of the infraction can determine the choice of strategy. As such social violations are less severe than personal injury. The situation of the interaction (situation familiarity) also makes a significant difference, depending on the relative familiarity between the interactants. Thus, while an offence (e.g. stepping on toes) in a formal situation (e.g., in stores) and between strangers can require an apology such as 'excuse me, I'm (terribly) sorry', in intimate situations (e.g., at home) and between spouses,

the same offence may simply receive an 'Oops'. As to the sex of the apologizer, there is no evidence that indicates whether men or women tend to apologize more. Fraser (1981) further distinguishes two kinds of apologies: 'genuine apology' is utilized when the offender feels genuinely regretful for his/her deeds and wishes to set things right by expressing regret and taking responsibility (p. 266). On the other hand, in 'ritual apology', the speaker is merely fulfilling what is expected of him/her and apologies are, thereby, viewed as facilitating moves (Fraser, 1981, p. 266).

According to Coulmas (1981b), the speech act of apology is highly recurrent and routinized (p. 69). Coulmas (1981b) considers apologies as reactive speech acts since they are directed towards an action, an event, or its consequence ('object of regret'), which is viewed as negative and unwanted by the recipient of the apology (p. 75). The object of regret, which might be in the form of damage, annoyance or inconvenience, can call for different types of apology. Coulmas (1981b), thereby, distinguishes six types of apology, namely, *ex ante* (anticipatory) apologies; *ex post* (retrospective) apologies; apologies that are predictable and those that are not predictable; apologies that imply and those that do not imply indebtedness (pp. 75-6). In addition, as Coulmas (1981) writes, sometimes apologies and the objects of regret occur simultaneously (simultaneous apologies); sometimes the apology occurs before the object of regret (*ex ante* or anticipatory apologies); and sometimes the apology occurs after the object of regret (*ex post* apologies) (pp. 75-6).

Holmes (1990) takes a sociolinguistic approach to studying the speech act of apology in New Zealand English (p. 161). According to Holmes (1990), the function of an apology, as a remedial interchange, is to address the victim's face-needs (see Brown and Levinson, 1987), and to restore equilibrium (Goffman, 1971, p. 140) or social harmony between the victim and offender (pp. 159). For Holmes (1990), apologies are primarily social supportive acts conveying affective meaning (p.155). That is, "they are primarily oriented to supporting the relationship between participants rather than to the expression of referential information or propositional meaning" (1990, p. 192). Referring to the New Zealand corpus of apologies, Holmes (1990) contends that apologies are highly formulaic; that is, most of the explicit apologies draw on a very small number of high frequency one word and phrasal lexical items and syntactic patterns (p. 175). One interesting finding of her research is that the remedial exchange between friends (as opposed to intimates and strangers) may be too complex to be explained by a simple linear model. Brown and Levinson's (1987) model predicts that the more distant the people, the more elaborate or polite the apologies. Likewise, Fraser's (1981)

research on American English confirms the prediction that as the degree of familiarity between interlocutors increases, the need to provide elaborate (or more polite) apologies decreases (p. 269). However, New Zealand data results showed that friends require more elaborate apologies than strangers and intimates (1990, pp. 185-6). In trying to justify this deviation, Holmes (1990) notes, "It appears that apology strategies may play a more crucial role in maintaining relationships between friends than between intimates or strangers" (p. 194). In refuting the assumption that more familiarity between interactants result in more casual apologies (see Fraser, 1981, p. 269), Holmes (1990) mentions a scenario wherein a person who had seriously offended his mother had to go through a number of remedial steps (verbal as well as non-verbal) over a period of a few days to fix the problem (p. 156).

Following Goffman (1971) and Fraser (1981), Olshtain and Cohen (1983) note that when an offender accepts responsibility for the infringement, s/he may select any combination of five possible formulas (or strategies) and sub-formulas (sub-categories) to apologize (pp. 22-3). The apology speech act set includes the following potential formulas (strategies):

1. An expression of apology (the use of IFIDs (Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices))

1.1. An expression of regret, e.g., 'I'm sorry.'

1.2. An offer of apology, e.g., 'I apologize.'

1.3. A request for forgiveness, e.g., 'Excuse me.'/'Forgive me.'/'Pardon me.'

2. An explanation or account of the cause which brought about the violation, e.g., 'The traffic was terrible.'

3. An expression of the speaker's responsibility for the offence

3.1. Accepting the blame, e.g., 'It is my fault'/ 'It is my mistake.'

3.2. Expressing self-deficiency, e.g., 'I was confused'/ 'I did not see you.'

3.3. Recognizing the other person as deserving apology, e.g., 'You're right to be angry.'

3.4. Expressing lack of intent, e.g., 'I did not mean it.'

4. An offer of repair, e.g., 'I'll pay for the damage.'

5. A promise of forbearance, e.g., 'It won't happen again.'

According to Olshtain (1989), strategies one and three are general, i.e., they can be used across all situations that require an explicit act of apology (p. 157). They demonstrate the offender's willingness to express an apology for a violation explicitly. IFIDs are characterized as formulaic, routinized and conventionalized forms of apology containing the

performative or apology verbs (1989, p. 157). In fact, IFIDs are the most direct realization of an apology. However, strategies two, four and five are situation specific, and semantically reflect the content of the situation (1989, p. 157).

Since the 1980s, a colossal amount of research has been done on the speech act of apology across a range of languages and cultures (Wouk, 2006a). Most of these studies take the CCSARP project as model, coding and analysing data on the basis of the coding scheme developed by CCSARP (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). Upon studying the strategies of apologizing in Lombok, Wouk (2006a) argues that (i) the category of 'taking on responsibility' as defined by CCSARP is problematic and needs more consideration or even modification, and (ii) many expressions that have been considered as 'taking on responsibility' are actually used for quite different purposes. Unlike other language communities already studied, Wouk (2006a) notes that Lombok Indonesians are less likely to overtly accept responsibility for an offense. Additionally, from among the many sub-strategies associated with 'taking on responsibility', Lombok Indonesians use only a relatively small sub-set, particularly, 'expressing lack of intent'. In order to deal with these issues, Wouk (2006a) suggests that a wider range of situations than the ones used by the CCSARPP project and that of others (e.g., Cohen & Olshtain, 1981 and Olshtain and Cohen, 1983) needs to be considered (p. 306). Furthermore, Wouk (2006a) proposes that future studies on the speech act of apology should build upon more carefully controlled and more authentic data (e.g., ethnographic observation).

Using Olshtain and Cohen's (1983) categories of apologies, Suszczyńska (1999) employed a discourse completion test (DCT) to compare the types of apologies provided by American, Hungarian and Polish native speaking students (p. 1057). The DCT comprised eight situations requiring apology with varying degrees of offence. Suszczyńska's focus was primarily on IFIDs, which are considered the prototypical strategy for an apology. Suszczyńska (1999) maintains that while English, Hungarian and Polish relatively exhibit the same IFIDs ('expression of regret', 'offer of apology', 'request for forgiveness'), they cannot be perfectly mapped onto one another in these three languages (p. 1058). For example, the IFID formulae expressing regret are more represented and routinized in English than Polish and Hungarian. IFID formulae requesting forgiveness are more represented and routinized in Hungarian than English and Polish. Moreover, while Hungarian and Polish make use of 'don't be angry' as a common IFID, English does not employ this expression as an apologetic formula. That is, conventionally, there is no English formula to convey such a concept. Thus,

Suszczyńska (1999) contends that apologizing as a speech act is culture-sensitive, reflecting culture-specific values and attitudes of different languages and cultures (p. 1053). For example, in justifying the centrality of 'regret' for expressing an apology among native speakers of English, Suszczyńska (1999) draws on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of linguistic politeness: An expression of regret (e.g., 'I'm sorry') seems to be less face-threatening for both speaker (S) and hearer (H) than other IFIDs (p. 1059). Unlike directive requests for H to forgive S, or to withhold anger in Hungarian or Polish, an expression of regret in English does not directly impose on H's negative face because it does not require the hearer to do anything. For English speakers, an expression of regret is a better way of apologizing since in comparison with other IFIDs, it does not appear to threaten the vital social factor of 'distance' between interlocutors (Suszczyńska, 1999, p. 1059). "[I]n Anglo-Saxon culture," as Wierzbicka (1985) notes, "distance is a positive cultural value, associated with respect for the autonomy of the individual. In contrast, in Polish culture it is associated with hostility and alienation" (p. 156). In Hungarian culture, as Suszczyńska (1999) further notes, 'distance' is similarly associated with hostility and alienation or at least emotional coolness and indifference (p. 1059). In Hungarian and Polish cultures in which people are more publically available to each other, paying no heed to 'distance' does not threaten their face (Suszczyńska, 1999, p. 1059). On the contrary, downplaying the social factor of distance is perceived as a natural and expected display of emotional involvement between interlocutors (Suszczyńska, 1999, p. 1059).

Aijmer (1996) indicates that a large number of studies have been carried out on remedial exchanges; however, they are not focused on the forms and utterances that are routinely employed as apologies (p. 80). Vollmer and Olshtain (1989) also point out that apology studies have mainly concentrated on strategy types rather than the internal structure of the apology IFIDs (p. 217). Therefore, bridging this gap, this study looks at the expressions that are routinely used as apology formulae in Persian.

6.3 Review of literature & the place of apology routines in the Persian-speaking community

Eslami-Rasekh (2004) conducted a cross-cultural study to compare the use of apology speech act between native speakers of American English and Persian. Similar to most researches on speech acts, this study is based on data elicited through a DCT, wherein the subjects are

asked to write down their reactions to six hypothetical situations. This study discusses some similarities and differences between English and Persian, and according to Eslami-Rasekh (2004), the four strategies most frequently used by both groups were (i) IFID formulae, (ii) acceptance of responsibility, (iii) offer of repair and (iv) explanation for the violation (p. 186). These account for 77.9 % and 82.9 % of the total strategies used by American speakers and Persian speakers, respectively. Eslami-Rasekh also refers to certain differences, which can be attributed to cultural norms and assumptions. Eslami-Rasekh (2004) claims that the two groups show statistically significant differences where it pertains to the modification (upgrading) of the IFID: Americans make use of exclamations almost twice as much as Persians (12 vs. 6), Americans go for intensification much more than Persians (54 vs. 38) and Persians tend to repeat IFIDs more than twice as much as Americans (25 vs. 12). Another significant difference between the two groups is that expressions of appeal for understanding, leniency and self-control have a much higher frequency (9.0) among Persians than Americans (2.1). Eslami-Rasekh (2004) speculates that this could be because an "[a]ppeal to hearer for understanding and leniency may signal warmth, intimacy, solidarity, and common ground, which can be related to the group-orientedness of Iranians compared to Americans" (p. 191).

Shariati and Chamani (2010) investigated the frequency, combination and sequential position of apology strategies in Persian. This longitudinal study is based on a corpus of natural data (500 apology exchanges) obtained through ethnographic observation in everyday life situations. Based on their corpus, of 1000 cases of strategy use, 632 occurrences (63%) consist of IFIDs, 193 (20%) acknowledgments of responsibility, 79 (8%) explanations or accounts of the situations, 63 (6%) are offers of repair and 33 (3%) are promises of forbearance (Shariati & Chamani, 2010: 1692-3). According to Shariati and Chamani (2010), the range of apology strategies which are used in Persian closely resemble those used in languages studied in the CCSARP project (p. 1693). However, owing to the different socio-cultural values that govern language use, preferences in the use of apology strategies vary across languages. Shariati and Chamani (2010) refer to four types of IFID in their data of which three fit into the sub-categories specified by Olshtain and Cohen (1983). According to Shariati and Chamani (2010), *šærmændæm*, an expression of shame, is specific to Persian. In their corpus, requesting forgiveness, *bebaxšid*, is the most frequent IFID, and an expression of regret, *mote'asefam*, is the least frequent IFID. Moreover, the most frequent combination of apology strategies in Persian includes an IFID (request for forgiveness) with an

acknowledgment of responsibility (2010, p. 1696). Shariati and Chamani (2010) also claim that apologies in Persian can be used to show sympathy and condolence, but this usage was not confirmed by my soap opera data (p. 1692).

In a cross-cultural study, Chamani and Zareipur (2010) examine the use of apology strategies as well as the offenses that motivate apologies among native speakers of British English and Persian. Analyzing a large corpus of naturally-occurring data collected from real-life situations, the authors show that both English and Persian speakers use a relatively similar set of apology strategies, although their preferences are different. For example, while the English speakers chose a single IFID formula in the majority of the situations, the Persian speakers used an explicit apology with a concomitant strategy (e.g., minimizing the responsibility for the offense). Moreover, the study demonstrates that hearing offenses (e.g., not hearing) elicits the highest rate of apologies in English (31.8 %), while accidents (e.g., damage to property) invoke the most apologies in Persian (27.4 %). In other words, the two groups do not apologize for the same offense types and even the same offences necessitate different apology rates.

An offender can utilize a considerable variety of formulae in apologizing in Persian (see section 6.3.1). Of these, *shærmænde* ('I am ashamed', or 'I feel ashamed/embarrassed') is the most interesting, taking its multifaceted functions into account. Exploring the cultural pragmatic schema of *shærmænde*, Sharifian and Jamarani (2011) point out that it enacts several different speech acts, namely, apologizing, expressing gratitude, offering goods and services, requesting goods and services, and accepting offers and refusal. Sharifian and Jamarani (2011) further elaborate on the instances in which Iranians might draw on the Persian cultural schema of *shærmænde* in their daily communication with non-Iranians (p. 236). For example, the authors refer to an apologizing scenario in which an Iranian (Nasrin) bewilders her Australian interlocutor (Lucy) by a pragmatic transfer from L1 to L2. Nasrin borrows a plate from Lucy, but forgets about it for some time. Upon returning it, she says:

Nasrin: I am really ashamed. I had totally forgotten about the plate

Lucy: That is really okay. It is just a plate.

Afghari (2007) endeavoured to extract and categorize the range of strategies used in performing the speech act of apologizing as well as the apology intensifiers by using a DCT with one hundred Persian-speaking university student participants. As regards the IFIDs or the formulaic expressions that are used for apologizing, Afghari (2007) arrives at more or less similar results as other researchers (see Shariati & Chamani, 2010; Chamani & Zareipur, 2010). Moreover, in response to those who do not consider *shærmændam* ('I'm embarrassed') as an explicit expression of apology, Afghari (2007) notes that the frequency of occurrence of *shærmændam* suggests that "this expression can function as a direct formulaic expression of apology rather than an indirect apology formula" (p. 181). With regards to intensifiers, Afghari (2007) lists six categories of internal intensifiers, namely, (a) *kheyli* (intensifying adverbials), (b) *kheyli kheyli* (double intensifiers), (c) *vay khoda* (emotional expressions), (d) *khahesh mikonam* ('please'), (e) *omidvaram* ('hope for forgiveness') and (f) *qasam mikhoram* ('swearing') (p. 180). It is worth mentioning that from among these categories, only categories (a) and (b) are evident in the soap opera data used in my study. A probable explanation for this inconsistency might be due to the difference in the methods of data collection. One weakness attributed to DCT is that participants write down their language reaction to a number of hypothetical situations, so their responses mainly represent the written language rather than the spoken. Therefore, the intensifiers they choose in their responses are predominantly used in written language rather than spoken language.

The long established teachings of Zoroastrianism and Islam have left their effects on RPF in general and expressions of apology in particular. In Islam, *esteghfar kærdæn* (the act of asking forgiveness from Allah for sins committed) is an essential part of daily worship. Muslims recite the formula *æstæghfirullah* ('I seek Allah's forgiveness'), or *æstæghfirullah wæ ætubu elæyh* ('I seek the forgiveness of Allah and repent to Him') in their daily prayers and at every opportunity that they can find. There are many indications in the Koran, and scriptures prescribing believers to constantly ask for forgiveness from Allah who is *ælghæfur* or most forgiving. Further, in Islam, there are two major types of rights: God's rights (*hæghullah*) and the people's rights (*hæghulnas*). God, as *ælghæfur* ('The All-Forgiving'), has the authority to forgive people for any violations of His orders; however, He cannot forgive violations of people's rights (e.g., abusing someone financially, physically, emotionally, etc.). Thus, it is the responsibility of the offender to seek forgiveness from the offended person. If not forgiven, it is held that the offender will face God's wrath in this life

and severe torment in the life to come. *hælaliyæt tælæbidæn* (asking for forgiveness from the person(s) offended) is regarded as a virtue among believers, and *hælal konid* ('forgive me'), as an explicit and strong expression of apology, clearly reflects this Islamic credo. Consequently, 'sin-sensitivity' and the need to ask for forgiveness from God and, more specifically, from the offended people is prominent in Islamic societies, including Iran. Similar to those in other Abrahamic religions (e.g., Judaism), Muslim children are brought up with a sense of sin, guilt, shame and embarrassment originating from the myth of the fall of man. This might justify the significant variety of forms used for apology, the prolific use of apology expressions or the presence of ostensible apologies (see Koutlaki, 2010, p. 47) in daily social interactions in Iran. Religious apology formulae and ostensible apologies shall be addressed in more detail shortly.

In the next sections, I will introduce the expressions (or IFIDs) used for apology in Persian and show the ways that Iranians conceptualize apology.

6.3.1 Explicit expressions of apology in Persian

In Persian, there is a considerable variety of routine formulae that can be utilized by the offender (apologizer) in apologizing. In my corpus, almost all remedial exchanges in Persian involve an explicit expression of apology (or IFID). Like other RPF, expressions of apology in Persian are conventional and formulaic, recurrent and are used in relatively fixed ways reflecting the socio-cultural values and norms governing the Iranian society.

Like other languages studied (see Olshtain and Cohen, 1983; Vollmer and Olshtain 1989; Blum-Kulka et al. 1989), in Persian, 'an expression of apology' (or IFID) contains a number of 'subformulas'. Each of the subformulas contains a performative verb, namely an apology verb, such as *bækhshidæn* ('to forgive'), *ʔozr khastæn* ('to apologize'), *motæ'æsef budæn* ('to be sorry'), *shærmænde budæn* ('to be ashamed') and *hælal kærdæn* ('to forgive'). All languages have explicit expressions of apology, but as Olshtain and Cohen (1983, p. 22) note, "The number of subformulas and their appropriateness to certain discourse situations would vary, however, from language to language. Moreover which of the subformulas is most common in any language may be specific to that language". While some scholars (see Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969, 1975) believe in the universality of pragmatic principles, others (see Wierzbicka, 1985) believe in variation in verbalization and conceptualization of speech acts

across different languages. Wierzbicka (1985) maintains that speech acts (of various kinds) cannot be truly comprehended without reference to the cultural values and attitudes of the people who use them. Shariati and Chamani note that context seems to play a limiting function in the selection of expressions of apology or IFID in Persian. That is, "depending on the nature and severity of offense, formality of situation, the relation between interlocutors, intensity of regret, and the extent to which the speaker is responsible for the fault, Persian speakers may use different forms to apologize" (Shariati & Chamani, 2010, p. 1694).

Explicit expressions of apology or IFIDs in Persian can be classified into four major categories or groups. Groups 1, 2 and 3 match the CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns) model (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989); however, group 4 of IFIDs is specific to Persian. As regards the use of expressions of shame and embarrassment for expressing explicit apology in Persian, Wouk (2006b, p. 1468) notes they have not been found to function similarly in other societies investigated to date.

(i) Requests for forgiveness: e.g., *bebækhshid/mibækhshin, hælal konid, ʔæf befærma'id*

(ii) Offers of apology: e.g., *mæ:zeræt/mæʔzeræt mikham, ʔozr mikham, puzesh mikham*

(iii) Expressions of regret: e.g., *motæ:sefæm/motæʔæsefæm*

(iv) Expressions of shame, embarrassment and guilt: e.g., *shærmænde/shærmændæm, rum siyah*

6.3.1.1 Group one of explicit expressions of apology in Persian: a request for forgiveness

Group one of the explicit expressions of apology contains three canonical forms along with a number of variants as follows:

Formula form: *bebækhshid*

bebækhshid (or *mibækhshin*), a request for forgiveness, is the most common formula for apologizing in Persian. It corresponds to 'forgive me', 'excuse me', 'pardon me' and 'I beg your pardon' in English. *bebækhshid* is an explicit and direct way of expressing apology in

both formal and informal situations. This unmarked general-purpose apology is lavishly used in spoken language by almost all age groups. *bebækhshid* is usually used for casual and normal faults and offences. For big infractions, however, it should be reinforced by intensifiers such as *kheyli* ('very'). According to Shariati and Chamani (2010) and Afghari (2007), *bebækhshid* is the most frequent IFID used in Persian. However, according to Eslami-Rasekh (2004), its occurrence is less frequent than *mæ:zeræt/ʔozr mikham*.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (INT) + *bebækhshid* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*to ro khoda*) + *bebækhshid* + (*to ro khoda*) + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*dige*) *be* {*bozorgi/khubi*} *khodetun bebækhshid* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *bebækhshid* (*that-clause/if-clause* (object of regret)) STOP

START (VOC) + *bayæd* + *bebækhshid* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + {*mæn/ma/bænde/in bænde-ye hæghir*} *ro* {*bebækhsh/bebækhsid*} + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *bebækhshid* + {a request/question} STOP

START (VOC) + *bekhater-e un* {*ghæziye/mæs'æle*} *bebækhshid* STOP

Formula form: *ʔæf befærma'id*

ʔæf befærma'id, a request for forgiveness, is an explicit apology expression. It corresponds to 'forgive me' in English. It is regarded as a formal and uncommon apology expression used among strangers. The written form is *ʔæfv*; however, in spoken language for ease of pronunciation the final consonant /v/ is omitted. *ʔæfv* is originally from a triconsonantal root in Arabic /ʔfw/ meaning to absolve or to forgo. In Afghari's study (2007), *ʔæf konid*, as a very formal IFID, has the lowest frequency of occurrence of about 0.1.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *ʔæf* {*befærma'id/konid*} + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *hælal konid*

hælal konid, a request for forgiveness, is an explicit expression of apology. It corresponds to 'forgive me' in English; however, it has strong religious connotations. In Islam, acknowledging people's rights is more important than God's rights. God has the authority to forgive people for any violations of His orders, but He cannot forgive violations of people's rights. It is the responsibility of the culpable person to ask the offended for forgiveness either on the spot or some time later. Therefore, the act of *hælaliyæt tælæbidæn* (asking for forgiveness from the offended person) is a common and highly recommended virtue observed mainly among Shiite believers. Given this religious background, in Iranian culture, *hælal konid*, as a marked expression of apology, is usually reserved for severe violations and offences for which the offender should personally ask for forgiveness. In addition, this formula implies a strong sense of guilt and indebtedness felt by the apologizer.

As a formula, *hælal konid* has some other usages: it is used when somebody is going to take a religious journey (especially to Mecca and other Shiite shrines). In the past when roads were unsafe and dangerous, long journeys could potentially result in death. Thus, before people can take their leave, if they know that they have previously harmed somebody, they should go to them in person asking for their forgiveness. Even if the leave-taker were sure they had not harmed anybody, asking for forgiveness would simply be regarded as a symbolic gesture to let friends and acquaintances know that someone is taking his/her leave for a religious journey. In this usage, it is mostly a polite gesture/behaviour strengthening social bonding, and the leave-taker asks to be forgiven for any sorts of violations that they might have consciously or unconsciously committed. In daily interactions among people, *hælal konid* may also be used in some other ways. For example, when someone pays for the price or fare of goods or services, if a retailer or service provider does not have enough change to give back to the buyer or receiver of a service, s/he would ask to be forgiven by the formula *hælal konid*.

hælal konid is only used as an '*ex post* apology' (see Coulmas, 1981, p. 76). Referring to Vollmer and Olshtain's (1989) classification, *hælal konid* is regarded as a strong apology. To reinforce this formula, it can be preceded or followed by terms of address or religious warrants such as *to ro khoda* ('for God's sake') to add more affection. *hælal konid* is used exclusively by adults and seniors and is regarded as quite old-fashioned.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (*to ro khoda*) {*mæn-o*/*ma-ro*} *hælal* {*konid*/*kon*} (*to ro khoda*) + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*to ro khoda*) *hælal-æm* {*konid*/*kon*} (*to ro khoda*) + (VOC) STOP

6.3.1.2 Group two of explicit expressions of apology in Persian: an offer of apology

Group two of the explicit expressions of apology contains three canonical forms along with a number of variants, as follows:

Formula form: *mæ:zeræt*/*mæʔzeræt mikham*

mæ:zeræt mikham, an offer of apology, is a formal apologizing expression in Persian. *mæ:zeræt* is originally from a triconsonantal root in Arabic, /ʔzr/. This explicit apology corresponds to 'I apologize (for)', or 'I present my apologies' in English. The written form is *mæʔzeræt*, and for ease of pronunciation the glottal stop /ʔ/ is usually omitted in spoken language. *mæ:zeræt mikham* also appears as *ʔozr mikham* with the same meaning and function. *mæ:zeræt mikham* is usually used for casual and normal faults and offences; however, for big infractions it should be reinforced by intensifiers and proper terms of address.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (INT) *mæ:zeræt* (*mikham*) + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + ({*mæn*/*bænde*}) ({*æz shoma*/*æzætun*}) (INT) *mæ:zeræt mikham* + (that-clause (reason for apology)) STOP

START (VOC) + {*mæn*/*bænde*} + (reason for apology) (INT) {*æz shoma*/*æzætun*/*æzæt*} *mæ:zeræt mikham* STOP

START *æz ghol-e* {*bænde*/*mæn*/*ma*} *æz* NP (person's name) (INT) *mæ:zerætkhahi konid* STOP

Formula form: *ʔozr mikham*

ʔozr mikham, an offer of apology, is a formal apologizing expression in Persian. This explicit apology corresponds to 'I apologize (for)', 'I present my apologies' in English. In spoken

language, for ease of pronunciation, the final consonant /r/ is usually omitted and *ʔozr* is pronounced as *ʔoz*. *ʔozr mikham* is usually used for casual and normal faults and offences; however, for bigger infractions it should be reinforced by intensifiers and proper terms of address. Acknowledging a debt of apology, as Aijmer (1996) points out, is the strongest form of a direct apology. Therefore, *mæn ye {ʔozr/mæ:zeræt} khahi be shoma bedehkaræm* ('I owe you an apology', or 'I must/ought to apologize') is regarded as a strong apology.

There are two other related and old-fashioned apology formulae that are used only in formal situations and mainly by seniors: *ʔozr-e tæghsir* ('sorry for the offence/fault') and *ʔozr-e tæ'khir* ('sorry that I am late').

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (INT) + *ʔozr mikham* ({*æz shoma/æzætun/æzæt*}) + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*mæn*) ({*æz shoma/æzætun/æzæt*}) (INT) *ʔozr mikham* + (that-clause) STOP

START (VOC) + {*bænde/mæn/ma*} *ye ʔozr khahi be shoma bedehkar-æm/im* STOP

START *æz ghole* {*bænde/mæn/ma*} *æz* NP (INT) *ʔozrkhahi konid* STOP

START (VOC) + *ʔozr-e* {*tæghsir/tæ'khir*} STOP

Formula form: *puzesh mikham*

puzesh mikham, an offer of apology, is an explicit apology expression. It means 'I apologize'. It is highly formal and is not as popular as common apology expressions. *puzesh mikham* is regarded as a pure Persian equivalent for *ʔozr mikham* and *mæ:zeræt mikham*, which are partly from Arabic. *puzesh mikham* is mainly used in the media, especially radio and TV programmes. In Afghari's study (2007), *puzesh mikham*, as a very formal IFID, had a low frequency of occurrence of 0.6 compared to other common apology expressions.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + ({*mæn/bænde*}) ({*æz shoma/æzætun/æzæt*}) (INT) *puzesh* {*mikham/mitælæbæm*} STOP

START (VOC) + *lotfæn* + *puzesh-e bænde ro bepæzir-in/-id* STOP

6.3.1.3 Group three of explicit expressions of apology in Persian: an expression of regret

Group three of the explicit expressions of apology contains one canonical form along with a number of variants as follows:

Formula form: *motæ:sefæm/motæ'æsefæm*

motæ:sefæm, an expression of regret, is an explicit apology expression. It literally means 'I am sorry', corresponding to 'I am sorry' and 'I am afraid that' in English. In written language it appears as *motæ'æsefæm*, whereas in the spoken language for ease of pronunciation the glottal stop /'/ is usually omitted. *motæ:sefæm* is very uncommon and has a weak pragmatic force. It seems that *motæ:sefæm* has entered the Persian politeness system through translation (e.g., English novels and playwrights) as well as dubbed English movies in view of the fact that it is a direct translation from 'I am sorry'. This, to some extent, might suggest why this apology formula is not culturally recognized as a common apology. In this study's corpus of Persian soap operas, it only occurred twice. Furthermore, *motæ:sefæm* does not sound as strong (forceful) as other common apology expressions being viewed as too 'weak' for the purpose (for 'strong and weak IFIDs', see Vollmer and Olshtain, 1989, p. 217). However, similar to other expressions of apology it can be intensified.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (*mæn*) (INT) *motæ:sefæm* STOP

6.3.1.4 Group four of explicit expressions of apology in Persian: expression of shame embarrassment and guilt

Group four of the explicit expressions of apology contains two canonical forms along with a number of variants as follows:

Formula form: *shærmænde* (or *shærmændæm*)

shærmænde (or *shærmændæm*), an expression of shame, embarrassment and guilt, is a common formula for apologizing in Persian. This explicit humble apology expression means

'I am ashamed', or 'I feel ashamed/embarrassed'. English dictionaries define 'shame' as a painful emotion caused by a strong sense of guilt, embarrassment, or disgrace. It may correspond to 'I am sorry', 'excuse me' and 'pardon me' in English. However, according to Eslami-Rasekh (2004), it expresses more emotion and involvement than 'I'm sorry' in English (p. 190). It is widely used in the spoken language in both formal and informal situations. As Eslami-Rasekh (2004) points out *shærmænde* is stronger than other IFIDs in Persian and hence it is used in situations of high offence (p. 190). Additionally, it implies a sense of guilt and indebtedness by the apologizer towards the offended person. Studies on apology speech acts in other languages (see Blum-Kulka, et al., 1989) seems to indicate that the 'expression of shame, embarrassment and guilt' for the act of apology is specific to Persian (see Afghari, 2007; Shariati and Chamani, 2010). Suszcyńska (1999), likewise, refers to a 'request to not be angry' (*Ne haragudjon* ('don't be angry')) as the prototypical strategy for apologizing specific to Hungarian. In spite of the popularity of *shærmænde* as an explicit and strong apology formula in Persian, Wouk (2006b) argues that it should be classified as a sub-type of the strategy of taking on responsibility (p. 1462).

Eslami-Rasekh (2004) asserts that languages clearly reflect the cultural values and norms of different societies (p. 180). Justifying the use of the expression of shame in expressing apology in Persian, Shariati and Chamani (2010) write, "Iranians are expected to feel and express shame for doing something wrong to someone" (p. 1694). Shariati and Chamani support their speculation by referring to the teachings of Zoroaster and his threefold motto: good thoughts, good words, good deeds. The teachings of Islam have also had an important effect in making people feel ashamed of their faults and offences against God and people. In Islam, in order for the forgiveness to be accepted, the offender should quickly turn to shame and repentance after committing a fault or giving offence.

shærmænde has some other varieties such as *shærmændætunæm* and *shærmændætæm* ('I feel ashamed before you') which convey more emotion and sincerity. The other expression of shame and guilt with the same meaning and function is *khejalætæm* ('I feel embarrassed'). However, it is not as common as *shærmændæm*. *khejalætæm* is regarded as informal and old-fashioned and is mostly used by women.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (INT) {*shærmænde/shærmændæm*} + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*be khoda*) (INT) {*shærmænde/shærmændæm*} + (that-clause) STOP

START (VOC) + (INT) {*shærmænde/shærmændæm*} ({*be khoda/valla/vællah*}) + (that-clause) STOP

START (VOC) + ({*mæn/ma*}) (INT) *shærmænde-ye shoma* {*shodæm/shodim/hæstim*} STOP

START (VOC) + *bekhater-e un* {*mowzu/mæsʔæle/ghæziye*} {*shærmænde/shærmændæm*} STOP

Formula form: *rum siyah*

rum siyah, an expression of shame, embarrassment and guilt, is an old-fashioned and infrequent formula for apologizing in Persian. *rum siyah* means 'May my face turn black', which roughly corresponds to 'I am very/terribly/awfully sorry' in English. This explicit apology expression has a strong pragmatic force and hence is used when the 'object of regret' (Coulmas, 1981) is quite large or is assumed to be large. It also implies a sense of guilt, shame and indebtedness in the apologizer. In Iranian culture, the colours *siyah* ('black') and *sepid* ('white') have bad and good connotations respectively. There are many expressions containing these two colours used for bad and good qualities. For example, *ru **siyah** shodæn* means 'to become denigrated or disgraced' and *ru **sepid** shodæn* means to 'become blessed'. The expressions *rusiyah* or *siyæhru* depict a person whose face has turned black due to guilt, embarrassment and shame and, as such, when used as an apology expression, it illustrates the utmost sense of regret, guilt and indebtedness in the apologizer. It is solely used by seniors and adults (especially females) and is regarded as outdated. This expression also appears as *rusiyam* (or *rusiyahæm/rum siyahe*) ('I feel embarrassed'). *rush siyah* ('May his/her face turns black'), as another variant, can be used to apologize for the offences that third parties have caused. For example, a mother who is deeply embarrassed and ashamed because her son has broken the neighbour's window may use this formula to express her embarrassment and to apologize for the mess.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *rum siyah* (*be khoda*) STOP

START (VOC) + (*be khoda*) *rum siyah-e* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *rusiyam* + (VOC) STOP

6.4 Apology responders

Most studies have focused on the production of apology speech acts and, hence, little investigation has been carried out on responses to apologies or the perlocutionary aspect of the apology speech act from the viewpoint of the person offended (see Olshain, 1989, p. 172). Coulmas (1981) considers the speech acts of apology and thanking as 'reactive speech acts' (p. 71). In his three-place pattern, the speech act of apology occupies the second position, and apology responders (hereafter referred to as ARs) occupy the third position. Unlike the offender who is under an obligation to apologize, the offended person is not obligated to respond. However, according to conventions of politeness and rules of etiquette, the person offended usually responds with suitable ARs. As mentioned earlier, apology expressions are recurrent fixed forms (Aijmer, 1996, p. 82) and their continuation patterns are fixed and formulaic too (Aijmer, 1996, p. 87). Aijmer (1996) refers to 'that's/it's all right' in combination with 'well', 'no' and 'oh' as the most frequently used ARs in the London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English (p. 87). However, Aijmer (1996) draws attention to the fact that apologies do not always have a continuation, or the absence of a responder is not necessarily noticeable (p. 87). When the object of regret is not specified or if the offence is trivial, there would be no responder for the apology (1996, p. 88). For example, when one excuses one's self at a restaurant table, the apology does not call for any responder (Coulmas, 1981, p. 78). Moreover, as Aijmer (1996) points out, only a retrospective or *ex post* apology (Coulmas, 1981) can be followed by a responder in which the apology is acknowledged, minimised or denied (p. 100).

The speech act of apology and the continuation pattern are complex behaviours, which necessitate the speaker (apologizer) and hearer (the person offended) paying sufficient attention to each other's face needs in the context of an offence. In other words, as face-supporting acts, apologies are aimed at maintaining and supporting participants' face needs (Holmes, 1990, p. 162). In a remedial exchange, the apologizer humbles himself/herself to save the hearer's face, and in so doing they damage their own positive face (see Brown & Levinson, 1987), which, in turn, needs to be saved by the hearer (or receiver of the act of apology) through the use of ARs. Therefore, by denying the cause for apologizing or by playing down the need to apologize, the hearer (offended person) can also attend to the apologizer's face needs.

Aijmer (1996) identifies two main responding strategies when an act of apology is acknowledged verbally: 'playing down the need to apologize' and/or 'denying the cause for apologizing altogether'. Likewise, Fraser (1981) indicates that just as there are strategies for making apologies, there are also strategies for responding to an apology: 'rejecting the need for apologizing' (e.g. 'you didn't have to apologize; I certainly understand'), 'denying offence' (e.g., 'I wasn't really upset'), 'expressing appreciation for the concern of the speaker' (e.g. 'thanks for your concern') and 'rejecting the speaker's responsibility for the action' (e.g., 'well, you really couldn't help it') are four strategies for responding to an act of apology (p. 265). For Coulmas (1981) the most common strategy to respond to an act of apology is to deny the guilt implicit in the apology and hence to make communication inoffensive (p. 90). Based on the soap opera data, the same strategies also apply in Persian and shall be discussed in the following section.

6.4.1 Apology responders in Persian

Apologies in Persian are elaborate and explicit and hence they need to be explicitly acknowledged by appropriate ARs. The most common and generic AR in Persian is *khahesh mikonæm* ('I beg you'). Another one is *ekhtiyar darin* ('You have the authority'). Both of these responders stand for 'that's/it's all right', 'don't worry', 'never mind', 'not a bit', 'it's ok', 'no worries' in English. They can be used in both formal and informal situations. As compound apology responders, they can be used with or accompany other less common ARs such as *in hærfa chiye/kodume?* ('Do not say this'), *in che hærfiye ke mizænin* ('Do not say this'), *eshkal nædare* ('It's ok'). The other less common colloquial apology responders include *ghorbunet* ('May I be sacrificed in your place'), *fædat beshæm* ('May I be sacrificed in your place'), *mokhlesim/mokhlesetim/mokhlesæm* ('I am your devoted friend'), *chakerim/chakeretim/chakeræm* ('I am your obedient servant') and *nowkæretim/nowkæretæm* ('I am your obedient servant').

For some apology formulae there might be specific and fixed ARs. For example, in response to an apology expression such as *shærmænde* ('I feel ashamed') one may respond with fixed expressions such as *doshmænet shærmænde bashe* ('May your enemy feel ashamed') or simply *doshmænet* ('Your enemy'), *dur æz jun* ('May you never feel ashamed') or *khoda nækone* ('God forbid that you feel ashamed'). Likewise, in response to *bebækhshid* ('forgive

me') one may reciprocate by *khoda bebækhshe* ('May God forgive you') or *shoma (bayæd) bebækhshid* ('Actually it is you who should forgive me').

Depending on the context of the situation, not responding to an act of apology can mean anger and dissatisfaction. In the following example culled from soap opera data, person A, a barber, accidently cuts person B's ear, which causes B's cry of pain and objection. Person A immediately apologizes with multiple strategies, but person B does not acknowledge it out of anger and annoyance.

> A: *akh, gushæmo boride agha*
>
> ('Ouch, you cut my ear Mr.')
>
> B: *mæ:zeræt mikham, bebækhshid*
>
> ('I'm sorry, please excuse me')
>
> A: Ø

In the following example from soap opera, person A has previously annoyed person B who is now sick and confined to bed. Person A has come to visit person B and to apologize for what he has done before. One common strategy in responding to apologies, especially among family members or close friends, is to totally deny the cause for apology and pretend not to know the cause for an apology at all.

> A: *mæno bebækhsh aghajun*
>
> ('Dear dad, please excuse me')
>
> B: *chera?*
>
> ('For what?'/'Why?')
>
> A: *mæn khæta-ye bozorgi kærdæm*
>
> ('I made a great mistake')
>
> B: *ey baba*
>
> ('Oh, do not mention it')

6.5 Reinforcing or upgrading apology expressions in Persian

Sometimes, depending on the nature and the 'weightiness of offense' (Holmes, 1990, p. 156), the interlocutors' relationship and the context of situation, the speaker ('offender') is

obligated to apologize more profusely (or to intensify the apology). Holmes (1990) suggests that the greater the offence or fault, the more polite the remedy would need to be (p. 176). However, Holmes (1990) points out that there has been little work carried out on what constitutes a polite apology (p. 187). According to Holmes (1990) features such as 'apology length', 'the complexity of the strategies' and 'the elaborateness of the linguistic formula' can have a bearing (p. 187).

Languages make use of various devices to reinforce (upgrade or intensify) the illocutionary force of apology expressions, however, discussions on apologies in the literature have not paid enough attention to upgrading (Wouk, 2006b, p. 1477). In Persian, there are a number of devices such as lexical and prosodic devices to strengthen or boost the illocutionary force of apology expressions. Altogether, nine different strategies for the intensification of apologies are discernible from the data corpus.

The first strategy involves placing intensifying adverbs, also known as 'adverbials' (Vollmer & Olshtain, 1989, p. 211), or simply intensifiers (INTs) in front of the direct expressions of apology (IFIDs). Fraser (1981) asserts that the inclusion of intensifiers such as 'very', 'so', 'terribly', and the like do not convert one strategy into another, but rather intensify the sense of regret expressed by the speaker (p. 264). According to Vollmer and Olshtain (1989), "By using intensification the S [speaker] emphasizes his or her interest in establishing harmony and good relations with the H [hearer] and admits to the seriousness of the offence" (p. 213). There are many intensifying adverbs in Persian; however, based on soap opera data, only a few of them are employed with expressions of apology. *kheyli* ('very much'), *vagheʔæn* ('indeed'), *hesabi* ('very many'), *rastesh* ('indeed/really') are INTs most frequently used with expressions of apology. There are some idiosyncrasies governing the collocation of INTs with apology expressions. For instance, *rastesh* ('indeed/really') is exclusively used with *shærmændæm* as in '*mæn rastesh shærmændæm*' ('I am really sorry'). Not all apology expressions can be accompanied by INTs; and no single intensifier can be used with all apology expressions. To increase the level of intensification a bit more, intensifying adverbs themselves can further be intensified. In Persian, intensifiers can be intensified in two different ways. First, some of them can be reiterated. We can call this 'iterative intensification' or 'double intensification'. For example, *kheyli* can be repeated twice: *kheyli kheyli* ('so very much'). The remaining INTs, however, cannot be iterated. Secondly, *kheyli*, *kheyli kheyli* as well as other INTs can be further intensified by stretching the vowel(s) inside

them termed 'phonetic stretching'. That is, *kheyli* with a prolonged vowel has more emotional impact than its normal counterpart. Through phonetic stretching, people can express their inner feelings adding affect or emotional weight to their sense of regret. In other words, in expressing apology, we signal to the hearer that we are affectively or emotionally involved signalling a deeper sense of regret. The same phenomenon can also be seen in English, as the vowel /e/ in 'very' can be lengthened to increase the level of intensity and hence to express a deeper sense of regret and/or to highlight the emotionality (K. Kuiper, personal communication).

The second method of reinforcing the illocutionary force of the apology expressions in Persian is to precede them with 'emotional exclamations or particles' such as *ah*, *akh* or *ey vay* ('Oh', 'Oops'). These exclamations express emotions adding affect or emotional weight to the sense of regret. Vollmer and Olshtain (1989) also suggest that the emotional use of 'Oh' is a common means of intensification in spoken language (p. 211). Likewise, Aijmer (1996) distinguishes thirteen different apology strategies in English in which expressing emotion with an exclamation ('Oh') is regarded as an apology strategy per se (e.g., 'Oh (I'm so sorry)) (p. 83). According to Eslami-Rasekh (2004, p. 188), Persian speakers use fewer exclamations than English speakers (6 vs. 12). Another emotional exclamation is *ha*, which only follows *bebækhshid* and *shærmænde*. *dige* ('Any more'), performing the same function, also precedes or follows *bebækhshid.* In the following example from soap opera data, when the hostess (B) joins the guests at a lunch table, one of the guests (A) apologizes for having started the meal without waiting for her. To increase the apologetic force, the apologizer employs an emotional exclamation (*ey vay*) as well as an endearment term as vocative.

> A: *ey vay sæmæn jun, bebækhshid ma zud shoru kærdim*
>
> ('Oh, dear Saman, sorry for not waiting for you')
>
> B: *nushe-e junetun*
>
> ('Enjoy')

The third method of reinforcing expressions of apology is to employ warrants (religious or non-religious). Religious warrants usually precede or follow an expression of apology to reinforce it. *to ro khoda* ('I swear you to/by God'/'for God's sake'), *be khoda* ('I swear by God'), *vællah/valla* ('I swear by God') and *be ghor'an* ('I swear by the Koran') are the common intensifying religious warrants used to reinforce apology expressions. For example,

to ro khoda bebækhshid ('I swear to you by God, forgive me') has more illocutionary force than *bebækhshid* ('Forgive me') alone. Likewise, *shærmændæm be khoda* ('I swear by God that I feel embarrassed') is much stronger than *shærmændæm* ('I feel ashamed') alone.

Intensifying religious warrants are mainly used in informal situations and between friends, peers and acquaintances. Though they have strong religious connotations (faith in God as the supreme power and judge), as with other RPF with their reference to God and religious values, religious warrants do not necessarily depict the user as a religious person. Something interesting about religious warrants is that they clearly reflect the major strategy of 'self-lowering and other-elevating' or self-abasement in Brown and Levinson's terms (1987, p. 178). That is, when asking for forgiveness, the apologizer asks to be forgiven not for his/her own sake as an individual, but for God's sake as the supreme source of power. In addition, *be bozorgi/khubi khodetun* ('For your greatness/goodness sake') is a non-religious warrant which exclusively precedes *bebækhshid.* Likewise, it touches upon the underlying strategy of self-lowering and other-elevating as the apologizer asks the offended person to forgive the apologizer not for his/her own sake, but for the hearer's greatness and goodness.

The fourth method of strengthening the illocutionary force of apology expressions, or making them more polite, is the use of 'multiple strategies' (see Volmer & Olshtain, 1989, p. 211); that is, to combine two or more strategies (see Fraser, 1981, p. 267; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983, p. 22; Blum-Kulka, 1989, p. 21; Holmes, 1990, p. 170; Aijmer, 1996, p. 94). Generally, Aijmer (1996, p. 51) takes 'lengths of expressions' as an important factor contributing to the politeness level of speech acts because heightened emotion can often provoke longer speech act sets. Holmes (1990) also indicates that there is a positive correlation between the weightiness of the offence and the complexity or length of the apology in the corpus of New Zealand remedial exchanges (p. 156). According to her (1990), combining different strategies results in a "weightier" apology appropriate for more serious infractions (p. 169). A more polite apology usually includes the combination of an explicit apology (an IFID) with another strategy (1990, p. 168). In Persian, compounding is realized in a number of ways: combining two or more explicit apology expressions or IFIDs; combining IFIDs with less direct apology strategies (e.g., inclusion of an explanation or an acknowledgment of responsibility). Of 500 apology exchanges analysed in their study, Shariati and Chamani (2010, p. 1694) showed that only 132 (26%) included a single IFID, whereas in 368 instances (74%) a combination of strategies were used. This indicates that strategy combinations is a popular means to strengthen apologies. In developing a satisfactory categorizing system for the data in this

study, Olshtain and Cohen's (1983) framework was adapted. As such, the following combinations were found in the material where IFID stands for 'an expression of an apology', EXPL stands for 'an explanation or account of the situation', RESP stands for 'an acknowledgment of responsibility' and WARR stands for warrants. This corpus of data did not contain any examples of 'an offer of repair' (REPR), or a promise of forbearance (FORB).

(a) IFIDx + IFIDy

(b) IFIDx + VOC + IFIDy

(c) VOC + IFIDx + RESP (lack of choice)

(d) IFIDx + RESP (Expressing self-deficiency) + IFIDy

(e) INT + IFIDx + INT + IFIDy + RESP (Expressing lack of intent)

(f) IFIDx + (WARR) + RESPa (Expressing lack of intent) + RESPb (Expressing lack of intent) + IFIDy + (WARR)

(g) IFID + VOC + RESP (Expressing lack of intent)

(h) IFIDx + VOC + IFIDy

(i) INT + IFID + RESPa (expression of guilt) + RESPb (expression of self-deficiency) + EXPL

(j) IFIDx + RESP + IFIDy + VOC

(k) IFIDx + VOC + EXPL + EXPL + IFIDy

(l) WARR + IFID + RESP (lack of choice)

(m) INT + IFID + VOC + EXPL

(n) IFIDx + IFIDy + EXPL + IFIDx

The fifth method closely related to compounding is repetition of the apology terms ('iterative apology'). Sometimes, to increase the illocutionary force of apology expressions the same IFID can be repeated two or more times, known as "double apology" (Holmes, 1990, p. 184), or "double IFID" (Vollmer & Olshtain, 1989). The iterative forms might immediately follow one another, or a different formula or construction might come in between. Eslami-Rasekh (2004) notes that Persian speakers tend to repeat the IFID more than English speakers (25 vs. 12) (p. 188). The data in this study contains a number of iterative apologies such as IFIDx + INT + IFIDx (e.g., *mæn motæ:sefæm vaghe ʔæn motæ:sefæm*) and IFIDx + INT + IFIDy + IFIDx + IFIDx + IFIDy (e.g., *bebækhshin, kheyli ʔozr mikham æz hæme, bebækhshin, bebækhshin, ʔozr mikham*).

The sixth method of intensifying apology expressions is to use them with terms of address as vocatives. Persian has an elaborate address system through which interactants can express their most subtle feelings and different levels of speech and formality. Terms of address (e.g., honorific titles, occupational titles, religious titles, kinship titles, endearment terms and their combinations) can precede or follow expressions of apology as deferential and/or solidarity forms increasing the level of politeness and/or enhancing the sense of solidarity, which in turn can reinforce the apology forms. Terms of address often appear as premodifiers or postmodifiers. For example, the presence of the honorific title *khanom* ('Miss') in *ʔozr mikham khanom* ('Excuse me Miss') means it is more polite than *ʔozr mikham* ('Excuse me') alone. In this example, term of address is used to show deference to the hearer.

The seventh method of reinforcing the illocutionary force of apology expressions is to expand them into complete sentences (see Aijmer, 1996, p. 88). Similar to English (see Aijmer, 1996, p. 88), in Persian, apology expressions are mostly the result of ellipsis and as they are quite flexible, they can hence be developed into a complete sentence. For example, an elliptical stem such as '*mæ:zeræt mikham*' can be expanded into a complete sentence to increase the politeness level as the following:

$[(mæn/bænde)]_{Subject} + [(æz\ shoma)]_{PP} + [mæ:zeræt\ mikham]_{Verb}$

The eighth method of reinforcing apologies is to precede them with modal auxiliary verbs such as *bayæd* ('should'). In the soap opera data, *bebækhshid*, a request for forgiveness, was the only apology expression reinforced with modal auxiliaries. As earlier mentioned, according to Suszczyńska (1999), in English culture, 'a request for forgiveness' (a directive act) is more face-threatening for both speaker and hearer than 'an expression of regret' (an expressive act) (p. 1059). In the English culture that favours avoidance-based negative politeness (see Suszczyńska, 1999, p. 1059), distance, privacy and autonomy of individuals (Wierzbicka, 1985, p. 156), a request for forgiveness in expressing apology is highly face-threatening. However, in Iranian culture, which favours positive politeness, social cohesion and social harmony, the pleas for forgiveness are not regarded as face-threatening for either speaker or hearer. In contrast, "they are perceived as a natural and expected display of emotional involvement and respect for harmony and well being of the others and for withholding societal norms of appropriateness" (Eslami-Rasekh, 2004, p. 189). Accordingly,

bayæd bebækhshid ('You should forgive me') has a stronger emotive force and hence embodies more deference than *bebækhshid* alone.

The ninth method, prosodic features, is considered by Owen (1983, cited in Holmes, 1990, p. 166) as a primary remedial move. Holmes (1990) writes that "tone of voice and facial expressions may contribute 'feeling' or 'intensity' to the expression of the apology" (p. 177). Whether or not one uses any of the above mentioned methods to reinforce the illocutionary force of expressions of apology, they can also be uttered with an apologetic intonation (see Aijmer, 1996, p. 84). According to Holmes (1990), in conversations among intimates, the ordinary utterances of language can also function as apologies once they are uttered with apologetic intonation (p. 171). This clearly explains the low percentage of 'explicit apologies' among intimates in the New Zealand English corpus as the following example from Holmes (1990, p. 171) illustrates. Person A who has three daughters calls home, and one of her daughters, B, answers the phone:

> A: Hello.
>
> B: Hi Mum.
>
> A: Oh which one's that?
>
> B: Jeannie.
>
> A: Oh so it is – I was just waiting to hear from Em so I wasn't expecting you.
>
> B: Huh!

In coding the data on apology speech act in Persian, I also looked for evidence of downgrading or minimizing of the offence, but did not find any examples (cf. Wouk, 2006b, p. 1471).

6.6 Ostensible apology in Persian

Fraser (1981) distinguishes two kinds of apologies: 'genuine apology' and 'ritual apology' (p. 266). While a genuine (serious) apology expresses a strong sense of regret on the apologizer's part (see Vollmer and Olshtain, 1989, p. 198), a ritual (casual) apology does not express the speaker's true emotions (Aijmer, 1996, p. 97). A number of linguists have touched upon the ritual nature of apologies (see Goffman, 1971; Coulmas, 1981; Fraser, 1981; Knowles, 1987; Aijmer, 1996). Vollmer and Olshtain (1989) have similarly

distinguished stronger IFIDs from weaker IFIDs, claiming that people can intuitively distinguish between the two (p. 198). With ritual apologies, there are no real 'objects of regret' (see Coulmas, 1981), and apologies are merely 'polite gestures' (see Aijmer, 1996: 97), a 'facilitating move' (see Fraser, 1981, p. 266) or simply part of what is called 'good manners' (Norrick, 1978, p. 280). Likewise, Vollmer and Olshtain (1989) point out that weaker IFIDs are used to satisfy the needs of social etiquette (p. 198).

According to Aijmer (1996), some of the common features of ritual apologies are: (i) occurring in stereotypic situations in which people apologize for trivial offences, (ii) having a typical intonation pattern (see Knowles, 1987, pp. 193-4) and (iii) having a fixed form. Vollmer and Olshtain (1989) further identify being highly recurrent and routinized as two main features of weak IFIDs (p. 198). In 'patterns of spoken English', Knowles (1987) points out that by giving the expression of apology a final rise, the speaker indicates that the apology is not to be taken seriously, and hence it is regarded as a mere ritual act (pp. 193-4).

Likewise, in Persian, a ritual apology, or 'ostensible apology' (Koutlaki, 2010) is not only appropriate for trivial faults and offences, it serves a wide range of additional functions (p. 47). If English people lavishly use 'thank you' in daily interactions, Iranians are the uncontested champions of the ostensible apology (Koutlaki, 2010, p. 47). Apology expressions, in Persian, can be used to communicate humility, indebtedness, gratitude, or a move to bring an interaction to a close (Koutlaki, 2010, p. 47). In Persian, based on soap opera data, ostensible apologies can be used in the following situations: (i) when offering a present to somebody the speaker apologizes, communicating the idea that the present is not worthy of the receiver, e.g., '*bebækhshid dige, ghabele shoma ro nædare*' ('Sorry, it is not worthy of you'); (ii) when the host/hostess, at the beginning or end of meals, apologises to the guests for not providing good and delicious food, e.g., *bebækhshid dige age ghæza bæd bud* ('Sorry, if the food is/was not good (delicious)'); (iii) when expressing gratitude and indebtedness for a favour or service, e.g., *shærmænde, chera be zæhmæt oftadin* ('Sorry, you shouldn't have troubled yourself'); (iv) when the guest is taking his/her leave, as part of the leave-taking ritual, the host/hostess may apologize to the guest for the probable inconveniences and lack of comfort, e.g., *bebækhshid dige age bæd gozæsht* ('Sorry, for the inconveniences'); (v) when the guest is taking his/her leave, as part of the leave-taking ritual, s/he may apologize to the host/hostess for their trouble, e.g., *bebækhshid ke baʔese zæhmæt shodim* ('Sorry for the troubles we've given you'); (vi) when wishing to get other's attention

(attention-getter) e.g., *bebækhshid agha* ('Excuse me sir'); (vii) when wishing to pose a question or to make a request, functioning as disarmer or softener, e.g., *bebækhshid, otaghe-e agha-ye Hushmand kojast?* ('Excuse me, where is the office of Mr *Hushmand*?'); (viii) when a person is making his/her way in a crowd, s/he repeatedly say *bebækhshid*, which can also functions as an attention-getter.

6.7 Exaggerated apology formulae in Persian

Sometimes the object of regret is so big, or intentionally assumed to be so big that using ordinary expressions of apology does not seem enough. One common theme among the exaggerated apology formulae involves an offender who feels unusually guilty (and indebted) and does not know how and with what words to express his/her regret over the severity of the fault or offence; It is as though the offence is so big that the offender is utterly incapable of expressing his/her utmost regret, or that words are unable to fulfil the act of apologizing sufficiently. Some formulaic expressions used for this purpose are *mæn nemidunæm chetori æzætun mæ:zerætkhahi konæm* ('I do not know how I can apologize to you enough'), *mæn nemidunæm ba che zæbuni æzætun mæ:zerætkhahi konæm* ('I do not know with what words I can apologize to you'/'I can find no words to apologize to you') and *kash zæmin dæhæn baz mikærd væ mæn-o mibæl'id* ('I wish the earth had opened its mouth and swallowed me'). Exaggerated apologies can also be preceded or followed by explicit common expressions of apology.

Formula structure:

START (*mæn*) (*vaghe ʔæn*) *nemidunæm ba che* {*zæbuni/juri/tori*} {*æz shoma/æzætun/æzæt*} {*ʔozr/mæ:zeræt*} *khahi konæm* + IFID^n STOP

START IFID^n + (*mæn*) (*vaghe ʔæn*) *nemidunæm ba che* {*zæbuni/juri/tori*} {*æz shoma/æzætun/æzæt*} {*ʔozr/mæ:zeræt*} *khahi konæm* STOP

START IFID^n + *kash zæmin dæhæn baz mikærd væ mæn-o mibæl'id* STOP

Discourse structure rules for exaggerated apologies:

R1.   Exaggerated apology + IFID^n

R2.   IFID^n + Exaggerated apology

6.8 Negative face imposition apology (apology prior to requests and questions)

Requests and questions are inherently face-threatening imposing on the negative face of the hearer (see Brown and Levinson, 1987). Intruding upon others (e.g., asking questions) is usually regarded as an offence or 'an object of regret' (Coulmas, 1981b, p. 76). Likewise, Aijmer (1996) posits that "(...) apologies may also focus on 'upcoming' text and soften a following action which is thought to threaten the hearer's negative face" (p. 98). To reduce the imposition on the hearer, and as remedial work, prior to asking questions or requests people tend to apologize. In addition, in this usage, expressions of apology can function as attention-getters (see Coulmas, 1981b, p. 76). Interestingly, in all examples from soap opera data, the apology formula used prior to making a request or question was *bebækhshid* ('Forgive me'). In the following example from soap opera person A asks a nurse if a physician is back at the hospital:

> A: *bebækhshid khanom, agha-ye doktor næyumædæn?*
>
> ('Sorry Miss, the doctor is not yet back?')

6.9 Positive face imposition apology (apology prior to broaching undesirable things or to express objection)

As social beings, there is a permanent need for us to live in harmony with other members of society, and politeness systems are a response to this crucial end. Sometimes before broaching a topic which the speaker thinks the hearer does not approve of, or if it is regarded as bad news for the hearer, the speaker should apologize in advance. Coulmas (1981b) suggests that "If an interaction is initiated in a way or under conditions that the initiator knows or assumes to be undesired by his [*sic*] interlocutor he [*sic*] will often start off with an apology" (p. 75). This kind of apology is called anticipatory or *ex ante* apology (see Coulmas, 1981b, p. 75). Aijmer (1996) attributes a softening or disarming function to this type of apology (p. 100). In the following example from soap opera, person A goes to B's house to convey some bad news. A first apologizes by drawing an analogy between himself and an owl knowing that in Iranian culture owls are seen as bad omens.

> A: *shærmænde, shodæm joghd-e shum*
>
> ('I feel ashamed, I have become an owl.')
>
> B: *dur æz jun*

('May you not feel ashamed')

Another example involves two burglars who stole a priceless carpet and they wish to express their dissatisfaction over the price their boss paid them for it. Person A tries to express his annoyance and dissatisfaction with an apologetic overtone:

A: *bebækhshid NP, shærmændæm, nemidunæm chi begæm, ma fekr mikærdim un færsh bishtær æz ina miyærze*

('Excuse me NP, I feel ashamed, I do not know what to say, we thought that the carpet was worth more than this')

6.10 Summary

Social and communal ways of living make frictions among people almost inevitable, necessitating redressive or remedial work by the offender. As such, the speech act of apology plays an important role in maintaining relationships amongst members of society. Explicit expressions of apology in Persian include (i) requests for forgiveness, (ii) offers of apology, (iii) expressions of regret and (iv) expressions of shame, embarrassment and guilt. The last is practised in Persian to a degree unmatched in any other societies investigated to date. Like other politeness formulae, the RPF that are used as expressions of apology reflect the socio-cultural and religious values governing Iranian society.

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter we shall look at the definition, function and the properties of the routine of thanking, followed by a brief literature review in 7.2. Explicit and implicit thanks are introduced in 7.3. Five major categories of gratitude expressions, namely, generic gratitude expressions, God-bound gratitude expressions, culture-bound gratitude expressions, apologetic gratitude expressions and negative face gratitude expressions, are covered in 7.4. Reinforcing gratitude expressions emerge in 7.5, followed by strategies to reinforce gratitude expressions in 7.5.1. Patterns of response appear in 7.6. Declining an offer through thanking is covered in 7.7. Sarcastic thanking appears in 7.8. Thanking and sense of indebtedness appears in 7.9, followed by after-meal thanking in 7.10.

7.2 The definition, functions, and properties of thanking

As Grant and Gino (2010) point out, gratitude is ubiquitous in our social life (p. 946). In most societies, expressing gratitude properly has important social value, which attends to the positive face of the benefactor. However, the way that gratitude is expressed is mainly determined by socio-cultural values and conventions governing each society. For example, while Americans favour explicit thanking (see Eisenstein & Bodman, 1993, p. 64), "Chinese seem to be too reserved to express their gratitude openly and explicitly" (Wong, 2010, p. 1243). The practice of gratitude has some benefits, e.g., they help people to cope with stressful situations better, and to strengthen social relationships (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade, 2005, pp. 125-126). When this function is expressed appropriately, it can create feelings of warmth and solidarity among interactants (Eisenstein and Bodman, 1993, p. 64), maintaining and enhancing social cohesion and social bonding in the society. Any failure to express gratitude (or to express it adequately) could have negative social consequences for interlocutors' relationships, leading to irritation, resentment and annoyance (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986, p. 167).

We usually thank people for favours and/or services that we receive, which are labelled as "object(s) of gratitude" (Coulmas, 1981b, p. 74). The type and nature of an object of gratitude

determines how elaborate the expression of gratitude should be. For example, the object of gratitude for an action that leads to saving somebody's life is quite different from that following somebody's action in holding the door open behind him/her for another person to pass through. As Coulmas (1981b) notes, "every sincere verbalization of gratitude is directed to some action (or actions) of a 'benefactor' or to a result of this action" (p. 74). Coulmas (1981b) employs four different criteria, namely, real/potential, material/immaterial, requested/not requested, and indebting/not indebting, to classify objects of gratitude into eight different classes:

I.   potential thanks: thanks before the event (e.g., for a promise, offer, invitation)

II.   real thanks: thanks after the event (e.g., for an invitation (afterwards))

III.   material thanks: thanks for material goods we receive (e.g., gifts, services)

IV.   immaterial thanks: thanks for immaterial goods we receive (e.g., compliments)

V.   requested thanks: thanks for some action resulting from a request by the beneficiary

VI.   not requested thanks: thanks for some action initiated by the benefactor

VII.   indebting thanks: thanks that imply indebtedness

VIII.   not indebting thanks: thanks that do not imply indebtedness (p. 75)

As Coulmas (1981b) points out, the nature of the object of gratitude is not the only factor, determining the choice of a proper thanking formula (p. 75). The nature and quality of the relationship among interlocutors has an equal bearing. That is, "Whether the interaction takes place between close friends, family members, strangers, or employer and employee, etc, in a way affects the assessment of the object of gratitude, and hence the choice of a gratitude expression" (1981b, p. 75). Coulmas (1981b) further writes that although the speech acts of apology (and thanks) may exist across cultures, the pragmatic considerations of their usage are defined culturally (p. 89).

There are certain typological relationships between the speech acts of thanks and apologies, and they do share certain features (Coulmas, 1981b, pp. 69, 72). For Europeans, as Coulmas (1981b) points out, there seems to be no similarity between the speech acts of thanking and apology; however, a closer examination reveals some definite typological similarities (p. 70). In English, French, German, and Greek, the routine response to thanks and apologies are identical. In English, for instance, the responses to apologies (e.g., 'Please excuse me'), and to thanks (e.g., 'Thank you so much') can be an identical routine formula such as 'that's all

right', which have apparently a bifunctional character. However, as Coulmas (1981) further points out, it is the norms and values of each speech community that determine if the speech acts of thanks and apologies can be considered as related (p. 69).

According to Coulmas (1981b), 'sequentiality' is the main feature of the speech acts of thanks and apology (p. 71). He (1981b) refers to speech acts of thanks and apologies as "reactive speech acts" knowing that "They are always preceded (or accompanied) by a certain intervention in the course of events calling for acknowledgment" (p. 71). Coulmas (1981b) considers three positions (or elements) for thanks and apologies, in which acknowledging the object of gratitude or apology occupies the second position (pp. 71-77). The response to an act of thanking or apology occupies the third position termed 'thanking/apology responder' dealt with shortly.

Similar to other cultures, attending to the positive face wants of co-participants, which usually appear as "positive face strokes" (in Smith's terms, 1991), is the major driving force behind the prolific use of gratitude expressions in Iranian culture (I shall deal with this in more detail in chapter nine). Religion also has a bearing: The virtue of thanking and appreciating others has a special place in Islam. In the Koran and scriptures, God has many different names and attributes. One of His most interesting attributes is *æsh-shækur* meaning that God is the most appreciative. Muslims are constantly advised to be grateful to God, whether one is rich or poor, healthy or ill, happy or sad, etc. Being truly grateful to God is a virtue for which believers will be rewarded. In the Koran, in *Surah Ibrahim* (14: 7), God says: "If you are thankful, I will surely increase you in favour (...)". Likewise, the Prophet Muhammad advised believers to be thankful for what others do for them: "Anyone who does not thank people has not thanked Allah", or: "The one who is not thankful to people, cannot be thankful to Allah". This might explain the diversity of forms, as well as the popularity, of the speech act of thanking among Iranians that we shall encounter in the following sections.

7.3 Explicit and implicit (follow-up) thanks

Aijmer (1996) classifies speech acts including the speech act of gratitude with regard to features such as directness/indirectness and the degree of emotionality (expressiveness) (pp. 35-38). According to her, some expressions of gratitude are explicit/direct in the sense that they are used for explicit thanking (e.g., 'thank you'), and some are implicit/indirect in the

sense that they express appreciation of the addressee (e.g., 'that's kind of you', 'that's nice of you'), or the act itself (e.g., 'that's lovely', 'it's appreciated'). Implicit thanks can be understood as thanks, and they usually appear as follow-up or secondary thanks. We usually thank people with explicit thanks as the essential items, and then there might be follow-ups of various sorts. Follow-up thanks are used if the favour is unexpectedly big, if someone has done something unusual to help us, or if there is deep sense of indebtedness. We usually express our gratitude by explicit thanks, and then by the follow-up thank(s) we personalize the act of thanking, signalling our greater sense of gratitude, appreciation, indebtedness and emotion. A typical expression of gratitude in Persian usually appears as 'explicit thanks + (follow-up thanks)'.

7.4 Categories of gratitude expressions in Persian

In what follows, expressions of gratitude in Persian have been classified into five major categories: 'generic gratitude expressions', 'God-bound gratitude expressions', 'culture-bound gratitude expressions', 'apologetic gratitude expressions' and 'negative face imposition acknowledgements'. These gratitude expressions are highly formulaic and conventional, and there are specific socio-pragmatic constraints on their use. All these gratitude expressions have been extracted from the soap opera data and role-plays, and their linguistic forms, variants and conditions of use are elaborated on. Given the limited objectives of this work, there will be no mentioning of the intonational patterns of Persian gratitude expressions.

7.4.1 Category 1: Generic gratitude expressions

The first category, generic gratitude expressions (GGEs)**,** includes the most commonly used expressions of gratitude in Persian. This category includes both explicit and implicit gratitude expressions. The wide variety of expressions of gratitude in Persian demonstrates the importance of this speech act in the social life of people to enhance a sense of solidarity and to strengthen social bonding among people. It also shows that Persian speakers tend to express their gratitude for the favours/services that they receive openly and explicitly.

Generally, as lexicalised stems, GGEs can be modified and expanded. To create a more polite gratitude expression, or to increase the force of gratitude, GGEs can be reinforced by various

devices. GGEs can be preceded by intensifiers; they can be preceded or followed by terms of address to communicate more affection, deference and status; they can combine with other gratitude expressions to make compound thanks; and they can be repeated to make iterative thanks. Moreover, by manipulating suprasegmental features, voice quality, facial expressions and body language, interactants can highlight their emotionality and affect. In what follows, I will try to introduce GGEs as dictionary entries.

Formula Form: *mæmnun*

mæmnun is a direct expression of thanks used for thanking somebody explicitly. It is used to thank for both minor and major favours. It is the commonest gratitude expression in both formal and informal situations. It means 'I am obliged to you (for what you have done for me)', or 'I am grateful (for what you have done for me)', corresponding to 'thank you' and 'thanks' in English. It is widely used to thank for both material and immaterial goods (e.g., gifts, services, compliments, congratulations). There are a number of intensifiers that can precede *mæmnun*, namely, *kheyli* ('very'), *kheyli kheyli* ('very much'), *vaghe ʔæn* ('indeed'), *ye donya* ('very much').

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + ({*mæn/ma*}) ({*æz shoma/æzætun/æzæt*}) + (object of gratitude) + (INT) *mæmnun-æm/-im* STOP

START (VOC) + (INT) + ({*æz shoma/æzætun/æzæt*}) *mæmnun-æm/-im* STOP

START (VOC) + (INT) + *æz* {*mohæbætetun/mohæbæt-e shoma/lotfetun/lotf-e shoma*} *mæmnun-æm/-im* STOP

START (VOC) + (INT) *mæmnun* + that clause (object of gratitude) STOP

Formula Form: *tæshækkor*

tæshækkor is a direct expression of thanks used for thanking somebody explicitly. This expression is from the tri-consonantal root ('*shkr*') in Arabic, meaning gratitude. *tæshækkor* is mainly used in formal situations. Its expanded forms are used in written language. It is mainly used by seniors.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (INT) + *tæshækkor* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + ({*mæn/ma*}) ({*æz shoma/æzætun/æzæt*}) + (object of gratitude) + (INT) *tæshækkor mikon-æm/-im* STOP

START (VOC) + ({*lotfæn/bizæhmæt*}) *æz ghol-e mæn æz* + absent benefactor + *tæshækkor konid* STOP

Formula Form: *motæshækker* (*mochchæker*)

motæshækker is a direct expression of thanks used for thanking somebody explicitly. This expression is from the tri-consonantal root ('*shkr*') in Arabic, meaning gratitude. In spoken language, for ease of pronunciation, /t/ (a plosive sound) and /ʃ/ (a fricative sound) merge into each other appearing as an affricate (/tʃ/). Therefore, in spoken language, *motæshækker* is largely pronounced as *mochchæker*. Its expanded forms are used in written language. It is mainly used by seniors.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + ({*mæn/ma*}) ({*æz shoma/æzætun/æzæt*}) + (object of gratitude) + (INT) *motæshækker-æm/-im* STOP

START (VOC) + (INT) + *æz lotf-e shoma mochchæker-æm/-im* STOP

START (VOC) + *æz lotf-e shoma* + (INT) + *mochchæker-æm/-im* STOP

Formula Form: *mersi*

mersi is a direct expression of thank used for thanking somebody explicitly. This gratitude expression is a direct borrowing from French ('*merci*'). The political, socio-cultural relationship between Iran and France in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries led to large-scale borrowing from French into Persian. *mersi*, as a borrowed gratitude expression, is extensively used by teenagers (boys and girls) and young women. Generally, women tend to use it more than men do, since men consider it somehow 'girlish'. Owing to its simple syllabic structure, compared to common Persian gratitude expressions that are mostly polysyllabic, and the fact that women (mothers) favour it more, children largely employ it for thanking others. Children, thus, acquire and use this formula before other gratitude formulae. Unlike native gratitude expressions, common intensifiers cannot intensify it, and it cannot be expanded into a complete sentence. However, it can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show more love and affection or deference; it can combine with other native gratitude expressions to make compound thanks; and it can be repeated to make iterative thanks.

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Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *mersi* (*æz lotfetun*) + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *sepasgozar*

sepasgozar is a direct expression of gratitude used for thanking somebody explicitly. It means 'I am a thanks-leaver', corresponding to '(I) thank you' in English. As a formal form, it is mainly used in written language and the media. It is regarded as a pure and native Persian gratitude expression and hence is favoured by purists. In written language as well as media, *sepasgozar* can also appear as *sepas* ('thank', 'gratitude'), *ba sepas* ('With thanks'), *ba sepas-e færavan* ('With many thanks') or *ba sepas-e færavan æz shoma* ('With many thanks from you'). It is mainly used by seniors. It can be preceded or followed by terms of address to add and show more affection, deference or status.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + ({*mæn/ma*}) ({*æz shoma/æzætun/æzæt*}) + (stating reason) + (INT) + *sepasgozar-æm/-im* STOP

START (*ba*) *sepas* + (INT) + (*æz shoma*) STOP

Formula form: *dæst-e shoma dærd nækone*

dæst-e shoma dærd nækone is an indirect expression of thanks used for thanking somebody implicitly. It means 'may your hand not ache', which is widely used by seniors in both formal and informal situations. When we are being handed something (e.g., a cup of tea), we need to thank the person with proper gratitude expressions. This type of thanks is called thanks for material goods, seeing that a material is handed to somebody by hand(s) (see Coulmas, 1981b, p. 74). As regards the physical role of the benefactor's hand in offering things, upon expressing the due gratitude, the beneficiary wishes that the benefactor's hand did not 'ache' (or more accurately 'be troubled'). In Persian, there are a number of expressions and sayings that demonstrate the importance of the hand in performing things. In other words, 'hand' can stand for 'person' or 'self', appearing as the real agent (and not merely an instrument). As for this gratitude expression, two points can be raised: in this formula and a few others, 'hand', as an agent, stands for 'person' or 'self'. Therefore, when it is wished that the benefactor's hand would not ache (be troubled), actually the benefactor himself/herself is in mind. Secondly, as mentioned earlier, 'trouble-sensitivity' is a prominent feature of the politeness system in Persian, based on which, upon receiving favours or services, the beneficiary tends

to acknowledge the troubles that the benefactor has gone through rather than the pleasing aspects of receiving the favours.

This gratitude expression is not usually used for non-material things. For example, in response to good wishes, compliments, or congratulations, this formula is not usually used. Its grammatical structure is fixed and cannot be expanded. However, it can be intensified with specific premodifiers such as *vaghe?æn* ('indeed') or *jedæn* ('indeed'); it can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show deference and status and to add more affection; and it can combine with other gratitude expressions to create compound thanks. The ritual response to *dæst-e shoma dærd nækone* is another conventional fixed formula with the same rhyme: *sær-e shoma dærd nækone* ('May your head not ache').

In recent decades, some other colloquial gratitude expressions have been coined by analogy, with 'hand' (= self) playing a central role in them. These formulae are used in informal situations, and young male adults and the working classes tend to use them extensively. Among the young, their usage implies a sense of belonging, solidarity and cool behaviour, strengthening group bonding. Women do not use them, unless they intend sarcasm. These formulae express the appreciation of the addressee, and/or the act itself. They cannot be expanded or intensified by intensifiers but they can be preceded or followed by terms of address:

(i) *dæstet bibæla* means 'May your hand (= you) not be afflicted with misfortune'.

(ii) *dæstet doros* means 'May your hand (= you) be right (good)'.

(iii) *dæstet tæla* means 'May your hand (= you) be gold'.

(iv) *ghorbun-e dæstet* means 'May I be sacrificed for your hand (= you), or 'may I be sacrificed in place of your hand (you)'.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (INT) + {*dæst-e shoma*/*dæstetun*/*dæstet*} *dærd nækone* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *dæstet* {*bibæla*/*doros*/*tæla*} + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *ghorbun-e* {*dæstet*/*dæssetun*} (*beræm*) + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *ghorbunet*

This implicit gratitude expression expresses the appreciation of the addressee. It means 'May I be sacrificed in your place', 'May I be sacrificed for you', 'I would be your sacrifice', or simply 'Your sacrifice'. *ghorbun-e kesi ræftæn* ('To be sacrificed or ransomed for somebody') conveys utmost love, attachment and dedication to somebody. For speakers of other languages, it might seem quite strange that when an Iranian is handed something (e.g., a cup of tea), upon expressing gratitude, the beneficiary wishes to be sacrificed for the benefactor. Considering this hypothetical example, the intensity of gratitude is not in proportionate to the 'object of gratitude' (benefaction), which in many languages simply requires mild thanking. In fact, exaggerating what others do for us (and belittling what we do for others) is a prominent feature of polite behaviour among Iranians. It is part of a more pervasive strategy in the Persian politeness system known as 'other-elevating and self-denigrating'. Strengthening vital social ties as well as boosting solidarity among members of society might be the reason behind the use of this gratitude formula, which is used only by seniors. It is mostly used among intimates and close friends in informal situations. Likewise, *fædat beshæm* has the same meaning and function.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + {*ghorbunet/ghorbun-e shoma*} + (*beræm*) STOP

START *fædat* ({*beshæm/shæm*}) + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *lotf kærdin*

This gratitude expression is implicit, expressing appreciation of the addressee (benefactor). It means 'you have made a great kindness', corresponding to 'that was nice of you' in English. It is taken as a sort of compliment. It is formal and is mainly used by seniors. Although it can be used alone, it usually combines with other common gratitude expressions, making compound thanks. When combined with other gratitude expressions, it usually has a secondary or follow-up function, reinforcing the act of thanking. Implicit thanks usually have a secondary or follow-up function compared to explicit thanks. Therefore, they are often preceded or followed by explicit GGEs. *mohæbbæt kærdin* ('You have made a great tenderness'), corresponding to 'that was kind of you' in English, has the same function. *lotf darin* is another variant with the same meaning and function.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (*shoma*) + (INT) + {*lotf/mohæbbæt*} {*kærdin/færmudin*} + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (INT) + {*lotf/mohæbbæt*} {*kærdin/færmudin*} + (that clause) STOP

START (VOC) + (*shoma*) + (INT) + *be* {*mæn/ma*} {*lotf/mohæbbæt*} {*dærdin/kærdin*} + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *zende bashi*

This gratitude expression is implicit, expressing the appreciation of the addressee. It is mainly used by seniors to mean 'may you live long' and is used among family members and friends in informal situations. It cannot be expanded or intensified with intensifiers. However, it can combine with other gratitude expressions to make compound thanks. It can be preceded or followed by terms of address to show more affection, deference or status.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *zende bash-i/-in* + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *dæmet gærm*

This gratitude expression is implicit, expressing appreciation of the addressee. It means 'let your breath be warm (i.e., live long)' being originally a compliment. It belongs to colloquial speech and hence it is only used in informal situations and among close friends and peers. Teenagers and young male adults tend to use it extensively. Among the young, its usage signals solidarity and group membership. Women do not usually use it, especially if there are some male bystanders around. It cannot be expanded; however, it can combine with other informal and colloquial gratitude expressions to make compound thanks. It can also be used to encourage and congratulate others on their achievements. In this usage, it means 'excellent', 'well done', 'you have done a great job' or 'you are wonderful'.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *dæmet gærm* + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *chakeræm*

This gratitude expression is implicit, expressing appreciation of the addressee. It means 'I am (your) obedient servant'. It is colloquial, used only in informal situations and among circles of close friends and peers. Its usage enhances the sense of belonging and group membership. *chakeræm* has some variants with the same function: *chakeretæm* ('I am your obedient servant'), *chakerim* ('we (I) are (your) obedient servant'), *chakeretim* ('we (I) are your obedient servant'). Another colloquial expression with almost the same meaning and function is *nowkæretæm* ('I am your servant'). They are not usually used by women.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + {*chakeræm/chakeretæm/chakeretim/chakerim*} + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + {*nowkæretæm/nowkæretim*} + (VOC) STOP

Formula form: *mokhlesæm*

This gratitude expression is implicit, expressing appreciation of the addressee. It means 'I am your devoted friend'. It is colloquial and only used in informal situations and among circles of close friends and peers. Its usage enhances the sense of belonging and in-groupness. *mokhlesæm* has some variants with the same function, namely, *mokhlesim*, *mokhlesetæm* and *mokhlesetim*.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + {*mokhlesæm/mokhlesetæm/mokhlesetim/mokhlesim*} + (VOC) STOP

7.4.2 Category 2: God-bound or religious gratitude expressions

A good number of gratitude expressions in Persian are benedictory in nature. That is, they are short invocations for God's blessing, help and support towards one's interlocutor (or 'benefactor' in Coulmas' terms, 1981b). Throughout its long history, Iran, as a nation state, has had an official religion (Zoroastrianism and then Islam). Naturally, language as the mirror of society clearly reflects the common religious beliefs popular among people. As a result, in Persian, a number of conventional formulaic expressions are religiously loaded, making specific reference to *khoda* or *Allah* ('God'). As mentioned earlier, we usually thank people for the favours and/or services that we receive, referred to as "object(s) of gratitude" (or 'benefaction' in Aijmer's terms, 1996). The underlying reason for employing the God-bound gratitude expressions seems to be the pervasive strategy of 'self-lowering and other-elevating', or more specifically the strategy of 'exaggerating the favours that one receives (and belittling the favours that one provides)'. As shown earlier, many of the RPF in Persian are in line with this strategy, based on which in expressing thanks and gratitude towards the 'benefactor', the 'beneficiary' (in Coulmas' terms, 1981b) suggests that the object of gratitude or benefaction is so big that as a human being (and therefore weak), s/he is unable to thank the benefactor enough. It is only God who as the source of unlimited power and mercy (being magnificent and merciful) can reward and/or repay the benefactor, and release the beneficiary from the huge burden of indebtedness (debt-sensitivity). We shall later see how small favours that in other cultures might be taken for granted can turn the beneficiary

into a big debtor in Iranian culture. God-bound gratitude expressions are usually reserved for thanking for major favours and services. They are used by seniors to thank younger people for major favours. Some of the God-bound gratitude expressions are now regarded as archaic and outdated. They are never used by young people and children. Senior women seem to employ them more than men. Although God-bound or religious gratitude expressions can be employed by themselves, they are often accompanied by GGEs to intensify the act of thanking. The common theme among God-bound gratitude formulae in Persian are: 'Let God repay you (for your kindness)', 'for your generosity', 'May God bless you', 'May God increase your greatness', 'May God assign you as my brother', 'May you come to a good end' or 'May you make a good end', 'May you be assisted by God', 'May God give you a long life', 'By God's will, may the shadow of your protection over us not cease' and 'May God give you abundance'.

In addition, as an old custom in the bazaar, shopkeeper and customer thank each other as soon as a deal is done. It usually does not matter who thanks the other first, but upon receiving money or/and after counting the money, the shopkeeper thanks the customer by a conventional formula such as *khoda bærekæt (bede)* ('May God give you abundance') and in response the customer usually thanks him/her back with GGEs.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *khoda {ʔævæzetun/ʔævæzet} bede* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *khoda æjr-etun/-et} bede* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *khoda {kheyretun/kheyret} bede* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *kheyr bebini* ({*elahi/inshallah*}) + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *khoda æz {bozorgi/bæradæri} kæmetun nækone* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *ʔaghebæt bekheyr {shi/beshi}* ({*elahi/inshallah*}) + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *mo'æyæd bashin* (*inshallah*) + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *khoda ʔomr-etun/-et bede* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *khoda {sayætun/sayæt} ro æz sær-e ma kæm nækone* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *khoda bærekæt* (*bede*) + (VOC) STOP

7.4.3 Category 3: Culture-bound gratitude expressions

In Persian, there are some gratitude expressions loaded with cultural and social meanings. Cultural values such as respect for age and elders, the importance of marriage in the social life of young people, and the joys and blessings of youth are some of the common themes, functioning as the basis for a number of gratitude expressions termed culture-bound gratitude expressions. Similar to God-bound gratitude expressions, culture-bound gratitude expressions in Persian are benedictory in nature, and, hence, they are usually used as indirect or follow-up thanks.

Senior people in expressing their gratitude and thanks to young people might employ a culturally loaded formula such as *pir beshi elahi*. It means 'You may grow to old age by God's mercy', but, as for its idiomatic sense, it has the same function as generic gratitude expressions simply meaning 'thank you'. In past times when there were many hazards in front of young people, wishing the young to grow to an old age was regarded as an appropriate and good wish or benediction, and hence a good way to thank people for their favours and services. The other plausible explanation might be that old people in Iranian culture as well as many other Eastern cultures (e.g., Chinese) have a special status within family and society, enjoying utmost respect and esteem. Culturally, old age is equated with wisdom; it is publically held that wisdom resides among the elderly, or that the words of elders are words of wisdom. Therefore, the older you are, the higher your status in the hierarchy of power in Iranian society. Moreover, age as a social factor usually overrides other social factors such as occupation, wealth, etc. *pir beshi elahi* is only used by elders towards young people in intimate situations, and it is usually employed for non-major favours and services in informal situations.

The second culture-bound gratitude formula, *inshallah ʔærusit*, is also used by seniors for unmarried young girls and boys in intimate situations. It means 'I wish you to get married', 'I wish to see you married', or 'I wish to see you being married'. In a culture where strict religious sex segregation rules are observed (especially in the past), young boys and girls have little opportunity to mix with each other before marriage. Therefore, marriage is of great importance in their social life, placing young people within the context of society. Tertiary education, a good job and a successful marriage are the three great wishes for young people in Iranian society. Hence, it is not surprising that one way to thank young people is a wish for

their marriage and the wish to offer a hand in their wedding ceremony. This always brings a smile to the face of the young people ('benefactor'), accompanied by a sense of shame, especially if some strangers are around. This formula has two more realizations such as 'I wish to assist in your wedding' (knowing that weddings require the help and support of many people to come to fruition), and 'I wish to dance at your wedding', used for fun.

Praising old age and the elderly does not stop people from admiring the beauties and merits of youth. Old people who have almost lost their ability to enjoy outdoor activities always complain about old age and dearly recall the sweet days of youth. Therefore, it is not surprising to find some gratitude expressions wishing young people to enjoy the blessings of their youth. The formula *kheyr æz jævunit bebini (elahi)* ('I wish to God that you may enjoy the blessings of your youth') is only employed by seniors to thank young people for casual or major favours. Culture-bound gratitude expressions are less direct, expressing appreciation of the addressee. They are usually used with GGEs as follow-up thanks.
Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *pir* {*beshi/shi*} ({*elahi/inshallah*}) + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *inshallah ʔærusit* ({*khedmæt konæm/beræghsæm/ro bebinæm*}) STOP

START (VOC) + *ʔærusit inshallah* STOP

START (VOC) + ({*elahi/inshallah*}) *kheyr æz jævunit bebini* ({*elahi/inshallah*}) + (VOC) STOP

7.4.4 Category 4: Apologetic gratitude expressions

In some cultures, apologizing seems to be associated with expressing gratitude. In Japanese (see Coulmas, 1981b) and Persian, the beneficiary can apologise to the benefactor to express his/her sincere gratitude. That is, apology expressions can function as thanking expressions too. Coulmas (1981b) refers to this special kind of thanking as "thanks with an apologetic undertone", or simply 'apologetic gratitude expressions' as it is called in this study (pp. 73, 82). Coulmas (1981) notes, in everyday communications among the Japanese, apology expressions can replace a number of (if not all) gratitude expressions (p. 84). Coulmas (1981b) considers this similarity in function between gratitude and apology speech acts "(...) as a significant reflection of social values and attitudes prevailing in Japanese culture" (p. 87). Debt-sensitivity and mutual responsibilities towards one another are the building blocks of Japanese culture and society (Coulmas, 1981b). In this hierarchical society, as Coulmas

(1981b) points out, even the smallest personal favour can make the receiver a debtor (p. 88). Owing personal favour produces deep discomfort in the Japanese and obliges them to re-pay the favour as soon as possible. However, in this debt-sensitive culture, "[n]ot every favour can be repaid, and if circumstances do not allow proper repayment, the Japanese tend to apologize" (Coulmas, 1981b, p. 88). The second reason justifying the use of apologetic gratitude expressions is the Japanese perception of the nature of favours and services (Coulmas, 1981b). Generally, the Japanese, as the recipients of favours of any kind, tend to focus on the trouble that the benefactor has gone through to provide a favour rather than the pleasing aspects to the beneficiary (Coulmas, 1981b, p. 83). Therefore, to express their gratitude, they feel obliged to apologize for the received favour rather than to thank explicitly. The third explanation for the abundance of apologetic gratitude expressions also takes its roots from the ethics of indebtedness. The Japanese tend to equate a sense of gratitude with a sense of guilt for which one should naturally apologize (Coulmas, 1981b, p. 89). In addition, justifying the use of apologetic gratitude expressions, Lebra (1976) argues, "When a Japanese wants to express sincere gratitude, he feels urged to say 'I am sorry', since 'thank you' does not sound sincere enough" (p. 92).

In like manner, in Persian, apology expressions can replace and function as gratitude expressions. For example, upon being offered something (e.g., a cup of tea), or receiving a favour or service, the beneficiary might express his/her gratitude with a generic apology formula such as *shærmænde* ('I feel ashamed'/'I am embarrassed') corresponding to 'sorry' in English, or *bebækhshid* ('excuse me'/'I'm sorry'). In trying to justify the presence of the apologetic gratitude expressions in Iranian language and culture, one can refer to the same socio-cultural values and norms observed in Japanese society. In daily interactions, Iranian people strongly adhere to the notion of indebtedness (debt-sensitivity). Adhering to the strategy of self-lowering and other-elevating as the basis of the politeness system in Persian, interactants tend to exaggerate the favour that one receives to show s/he has good manners. As a result, it is not surprising that a slight favour can instantly turn the beneficiary into a big debtor. The debt (burden) should be paid back in appropriate ways as soon as possible (debt-sensitivity), and hence, apologizing for a favour on the spot seems to be an instantaneous way to make one's shoulders free from the burden of debt, as though gratitude expressions do not sound heartfelt and sincere enough. The other reason justifying the use of apologetic gratitude expressions in Persian is the way that Iranians approach the notion of favour (once again similar to Japanese culture). A favour received from others can have two aspects (see

Coulmas, 1981b): the trouble that the benefactor has undergone to provide the favour/service, and the pleasing aspect for the beneficiary (receiver of favour) (p. 83). In Iranian culture, the beneficiary tends to ignore the pleasing part of a favour, and to exclusively focus on the trouble that one has caused for the benefactor (imposing upon his/her negative face), which by itself can produce a sense of guilt in the beneficiary. As such, the sense of gratitude equates to the sense of guilt for which the beneficiary should apologise to the benefactor. Trouble-sensitivity is hence a crucial underlying basis in the use of some RPF in Persian. As soap opera data show, in Persian, apologetic gratitude expressions can be employed by themselves to express deep gratitude. However, they might combine with other gratitude expressions, as compound thanks, to reinforce the force of gratitude. As an example from soap opera data, person A (a woman) offers person B, a guest, a cup of tea. B expresses his gratitude by employing a GGE accompanied with an apologetic gratitude expression as follows:

01   A: *befærma'id*

        ('Would you like to try a cup of tea?')

02   B: *dæst-e shoma dærd nækone*; *ba'ese shærmændegiye*

        ('May your hand not ache'; 'it is a cause of embarrassment (for me)')

        Thanks; I am sorry

03   A: *ekhtiyar darin*

        ('You have the authority; please do not say this')

        Please do not mention it

People usually do not employ apologetic gratitude expressions with family members (parents, siblings and children) or intimate friends or peers. They are usually reserved for non-intimates and strangers, as they appear to be more formal.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + {*shærmænde*/*shærmændæm*} + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (INT) + ({*ma/mæn*} *ro*) + (INT) + *shærmænde* (*lotf-e khodetoon*) *kærd-i/-in* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *chera* ({*ma/mæn*} *ro*) (*inghædr*) *shærmænde kærd-i/-in* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *shoma hæmishe* ({*ma/mæn*} *ro*) *shærmænde mikon-i/-in* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*be khoda*) *baʔes-e shærmændegi-ye* (*be khoda*) + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + {*khejalætæm*/*khejalat*} *dadin* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*hesabi*) *khejalætzædæm kærd-i/-in* + (VOC) STOP

START (*to ro khoda*) *ma ro* (*inghædr*) *shærmænde nækonin* (*to ro khoda*) STOP

START (VOC) + *biændaze {ma/mæn} ro shærmænde-ye lotf-e khodetun kærdin* + (VOC) STOP

7.4.5 Category 5: negative face imposition acknowledgements

Expressing gratitude generally involves face wants (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1993, p. 74). As mentioned earlier, trouble-sensitivity is an important feature of Iranian culture, based on which people are quite conscious about the trouble (or 'the impositions on negative face' in Brown and Levinson's terms, 1987) that they impose upon others. Actually, the concept of 'trouble' is kind of shorthand for imposition on negative face. When we request others to do us a favour, we are, then, under an obligation to express our gratitude with proper thanking formulae. However, there are times in which someone has gone through a lot of trouble and inconvenience for us without our asking them. Coulmas (1981) refers to this as "thanks for some action initiated by the benefactor" (p. 74). In this case, we are under a greater sense of obligation than if we had asked for the favour. If they (benefactors) simply performed the favour of their own volition, then they imposed on their own negative face or free space for us even without our asking them. Therefore, there is a greater obligation for us to express our appreciation and gratitude. Schauer and Adolphs (2006) propose six categories for expressing gratitude in English, where the fifth category takes note of negative face imposition acknowledgements (p. 129). Based on a discourse completion task, participants had been asked to thank a friend who had brought them a birthday present. 'Thank you, but you should not have', 'You did not have to do that, thanks' and 'Wow, you should not have' were the responses acknowledging negative face imposition. As these examples show, the expressions of gratitude either precede or follow the statement of the benefactor's non-existent obligation.

In Persian, we can express our gratitude for all sorts of big and small favours that we have asked for by common gratitude expressions. However, for the benefits for which we have not directly asked, another category of gratitude expressions can be used, namely 'negative face imposition acknowledgements'. These expressions of gratitude directly address the benefactor's negative face. They signal to the benefactor 'I appreciate (acknowledge) that you have imposed on your own negative face in doing what you have done for me'. The common themes for these formulae are: 'You have really troubled yourself', 'I really did not expect you to trouble yourself', 'Why do/did you trouble yourself', 'You need not have

bothered', 'You have troubled yourself a lot'. In response to these formulae, the benefactor denies going through any trouble or inconvenience, and asks (implores) the beneficiary not to talk about it anymore. Based on soap opera data, in two clips the negative face imposition acknowledgements have been used alone in acknowledging (thanking) what the benefactor has done for the beneficiary, and in the remainder (four clips) the negative face imposition acknowledgements have been used with generic gratitude expressions as compound thanks.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (INT) + (*be*) *zæhmæt oftad-i/-in* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (INT) + *oftad-i/-in* ({*be/tu*}) *zæhmæt* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *chera zæhmæt mikesh-i/-in* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *chera be zæhmæt oftad-i/-in*? + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *razi be* {*zæhmætetun/zæhmætet/zæhmæt-e shoma*} *næbud-æm/-im* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*kheyli*) *zæhmæt keshidin* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *zæhmæt nækeshin to ro khoda* + (VOC) STOP

Table 32: Negative face imposition acknowledgement

	Formula form	Literal translation	Idiomatic sense
1	*chera zæhmæt mikeshin NP?*	Why do you trouble yourself?	Thank you, you should not have You needn't have bothered
2	*be zæhmæt oftadin*	You troubled yourself	Thank you, you should not have
3	*razi be zæhmætet næbudæm*	I did not expect you to trouble yourself	Thank you, you should not have
4	*(kheyli) zæhmæt keshidin*	You troubled yourself a lot	Thank you, you should not have
5	*zæhmæt nækeshin to ro khoda*	I swear you to God not trouble yourself	NEE

7.5 Reinforcing gratitude expressions

Thanking (and apology) are expressive speech acts conveying the "(…) speaker's psychological state towards a state of affairs or a person" (Aijmer, 1996, p. 34). Thanking is not a simple act, and depending on the type and size of the favour (e.g., minor favours vs. major favours), the level of required gratitude can change (Aijmer, 1996, p. 67). Moreover, in determining the degree of gratitude, the nature of the interpersonal relationship between participants, the context of the situation and the presence of an audience can have a bearing (see Coulmas, 1981b, p. 75). At times, there is no need to use any expression of gratitude; in other cases, a short phatic expression of gratitude might seem enough. Elaborated or lengthy

expressions of gratitude, however, might be needed, if one feels that the received benefit has been especially helpful (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986, p. 169). Tesser, Gatewood and Driver (1968) suggest the degree to which a beneficiary feels grateful towards a benefactor (sense of gratitude) depends on some determinants, namely, if the recipients perceive the benefit as (i) given sincerely (rather than with ulterior motives), (ii) costly to the benefactor to provide, and (iii) valuable to them (p. 233). Given how big or significant the object of gratitude seems to the beneficiary, there are some ways to increase the illocutionary force of an expression of gratitude. Holmes (1984) considers expressions of gratitude as 'a positively affective speech act' that can be boosted (p. 346). Languages provide speakers with different devices such as lexical and prosodic devices to intensify or boost the illocutionary force of gratitude expressions (see Aijmer, 1996, p. 35).

7.5.1 Strategies to reinforce gratitude expressions in Persian

In Persian, there are a number of different ways to increase the intensity of the expressions of gratitude. The first strategy, as a lexical device, involves placing intensifiers or 'intensifying adverbs' (in Aijmer's terms, 1996) in front of gratitude expressions. Intensification, as Aijmer (1996) refers to in English and Swedish, is the most common device to create more polite gratitude expressions (p. 46). Likewise, in Persian intensifiers are widely used to reinforce gratitude expressions. For example, *kheyli* ('very much') is the most popular and common intensifier in Persian. *vagheʔæn* ('indeed'), *hesabi* ('very much'), *jeddæn* ('indeed'), *besyar* ('very many'), *bi ændaze* ('very much'), *ye donya* ('very much') and *færavan* ('very many') have more or less the same function as *kheyli*, but they are much less common and collocate with particular gratitude expressions. In Persian, intensifiers, as premodifiers, are used only with GGEs. There are many idiosyncrasies governing the collocation of intensifiers with GGEs. Not all GGEs can be used with intensifiers; and not a single intensifier can be used with all GGEs. In the following, we will see the ways that gratitude expressions collocate with specific intensifiers:

(i) {*kheyli/kheyli kheyli/vagheʔæn/ye dona*} + *mæmnun*

(ii) {*kheyli/kheyli kheyli*} + *mochchæker*

(iii) {*kheyli/hesabi*} + (*be*) *zæhmæt oftadin*

(iv) {*kheyli kheyli/kheyli/bi ændaze*} + *sepasgozaræm*

(v) *{kheyli/vaghe ʔæn/jedæn/bi ændaze} + {lotf/mohæbbæt} kærdin*

An example below from the soap opera data shows that intensifiers often precede gratitude expressions. While a customer, A, hands some money to a barber, B, he thanks the barber with two successive GGEs. In response, the barber replies with a formulaic expression, saying that the service done is not worthy of the customer and he can be his guest (and hence not to pay). In response, once again the customer thanks the barber with a combination of three gratitude expressions each of which is preceded and intensified by an intensifier.

01   A: *kheyli mæmnun, dæst-e shoma dærd nækone*

('Many thanks, may your hand not ache')

02   B: *agha ghabel nædare, mehmun-e mæn bashin*

('It's not worthy of you, be my guest')

03   A: *kheyli mæmnun, jedæn lotf færmudin, kheyli motæshækker*

('Thank you very much, you've made a great kindness, thank you very much')

To increase the level of intensification, intensifiers themselves can further be intensified. In Persian, intensifiers can be intensified in two different ways: Some of them can be reiterated two times ('iterative intensifiers'). For example, *kheyli* can be repeated twice: *kheyli kheyli* ('so so much'). The other intensifiers, however, cannot be iterated. Secondly, *kheyli*, *kheyli kheyli* as well as other intensifiers can be further intensified by lengthening the vowel(s) within them. That is, *kheyli* with a prolonged vowel has more emotional impact than its normal counterpart. Through phonetic stretching, people can express their inner feelings, adding affect or emotional weight to their sense of gratitude. In other words, in expressing our thanks, we signal to our benefactor that we are affectively or emotionally involved, signalling a deeper sense of gratitude. Phonetic stretching also applies for gratitude expressions themselves. For example, in a gratitude expression such as *mæmnun* ('thank you'), by stretching the vowel in the second syllable, one can add affection and emotional impact in acknowledgment of a benefit/favour, revealing how strongly one feels about the act of thanking.

The second strategy for intensifying gratitude expressions is to combine two or more than two different gratitude expressions together as x + y + z where x, y and z stand for different gratitude expressions. Therefore, in Persian, another common way to deeply thank people is

to employ more than one gratitude expression, with one immediately following another. This is termed 'compound thanks'. Although compound thanks are usually formed of two different gratitude expressions (e.g., x + y), two identical gratitude expressions might also immediately follow each other as x + x. This is called repetition or 'reiterative thanks'. Generally, some emotional baggage comes with repetition: It seems that the first occurrence is conventional, and the second occurrence is emphatic, adding to the 'emotional force' rather than 'speech act force'. That is, the speech act is done the first time, but we add emotional weight when we repeat it the second time. Based on Persian soap opera data, reiterative thanks (x + x) are not popular. However, the order x + y + x is more acceptable. Aijmer (1996) takes 'lengths of expressions' as an important factor contributing to the politeness level of speech acts (p. 51). Likewise, as Eisenstein and Bodman (1993) write, greater emotion can often provoke longer speech act sets (p. 67). As regards the speech act of thanking in Persian soap opera data, the longest combination found was three successive gratitude expressions, where each gratitude expression was also premodified with an intensifier.

The third strategy for intensifying gratitude expressions is to use them with terms of address. Persian has a complex and elaborate address system through which interactants can express the most delicate feelings towards one another. Terms of address (e.g., honorific titles, occupational titles, religious titles, endearment terms and their combinations) can precede or follow gratitude expressions to increase their intensity by showing status, deference and by adding more affection (see also Aijmer, 1996, p. 46). For example, owing to the presence of an endearment term (*æzizæm* 'my dear') in *kheyli mæmnun æzizæm* ('Thank you very much my dear'), the expression has more affect and emotion (and hence it is more polite) than *kheyli mæmnun* ('thank you very much') alone.

The fourth strategy for reinforcing gratitude expressions is to expand them into complete sentences. According to Aijmer (1996), a gratitude expression such as 'thank you' in English is the result of ellipsis, which can be developed into a sentence again when intensification is desired (pp. 44-5). For example, Aijmer (1996) proposes the following structures for 'thank you' as an elliptical gratitude expression in English:
(i) ({I/we}) thank you (intensifier) (vocative) (for {NP/V-ing})
(ii) thank you (intensifier) (vocative) (for{NP/V-ing}) (pp. 44-5)

Similarly, in Persian, a stem such as *mæmnun* can be expanded into a sentence from which it has been derived due to ellipsis.

The last strategy for intensifying gratitude expressions is neither to precede them with intensifiers nor to combine different thanking formulae together. It is the implementation of the exaggerated thanks. Sometimes the object of gratitude is so big (major favours), or it is assumed to be so big, that expressing gratitude with common gratitude expressions does not seem adequate. Eisenstein and Bodman (1986) refer to exaggeration in expressing gratitude as a means to emphasize the depth of gratitude conveying deeply felt emotions (p. 172). Exaggerating the favours and services that others provide (and simultaneously belittling the favours and services that one gives) is part of a more general strategy in the Persian politeness system called 'self-lowering and other-elevating'. In Iranian culture, exaggerating the services and favours received from a benefactor is a way to attend to the positive face of the benefactor and hence to increase the politeness level and to strengthen the vital sense of solidarity and social bonding among interactants. One common theme among 'exaggerated gratitude expressions' is that the beneficiary feels unusually grateful and does not know how and with what words to express his/her gratitude regarding the size of favour; as if the benefit is so big that the beneficiary is unable to express his/her appreciation, or even words are unable to fulfil the act of thanking sufficiently. Two common formulae used for this purpose are *mæn nemidunæm chetori æz shoma tæshækkor konæm* ('I do not know how I can thank you enough'); *mæn nemidunæm ba che zæbuni æz shoma tæshækkor konæm* ('I do not know with what words I can thank you' or 'I find myself without words to express my gratitude'), meaning that even language or words are incapable of fulfilling the necessary thanking. These expressions are usually preceded or followed by direct expression of thanking. The discourse structure rule for exaggerated or compensatory thanks is:

Exaggerated thanks ---> (direct expression of thanking)^n + exaggerated thanks (expressing an inability to articulate deep feelings) + (direct expression of thanking)^n

Formula structure:
START (VOC) + *mæn* (*vagheʔæn*) *nemidunæm* {*ba che zæbuni/che juri/che tori*} {*æz shoma/æzætun/æzæt*} *tæshækkor konæm* + (VOC) STOP

7.6 Responders to gratitude expressions

For Coulmas (1981b) the most important and strategic function of the speech act of thanking is to balance politeness relations between interlocutors (p. 81). Recalling his (1981b) three-place pattern for an act of thanking, let us assume a scenario in which benefactor (B) has done an act that recipient (R) believes benefits him/her (the first element of the pattern) (p. 71). R feels grateful or appreciative for B, and, hence, feels obliged to express his/her gratitude to B (the second element of the pattern). This produces an imbalance between R and B. By employing appropriate routine responders (the third element of the pattern), B tries to restore this imbalance and to make R free from the debt of gratitude (see Searle, 1969, p. 67; Coulmas, 1981b, p. 77; Aijmer, 1996, p. 38).

The act of thanking is mutually developed and usually has continuation; that is, a gratitude expression can be followed by responders. Eisenstein and Bodman (1993) regard the speech act of thanking as 'interactive', involving a complex series of interactions that develop mutually (p. 74). They (1993) further note, "Both the giver and the thanker collaborate in the development of a successful thanking episode" (p. 74). According to Watts (2003), responders are employed to play down the sense of debt or obligation expressed by the first speaker (p. 188). Languages seem to be quite different in providing responses for the act of thanking. For example, as Aijmer (1996) points out, responding to an act of thanking in some languages is less frequent (e.g., English) than others (e.g., Swedish, Russian, German) (p. 40). Using the London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English, Aijmer (1996) lists a number of responders in British English, namely, 'that's ok' (minimizing the favour), 'great pleasure' (expressing pleasure) and 'you're welcome' (expressing appreciation of the addressee) (p. 40). Likewise, using the International Corpus of English in Hong Kong (ICE-HK), Wong (2010) claims that in Hong Kong English responses to expressions of gratitude are quite infrequent (only 18 out of 233 expressions of gratitude received responses) (pp. 1253-5). Besides the low frequency of thanking responders, the number of expressions that can be used as responders is also quite limited (e.g., 'all right', 'okay', 'yeah'). However, Hong Kong English should not be taken as representative of English as spoken, say, in England.

In Persian, the response to an act of thanking is quite frequent, and a number of different 'responders' are employed. In what follows, I will try to introduce the strategies employed in Persian, adopted from Coulmas (1981b, p. 77) and Aijmer (1996, pp. 39-40). These strategies are tightly bound to the socio-cultural values governing Iranian society. The strategies used

here are part of a common strategy used in the Persian politeness system named 'exaggerating favours received from others and belittling favours given to others'. Moreover, these strategies reflect the importance of mutual social obligations and social cohesion in Iranian society.

The first strategy in responding to thanks is to recognize and acknowledge the object of gratitude, and to relieve the beneficiary from his/her burden by showing the benefactor's happiness in doing the favour. It is very unusual (impolite) for a beneficiary not to thank their benefactor with an appropriate gratitude expression, and it is much more unusual if the benefactor does not recognize the object of gratitude, at least with facial expressions (e.g., smiling) or body language (e.g., putting the right hand palm on chest, which is done especially by men). Moreover, in providing a response for the act of thanking, the size of the favour, the interpersonal relationship, and the context of the situation all have a bearing. *khahesh mikonæm* is the commonest responder to acknowledge all sorts of gratitude in nearly every context. It means 'I beg you', but it corresponds to English responders such as 'you're welcome', 'my pleasure', 'great pleasure', 'that's ok', and 'that's all right'. For example, in English usage, 'you're welcome' communicates the idea that a favour/service that was done and thanked for was done with pleasure (see Coulmas, 1979, p. 256). Other responders with the same function are *estedʔa daræm* ('I beg you'), *gorban-e shoma* ('May I be sacrificed in your place'), *fædat beshæm* ('May I be sacrificed in your place'), *zende bash-i/-in* ('May you live a long life'), *mokhlesim* ('I am your devoted friend'), *chakerim* ('I am your obedient servant') and *kuchiketæm* ('I'm nothing before you').

The second strategy in responding to an act of thanking is to deny the existence of the object of gratitude (or to deny the cause for thanking), and/or to belittle the favour. Actually, by using this strategy the benefactor signals to the beneficiary that whatever imposition there has been on his/her negative face has not been perceived as an imposition. The formulae used as responders include *khahesh mikonæm* ('I beg you (not to say this)'), *estedʔa daræm* ('I make a request (not to say this)'), *tæmænna daræm* ('I beg you (not to say this)'), *ekhtiyar darin* ('You have the choice/authority'), *in hærfa chiye/kodume?* ('Do not say this'/'No cause to thank me'), *dige hærfesh-o næzænin* ('Do not talk about it anymore'/'No cause to thank me'), *mæn (ke) kari nækærdæm* ('I did not do anything worthy (for you)'), *tæshækkor lazem nist* ('No need to thank me'), *væzifæm bud* ('Whatever I did (for you) was out of my duty towards

you'), and *ghabel-e shoma ro nædare/nædasht* ('It was not worthy of you'). These responders may correspond to 'not at all', 'don't mention it', 'no trouble', 'no problem', and 'no worries' in English. While in other languages usually a single expression can be used as a responder, in Persian, usually more than one responder can be used ('compound responders'). In the following example from soap opera data, four responders have been used in response to the act of thanking. Person A who is confined to bed in hospital is visited by Person B, one of her acquaintances. A thanks B for the visit, and B responds with four successive responders as compound responders.)

01   A: *mæmnun æzætun ke tæshrif avordin*

        ('Thank you for coming and visiting me')

02   B: *khahesh mikonæm, ekhtiyar darin, in che hærfiye ke mizænin, væzifæm bud*

        ('My pleasure, that's all right, do not mention it, it was my duty')

Responders in Persian:

START (VOC) + *khahesh mikonæm* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *estedʔa daræm* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *tæmænna daræm* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *ekhtiyar dar-i/-in* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *gorban-e shoma* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *fædat beshæm* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *zende bash-i/-in* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *mokhlesim* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *chakerim* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*næ baba*) *in hærfa kodume/chiye?* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*næ baba*) *in che hærfiye* (*ke mizænin*)? + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*dige*) *hærfesh-o næzænin* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + (*mæn*) (*ke*) *kari nækærdæm (ke)* + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *ghabel-e shoma ro* {*nædare/nædasht*} + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + {*væzifæmun bud/væzifæmo ænjam dadæm/væzifæs*} + (VOC) STOP

START (VOC) + *tæshækkor lazem nist* + (VOC) STOP

In Persian, there are many idiosyncrasies concerning the use of responders. For a number of gratitude expressions, there are fixed automatic responses: (i) *dæst-e shoma dærd nækone* ('May your hand not ache') is one such formula. When it is employed to thank for material things such as a gift or a favour, the thanking responder is another fixed formula, which

rhymes with it: *sær-e shoma dærd nækone* ('May your head not ache'). In addition, when it is used to thank for food, the responder is a formula such as *nush-e jan* ('I hope you have enjoyed it (food)'), and when it is used to thank for a drink (e.g., cherry syrup) the routine formulaic response can be *govara-ye vojud* ('I hope it has refreshed you'). What is more, in special cases, by shifting the focal stress from its conventional location on *dæst* ('hand') to *shoma* ('you'), the whole expression can be directed back to the beneficiary, meaning 'You are the person to whom I should be obliged, and not you to me'. *dæst-e khodet dærd nækone* ('Your own hands may not ache') is another plausible fixed response to *dæst-e shoma dærd nækone*. (ii) *ghorbune dæstet* ('May I be sacrificed for your hand (you)') is mainly used to thank for material things, especially when we are handed something. The fixed response to this formula can be *khoda nækone* ('God forbid (that you be sacrificed for me)'). (iii) *shærmænde* ('I am ashamed'), as said earlier, is an apologetic gratitude expression usually used to humbly thank for a favour or service. For this there are two conventionalised responders: *doshmænet shærmænde bashe* ('May your enemy be ashamed') and *khoda nækone* ('may God forbid you from feeling ashamed'/'God forbid'). (iv) The response to the gratitude expression *zæhmæt oftadin* ('You troubled yourself') is a conventionalised fixed formula: *che zæhmæti?* ('What trouble?'/'No trouble at all'). However, the above-mentioned responders might also be accompanied by generic responders such as *khahesh mikonam* ('I beg (not to say this)').

7.7 Thanking as negation (declining an offer through thanking)

The speech act of thanking can be used for both accepting an offer (especially food and drink) and for rejecting it politely (Aijmer, 1996, p. 73). Knowing the right words and learning the proper strategies to decline offers politely is a crucial part of communicative competence in every language (see Schauer & Adolph, 2006, p. 129). Schauer and Adolph (2006) further suggest, "the ability to express gratitude and at the same time to refuse a proposition is one of the main skills that students may need to possess in a native speaker context" (p. 129). On social occasions, declining an offer is a face-threatening act, which requires conscious attention (see Aijmer, 1996, p.74). In Iranian culture, in informal situations and with family members, close friends and peers (in-groups), one can easily refuse an offer of any sorts with simply saying 'no', 'I do not want/like', and/or 'I have no appetite'. In formal situations, however, a blunt 'no' to an offer can be face-threatening or impolite as the speech act of refusing is intrinsically face threatening. To refuse an offer in a diplomatic

way, a generic gratitude formula with or without a negation word (*næ, nækheyr*) is used. Sometimes the reason for not accepting an offer is also stated (e.g., 'No, thanks, I already had my lunch'). Aijmer (1996) regards this function of thanking as phatic (p. 53). In interpreting expressions of gratitude as a negation device, tone of speech, facial expressions and body language play an important role. As for body language, if one is going to decline an offer with the help of gratitude expressions, s/he can raise the palm of the right hand and keep it in front of his/her chest/chin for a few seconds or/and directly put the palm of the right hand onto the chest, keeping it there for a few seconds. In both cases, by retracting the right hand (due to the symbolic role of hands in accepting things when they are forwarded), we demonstrate that we are not going to accept the favour. Interestingly, though this body gesture naturally applies to material goods, its usage has been generalised to immaterial things too.

The discourse structure rule for declining an offer through thanking:

R.1   Declining an offer through thanking ---> (negation word) + thanking formula^n + (the reason for not accepting an offer) + (thanking formula)^n

R.2   Declining an offer through thanking ---> (negation word) + (the reason for not accepting an offer) + thanking formula^n

7.8 Sarcastic thanking

The illocutionary force of a gratitude expression is to express gratitude and appreciation. However, at times, the illocutionary force of these expressions is not primarily gratitude or appreciation, but the expression of feelings such as irritation, anger and grievance (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986, p. 168). "It is useful to keep in mind that not all expressions using the words 'thank you' refer to gratitude" (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1993, p. 65). Sometimes in the circle of family and friends, one might be unfairly judged, reproached and/or accused of something. Owing to the close relationship (e.g., mother-son relationship), the person under criticism usually cannot fight back with the same intensity. Dissatisfaction, however, should be expressed in some way. In Persian, in such situations, expressions of gratitude are employed to express dissatisfaction in a polite way. In this sarcastic marked usage, expressions of gratitude have the illocutionary force of expressing anger and discontent. Sarcasm is believed to be the dark side of politeness. Every politeness form can be used sarcastically. However, some hints such as tone of speech, body language and facial expressions clearly signal the discontent. In this situation, expressions of gratitude such as

'dæst-e shoma dærd nækone' and its variants as well as *'kheyli mæmnun'* are used more than others. As an example from soap opera data, A's mother reproaches him in front of others, and A who feels he has been unjustly treated, sarcastically thanks his mother to express his deep dissatisfaction.

01 A: *dæst-e shoma dærd nækone*

('May your hand not ache'/'Thank you very much')

7.9 Thanking and the sense of indebtedness

Upon receiving a favour, or a promise to receive a favour or service in the future, usually two kinds of emotions are aroused in the beneficiary: a sense of gratitude and/or a sense of indebtedness. Coulmas (1981b) considers a distinction between the thanks that imply indebtedness and the thanks that imply no indebtedness to the benefactor. While in one culture a special favour or service may merely lead to a sense of gratitude, the same favour might produce a sense of indebtedness in another culture. Coulmas (1981b) notes that thanking entails indebtedness to the benefactor in Japanese culture. Likewise, Iranians are very conscious of having had others do things for them. In fact, debt-sensitivity is a crucial concept in the Persian politeness system. The smallest favours can make the recipient a big debtor. Debt of any sorts or kinds should be paid back or at least should be properly acknowledged. In Iranian society, if a beneficiary is thanking for a major favour, s/he should also express his/her indebtedness to the benefactor. Even if the object of gratitude is not particularly big, showing/pretending that one is in somebody's debt can reinforce the gratitude expression and can enhance the sense of solidarity and social bonding among interactants. Concerning Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness, expressing the sense of indebtedness at the time of thanking attends to the positive face wants of the benefactor, making them feel good about the interaction. In Persian, there are a number of expressions of indebtedness that can implicitly be used as expressions of gratitude. However, in this usage, they are usually preceded by generic gratitude expressions. The expressions of indebtedness such as *ma ta ʔomr darim mædun-e shoma hæstim* ('To the end of my life, we (I) are in debt to you') and *ma ta akhær-e ʔomr mædun-e shoma hæstim* ('To the end of my life, we (I) are in debt to you') can implicitly be used as expressions of gratitude.

A sense of indebtedness is also related to the concept of reciprocity. Reciprocity in doing favours, or stating the intention to reciprocate the favour, is another way to express

indebtedness (and gratitude) to people. Therefore, a sense of indebtedness at the time of expressing gratitude can also be expressed with a formula such as *inshallah ke betunæm (lotfetun ro) jobran konæm* ('God willing, hope that I can compensate or reciprocate your favour'), or *nemidunæm chetori jobran konæm* ('I do not know how to compensate for your favour'). The other theme in Persian data is the deep sense of indebtedness expressed by the formula *lotf-e shoma ro hichvæght færamush nemikonæm* ('I will never forget your kindness (towards me)'), and *mæn ta ʔomr daræm mædyun-e shomam* ('For as long as I live, I will be in debt to you'). These expressions are usually preceded or followed by direct expression of thanking as in the following.

(direct expression of thanking)^n + {expressing indebtedness/stating intent to reciprocate the favour} + (direct expression of thanking)^n

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + {*mæn/ma*} *ta ʔomr daræm mædyun-e* {*shomamshoma'im*} STOP

START (VOC) + *lotf-e shoma ro hichvæght færamush nemikon-æm/-im* STOP

START (VOC) + *inshallah ke betun-æm/-im* (*lotfetun ro*) *jobran kon-æm/-im* STOP

START (VOC) + *nemidunæm* + (INT) + *chetori (lotfetun ro) jobran konæm* STOP

7.10 After-meal thanking:

Every society has its own rules for how, where and when to employ gratitude expressions (see Aijmer, 1996, p. 66). According to Aijmer (1996), on social occasions, we are supposed to express our appreciation of the meal (p. 66). In most cultures and religions, mealtimes require acknowledgment, thanks and praying before and/or afterwards. Mealtimes are usually associated with specific rituals, routines and conventional language (i.e., formulae). In Iranian culture (similar to others), mealtimes (especially formal ones) are about more than satisfying physical hunger: they are an opportunity to reaffirm and strengthen vital family ties (Koutlaki, 2010, pp. 141-2) and to enhance social cohesion and social bonding. Prayers and thanks are an important part of the mealtime ritual in Iran. Before-meal ritual is not as elaborate as after-meal ritual. *besmellah* ('In the name of Allah'), a short form for the more popular formula *bessme-llah-e ær-ræhman-e ær-ræhim* ('In the name of Allah, the compassionate the merciful'), serves as a generic before-meal prayer, which simply signals the start of eating by the guest. When used by the host/hostess, it is a signal to guest(s) to start

their meal. Generally, Muslims start all daily chores and actions with *besmellah* in order to enjoy God's help and support.

There is usually no specific before-meal thanking formula. However, as soon as the meal is over, if, for example, it is a dinner function, people usually thank God, thank the host/hostess, pray for the host/hostess's welfare and prosperity, and they may praise the meal. In the case of common family mealtimes, people usually thank God and thank the person who has cooked and prepared the food (usually housewives) as a polite move to attend to the positive face of the hearer for being appreciated and praised.

Short prayers of thanks or thanking God formulae include *ælhæmdolellah* ('All praise is due to *Allah*'), *khodaya* {*shokr/shokret*} ('Thank God'), *elahi shokr* ('Thank God'), *khoda bærekæt* (*væ vosʔæt*) *bede* ('May God bestow His blessing and abundance upon you'). Fixed numbers such as 'one thousand' and 'one hundred thousand' can precede *khodaya shokr*, *elahi shokr* to intensify them. For example, *elahi hezar mærtæbe shokret* meaning 'one thousand times thank God', or *elahi sæd hezar mærtæbe shokret* meaning 'one hundred thousand times thank God'. After thanking God's grace, depending on the occasion (e.g., a dinner function), it is time to thank the host/hostess. Thanking the host/hostess or one's wife is usually the obligatory part of the after-meal thanking ritual, which is usually accompanied by some compliments on how skilful the cook is in cooking tasty food, setting the meal table, etc. Since women are usually responsible for cooking and setting the table, guests firstly thank them and then turn to the man of the family to acknowledge him. Generic thanking formulae (usually as compound thanks) are employed for this purpose. Since this kind of thanking entails thanking for material goods, *dæst-e shoma dærd nækone* ('May your hand not ache') is the main gratitude expression for this purpose, or it is usually the obligatory component of a compound thanking. In addition, in more formal family functions, it is common to pray for the dead people in the household of the host/hostess. In the following example from soap opera data, as soon as the meal is over, person A, who is a guest in his daughter's house, thanks God, thanks his daughter and compliments the taste of the food:

01   A: *elahi hezar mærtæbe shokret, dæstet dærd nækone baba, kheyli khoshmæze bud.*
        ('One thousand thanks to God', 'your hand may not ache', 'it (the food) was very tasty')

The discourse structure rule for after-meal thanking:

After-meal thanking ---> (thanking God) + thanking host/hostess/housewife + (complimenting food, etc.) + (praying for host's/hostess's welfare and prosperity) + (praying for the dead people in the household of host/hostess)

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *khoda bærekæt* (*væ vosʔæt*) *bede* + (VOC) STOP

START {*elahi/khodaya*} ({*hezar/sædhezar*} *mærtæbe*) {*shokr/shokret*} STOP

7.11 Summary

We usually thank people for favours/services they do, or promise to do for us. Like other cultures, attending to the positive face of co-participants, functioning as positive face strokes, is the major driving force behind the use of gratitude expressions in Iranian culture. These are classified into five main categories: (i) generic gratitude expressions, (ii) God-bound gratitude expressions, (iii) culture-bound gratitude expressions, (iv) apologetic gratitude expressions and (v) negative face imposition acknowledgements. The strategy of exaggerating the favours/services received from others (and belittling the favours/services given to others) is behind the use of some expressions of gratitude in Persian.

CHAPTER 8:

REQUESTING

8.1 Introduction

My aim in this chapter is to go through the definition, function and properties of requests, and to review the related literature in 8.2; to look at the general structure of a request sequence in 8.3; to go over the tactful use of terms of address in softening the illocutionary force of requests in 8.4; to introduce politeness markers in Persian in 8.5; to explore preparators in Persian in 8.6; to investigate request strategies in Persian in 8.7; and to review responses to requests in Persian in 8.8.

8.2 The definition, function and properties of requests, and literature review

Hardly a day goes by without making requests for items, services or information, and without receiving such requests from others. That is, similar to other conversational routines (e.g., greetings, parting etc.), the speech act of requesting is an inevitable social act in our daily communications. As regards the face-threatening nature of requestive speech acts (see Brown & Levinson, 1987), making appropriate and tactful requests and responding to them properly is an important part of communicative competence for speakers of any language.

Requests, as illocutionary acts, belong to Searle's (1976) category of directives (p. 11). The illocutionary purpose of a request is to have the hearer (H) to do something (A) for the speaker (S). Searle (1969) describes the speech act of request in terms of felicity conditions (p. 66). According to him (1969) the force of an utterance derives from a set of necessary and sufficient conditions relating to the particular act (p. 66). The conditions that underlie a sincere request are specified with the following rules:

Participant roles: S(peaker), H(earer)

Propositional content (future act *A* of *H*):

a) *S* wants *H* to do *A*.

b) *S* assumes *H* can do *A*.

c) *S* assumes *H* is willing to do *A*.

d) *S* assumes *H* will not do *A* in the absence of the request

Trosborg (1995) considers a request an illocutionary act by which a speaker conveys to a hearer that s/he wants the requestee to perform an act that is solely in the interest of the requester and generally a cost to the requestee (p. 187). 'Benefit to speaker' and 'cost to hearer' are two decisive features that can distinguish requests from other acts, e.g., suggestions (1995, p. 187). The requested act, as Trosborg (1995) mentions, may be a request for non-verbal goods and services (e.g., an object) or verbal goods and services (e.g., information) (pp. 187-8). "These acts", Trosborg (1995) further points out, "may range in illocutionary force from ordering to begging" (p. 189). When we make a request, we are asking others to perform an action for us. That is, the requester imposes upon the requestee's negative face (their wish not to be imposed upon). The degree of imposition, as Trosborg (1995) points out, may vary from small favours to demanding acts (p. 188). According to Trosborg (1995), since the desired act is to take place post-utterance, the speech act of requesting can be characterized as 'pre-event', as opposed to, e.g., complaints, which are 'post-event' (p. 187).

Trosborg (1995) mentions a number of ways that a 'locution' can be assigned the illocutionary force of a request (pp. 189-192). Firstly, the imperative mood is traditionally associated with the force of a directive. It is the canonical grammatical form for getting a hearer to do an action. Secondly, by using performative verbs such as 'request', 'demand', or 'order' the speaker can explicitly signal the illocutionary force of a request. Thirdly, utterances that meet the felicity conditions set forth by Searle (1969) can convey the illocutionary force of a request (p. 66). Finally, there are utterances that meet the essential condition of requests proposed by Searle ("an attempt on the part of *S* to get *H* to do *A*"), but they refrain from mentioning either the desired action or the hearer as the intended agent, e.g., 'It is cold in here' standing for 'Close the door, please. It is cold in here.' (These are hinting strategies, in other words)

Based on contextual factors such as the interlocutors' relationship, their rights and obligations towards one another, and the degree of imposition involved in the request, a speaker can choose a request strategy at a particular level of directness. In the CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization) project, Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) distinguish three levels of directness, which further subdivide into nine distinct sub-levels called 'strategy

types' (p. 18). In this classification, strategy one is regarded as the most direct request, as opposed to strategy nine, which is the least direct. The nine strategy types are cited in detail as follows (House & Kasper, 1989, p. 18):

a) Direct requests

1. Mood derivable: utterances in which the grammatical mood of the verb signals its illocutionary force (e.g., 'leave me alone').

2. Explicit performatives: utterances in which the illocutionary force is explicitly named by the speaker (e.g., 'I'm asking you not to park the car here')

3. Hedged performatives: utterances in which the naming of the illocutionary force is modified by hedging expressions (e.g., 'I would like to ask you to give your presentation a week earlier').

4. Obligation statements: utterances which state the obligation of the hearer to carry out the act (e.g., 'Madam, you'll have to move the car').

5. Want statements: utterances which state the speaker's desire that the hearer carries out the act (e.g., 'I really wish you'd stop bothering me').

b) Conventionally indirect requests

6. Suggestory formulae: utterances which contain a suggestion to do something (e.g., 'How about cleaning up').

7. Query-preparatory: utterances containing references to preparatory conditions, i.e., ability, willingness and possibility of the act being performed (e.g., 'Could you clear up the kitchen, please').

c) Non-conventionally indirect requests

8. Strong hints: utterances containing partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act (e.g., 'You have left the kitchen in a mess').

9. Mild hints: utterances that make no reference to the request proper (or any of its elements) but are interpretable as requests by context (e.g., 'I am a nun' in response to a persistant hassler).

An important finding of the CCSARP project (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989) was that the languages (except for Hebrew) studied overwhelmingly preferred conventionally indirect request strategies. However, Hong (1999) argues that this finding is biased towards Western culture (p. 73). That is, "all of the languages and varieties studied (except Hebrew) are either Germanic or Romance, and all of the cultures studied are either Western or heavily influenced by Western culture". Studies done on Akan (see Obeng, 1999), Chinese (see Lee-Wong, 1994; Hong, 1999), Persian (see Eslamirasekh, 1993) and Polish (Wierzbicka, 1991) show that the universality of a preference for conventionally indirect requests claimed by CCSARP is not completely warranted. Put differently, each culture possesses its own "interactional style" (see Mills, 1992, p. 65).

According to Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987), requests are face-threatening acts (FTAs), since a speaker imposes his/her will on a hearer (p. 65). To a lesser extent, requests can also threaten the face of the speaker himself/herself as the hearer may choose to decline the request. Thus, when confronted with the need to perform an FTA, the individual can choose between performing the FTA in the most direct way, or mitigating the effect of the FTA on the hearer's face to gain his/her compliance with the request. For this reason, in English and other languages studied in CCSARP (see Blum-kulka, House and Kasper 1989), imperatives (e.g., 'open the window') or requests containing a performative verb (e.g., 'I request/order that you open the window'), appearing as commands, are not preferred ways of making a request (see Trosborg, 1995, p. 190). In contrast, indirect requests such as 'can you answer the phone?' or 'will you answer the phone?' are more polite since the speaker leaves the hearer considerable freedom to choose whether or not to comply with the request (Aijmer, 1996, p. 139). According to Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989), all of the languages studied in CCSARP (except for Hebrew) favoured conventionally indirect request strategies. There are, however, languages and cultures that pattern their requests in the most direct form (impositives/imperatives) without these being taken as impolite.

As Obeng (1999) notes, in Akan, spoken in Ghana, requests may be direct or indirect (conventional/nonconventional) (p. 230). In the Akan society, making direct requests for favours and services is not taken to be harsh or impolite. In fact, the way that the Akan conceptualize requests differs from in Western societies. Referring to the culture of collectivity and the high degree of interdependence and social harmony among the Akan, Obeng (1999) claims that a direct request such as 'give me your pen', used in an equal-equal or superior-subordinate interaction would not be seen to be impolite (p. 240). Obeng (1999)

further points out that direct requests can even be used in an inferior-superior interaction, provided that the requestee (superior) is addressed in deferential terms (p. 240). In getting people to comply with direct requests in Akan society, terms of address play a crucial role in requestive environments. Terms of address can have a softening effect on direct requests (Obeng, 1999, p. 233). I shall return to this shortly.

Obeng (1999) argues that direct requests appearing as commands or orders are not seen as impositions on the hearer and therefore do not threaten the face of the requestee (pp. 230-231). Obeng (1999) further points out that "although requests in Akan society may cause discomfort or inconvenience to a requestee, they are tolerated in the interest of group or societal cohesion" (p. 231). Therefore, if a request entails an imposition on a requestee, it is assumed that it will not be imposed by the requester alone, but by the society as a whole (Obeng, 1999, p. 231).

In English, as Hong (1999) points out, an imperative sentence implies a command or order which makes it inappropriate and impolite in making a request (p. 73). Actually, direct requests are not favoured in English culture unless the speaker enjoys considerable power over the hearer (e.g., officer-soldier relationship). In Chinese, however, according to Hong (1999), direct requests sound quite natural and polite in routine daily interactions (p. 74). Therefore, the direct use of basic action verbs such as *dài* ('bring') or *jiè wǒ* ('lend me'), which indicate the desired action, seem natural and polite. For example, the use of direct requests with intimates and kin is quite appropriate and does not imply imposition (Hong 1999, p. 75). In Chinese, a lack of modals to show levels of politeness, as they do in English (e.g., could vs. can), can be compensated by placing a politeness marker (or mitigating device) such as *qǐng* ('please') at the beginning of an imperative sentence, putting tags such as *kě yǐ ma* at the end of an imperative sentence, preceding the verb with *Máfán nǐ* ('trouble you ...'), or prefacing the direct request with formal honorific titles such as *Lǎo dàyé* ('old grandpa') (Hong 1999, p. 74). *qǐng* ('please') as a strong politeness marker is reserved for having strangers and outsiders be amenable to requests. *qǐng* is not often used among friends and family members as it would seem overly polite and therefore be regarded as treating that person as an outsider (see also Lee-Wong, 1994).

The ways in which speech acts are interpreted and used are bound to socio-cultural values governing speech communities. Concepts such as sincerity or solidarity have different interpretations and manifestations cross-culturally. For example, while in English, which

favours negative face politeness, a conventionally indirect request such as 'could you give me a little salt?' sounds flawless, the same query in Chinese, which favours positive face (or solidarity politeness), implies a lack of sincerity in the speaker. "Cultural values and beliefs", as Lee-Wong (1994) contends, "do not expect *S* to ostensibly ask *H* whether s/he could part with a little salt" (p. 508). This could convey the wrong message that *S* is not certain if *H* would wish to give him/her some salt. It could also sound as if *S* doubts *H*'s generosity, thereby offending his/her feelings. According to Lee-Wong (1994), Chinese conceptualization of solidarity tolerates imposition within reasonable limits (p. 509). Thus, in a circle of intimates, imposition in making requests is culturally interpreted as an expression of in-group solidarity.

8.3 Review of literature on requesting in Persian

In a comparative study, Eslamirasekh (1993) examines the similarities and differences in the realization patterns of the speech act of requesting between Persian-speaking students and American speakers of English. According to her (1993), "the conventional expression of requests in Persian is extremely direct compared to English, and it reflects a culturally specific interactional style in the requestive behaviour of the two languages examined" (p. 98). For example, 70% of requests in Persian are phrased as direct requests, more than 25% as conventionally indirect and about 4% as hints. The equivalent ratios for American English were 11.86%, 78.85% and 7.37% respectively (Eslamirasekh, 1993, p. 96). In the literature, as said earlier, directness is usually associated with impoliteness; however, as Eslamirasekh points out (1993, p. 96), the exact social meaning of directness may be a cross-culturally variant. According to Eslamirasekh (1993), the difference in the level of directness in English and Persian does not imply that speakers of English are more polite than speakers of Persian (p. 96). "Indirectness", as Blum-Kulka (1987) argues, "does not necessarily imply politeness", i.e., there is enough evidence to suggest that indirectness and politeness are not necessarily correlates of each other (p. 131). As regards the directness of requests in Persian, Eslamirasekh (1993) claims that in some societies including Persian, politeness is achieved by means other than (in)directness (p. 96). That is, Persian speakers may compensate for the level of directness in their requestive speech acts by using considerably more external and internal modifiers (Eslamirasekh, 1993). This by itself makes the length of requests in Persian longer than their English equivalents (p. 97). Rintell and Mitchell (1989) draw attention to the

length of speech acts (e.g., requests and apologies) as a factor in determining their level of politeness (pp. 265-6). According to Rintell and Mitchell (1989), "Having more and/or longer supportive moves in requests in particular can contribute to a perception of the request as more elaborate and therefore more polite" (p. 266). Moreover, as regards the choice of perspective, Persian speakers tend to use second person perspective or hearer-oriented requests (e.g., 'could you tidy up the kitchen?') more than first person perspective or speaker-oriented requests (e.g., 'do you think I could borrow your notes?') as opposed to English speakers (Eslamirasekh, 1993, p. 96). In discussing the differences in the realization patterns of the speech act of requesting between Persian speakers and American speakers of English, Eslamirasekh (1993) argues that American culture favours individuality and the wish for freedom of action and freedom from imposition, i.e., the negative politeness (pp. 96-7). On the other hand, Iranian culture favours in-group membership, group harmony and societal cohesion, resulting in an orientation towards positive politeness. Therefore, concerning the interlocutors' relationship, the context of the situation, the ranking of the imposition, and the presence or absence of an audience, direct requests in Persian can entail solidarity and rapport.

In another study on requests in Persian, Salmani Nodoushan (2008) comes up with results different from those of Eslamirasekh (1993). According to Salmani Nodoushan (2008), from 2232 requests across the six discourse structure test (DCT) situations, 16.22% were direct requests and 71.64% were conventionally indirect requests, demonstrating preference for the use of conventionally indirect strategies (p. 266). Salmani Nodoushan's study draws on a bigger population than Eslamirasekh's (1993). This significant discrepancy between these two studies by Eslamirasekh (1993) and Salmani Nodoushan (2008), both of which used the same method for data collection, may indicate the weaknesses of DCT as a reliable means of data collection and the need to turn to more naturally-occurring and authentic data in studying speech acts. Like Eslamirasekh (1993), Salmani Nodoushan (2008) also argues that solidarity among interactants can lead to a high frequency of imperatives or imposing requests (p. 269). In other words, as Salmani Nodoushan (2008) notes, in situations where there is little social distance between interlocutors, Persian speakers have a propensity for direct requests (p. 272). It seems "as if they [direct requests] have a potential for expressing camaraderie and friendship" (Salmani Nodoushan, 2008, p. 272).

In a cross-cultural study, Abdolrezapour and Eslami-Rasekh (2012) investigate the effect of using mitigation devices on request compliance from both requestor and requestee's

viewpoints in American English and Persian cultures. The data analysis, which is based on a number of role-plays, demonstrate that American requests in all four power-asymmetrical social situations are mainly characterized by the use of the internal modifications (35% vs. 30%) such as downtoners (e.g., *possibly*) as well as the use of conventionally indirect utterances (e.g., *Could you give your lecture sooner?*). Iranians, however, tend to use external modifications (50% vs. 41%), such as reasons (e.g., May I have the book you recommended to me yesterday? <u>I went to the library, but unfortunately it was closed</u>) and preparators more frequently (e.g., <u>Yesterday you suggested that I go to the library to get a cop of Hudson to do my research, I went to the library but it was closed</u>. May I have your copy?). Mitigation devices reflect different social meaning in both societies. Whereas the Iranians generally used more mitigation devices to guarantee the compliance of the requestee, the Americans believed that the overuse of mitigation devices might be taken as flattering by the requestee. The American respondents also believed that conventionally indirect utterances might function as a kind of mitigation device in its own right (Abdolrezapour & Eslami-Rasekh, 2012: 158). Moreover, the social power of the addressee was not an important factor for the Americans in mitigating their request. For the Persian speakers, however, the degree of mitigation devices correlates positively with the social power of the requestee and the degree of imposition. That is, the higher the status of the requestee, or the higher the degree of the imposition, the higher the use of mitigation devices would be. In justifying this, Abdolrezapour and Eslami-Rasekh (2012) refer to a socio-cultural element among Iranians, which is more or less absent from the egalitarian society of America: "(...) Iranian society is built around hierarchical relations and social power is one of the most important factors that people consider when they engage in conversations" (p. 160).

Using a DCT, with six formal/informal scenarios, as the main means for data collection, Salmani Nodoushan and Allami (2011) investigate the types of supportive discourse moves employed by Persian speakers in their requestive speech acts. Salmani Nodoushan and Allami (2011) employed Scollon and Scollon's (2001) politeness model, which is based on the three factors of hierarchy, deference and solidarity. Their corpus consisted of 2232 instances of requests across different levels of situational formality. Each request was analyzed to see if it only included the head act, the head act with internal supportive moves (ISM), the head act with external supportive moves (ESM), or the head act with both internal and external supportive moves. A total of 6048 strategies emerged from the responses, of which 2013 (33.28%) were ISM and the rest, 4035 (66.72%), were ESM. The results of the

study show that the use of both ISM and ESM strategies in Persian is situation dependent. That is, perceived situational seriousness, which is defined in terms of power and distance, is the main motivation behind the use of ISM and ESM strategies in Persian requests. In sum, hierarchical politeness system (+ power, + distance) requires the greatest number of discourse moves (both internal and external), solidarity politeness system (- power, - distance) requires fewer ESM and ISM strategies and deferential politeness system (- power, + distance) is situated in the middle. Additionally, the results show that Persian speakers are inclined to employ ESM than ISM strategies (Salmani Nodoushan & Allami, 2011, p. 87).

8.4 The general structure of a request sequence

According to the CCSARP coding scheme developed by Blum-Kulka, et al. (1989), a request is made up of a head act (HA), request proper, and some peripheral elements. An HA that can realize a request is the core of the request sequence and can stand on its own. Although requests usually consist of one HA, they can also be multi-headed. The request HA may be preceded or followed by peripheral elements that work to modify the illocutionary force of the request HA. The peripheral elements are not essential for realizing the request. They include alerters and supportive moves. Alerters, as attention getters, usually precede the HA. They alert the hearer's attention to the ensuing speech act. Alerters include terms of address (names, honorific titles, endearment terms, reproach terms etc.) as well as expressions of apology. Supportive moves (SMs) may precede the head act (pre-posed SMs) and/or follow the head act (post-posed SMs). They provide justification for the request HA, and are used to soften the force of the request HA. Having said this, the general structure of a request sequence is:

(Alerters) + (Supportive Moves) + Head Act + (Supportive Moves)

I have used the CCSARP coding system to categorize my data.

8.4.1 Internal and external modification of requests

The head act (HA) can be internally and/or externally modified (see Faerch & Kasper, 1989, p. 224). Sometimes the HA is internally modified; sometimes it is externally modified by using supportive moves; at times, it is both internally and externally modified. Internal

modification occurs within the HA, but external modification occurs within the HA's immediate context. As regards politeness norms in different speech communities, some languages have a preference for internal modification (e.g., Dutch), and some prefer external modification (e.g., French, Persian) (see Van Mulken, 1996; Salmani Nodoushan & Allami, 2011).

8.4.1.1 Internal modification of requests

As said before, a request may vary in strategy type and its level of directness. In addition to the selection of directness level, as Trosborg (1995) contends, it is also possible to soften the illocutionary force of a request by modulating it (p. 209). 'Modality markers' are the linguistic devices through which to change the impact a request strategy is to have on the hearer (see House & Kasper, 1981, p. 166). Modality markers, which tone down the impact of a request, are referred to as 'downgraders'. 'Upgraders', on the contrary, have the opposite effect of increasing this impact (Trosborg, 1995, p. 209). According to House and Kasper (1981), as well as Faerch and Kasper (1989), a requester can mitigate the force of a request internally by employing syntactic downgraders and/or lexical/phrasal downgraders.

(i) Syntactic downgraders:

Distancing a request from reality is the common feature of syntactic downgraders (Trosborg, 1995, p. 209). A shift away from the deictic centre of the speaker (on temporal or personal dimensions) can tone down the expectations as regards the fulfilment of the request (Trosborg, 1995, p. 210). Thus, if the request is refused, the speaker does not lose face easily, and, at the same time, it leaves the hearer with a choice not to comply with the requester's wish (Trosborg, 1995, p. 210). There are a number of syntactic devices used for softening the force of a request (Trosborg, 1995, pp. 210-12): (i) questions (e.g., 'can you do the cooking tonight?'); (ii) past tense/negation (e.g., 'could you hand me the paper, please?'/ 'can't you hand me the paper?'); (iii) tag questions (e.g., 'hand me the paper, will you?'); (iv) conditional clauses (e.g., 'I would like to borrow some of your records if you don't mind lending them to me'); (v) embedded clauses expressing tentativeness, hope, delight, thanks etc. (e.g., 'I wonder if you would be able to give me a hand'); (vi) ing-form (e.g., 'I was wondering if you would give me a hand').

(ii) Lexical/phrasal downgraders:

Lexical/phrasal downgraders can modify and soften the head act internally (Trosborg, 1995, pp. 212-14): (i) politeness markers such as 'please' can add the element of deference to a request; (ii) consultative devices such as 'would you mind ...?' seek the hearer's consent; (iii) downtoners such as 'just' can soften the impositive force of the request (e.g., 'just give me a ring, will you?'); (iv) understatements such as 'a second' can minimize some aspects of the desired act (e.g., 'would you wait just a second?'); (v) hedges such as 'kind of' are adverbials which by adding vagueness can soften the force of the request (could you kind of put it off for a while?); (vi) hesitators are non-linguistic signals which convey the requester's doubt in making a request (e.g., 'er... could you help me fill out this form?'); (vii) interpersonal markers or cajolers (e.g., 'you know').

8.4.1.2 External modification of requests

External modifications usually appear as supporting statements preceding and/or following the head act (request proper). To persuade the hearer to comply with the desired wish, it is often necessary to make use of supportive moves (Trosborg, 1995, p. 215). Seeing that requests are by definition imposing, they need to appear plausible and justifiable to be fulfilled by the requestee (Trosborg, 1995, p. 215). Supporting moves usually take the form of giving reasons for and justifying the making of a request. External modifications occur within the immediate context of the HA. External modifiers are longer than internal modifiers and only loosely attached to the HA (Ajmer, 1996, p. 170). They are less conventionalized than internal modifiers (Faerch and Kasper, 1989, p. 244). There are a number of supporting moves cited in detail (Trosborg, 1995, pp. 216-9) as follow.

(i) Preparators:

Requests for small favours/services, or requests to intimates whom the requester knows will fulfil his/her wish, usually do not need justifications, but demanding requests, or requests to non-intimates, need to be well prepared, justified and supported (Trosborg, 1995, p. 216). A requester can prepare his/her request in a number of ways. Firstly, the requester can structure the conversation in such a way that his/her request fits naturally into the context (preparing the content); secondly, preparing the speech act (e.g., 'there is something I'd like you to do for me'); thirdly, checking on the availability of the requestee (e.g., 'may I disturb you for a

moment?'); fourthly, securing a pre-commitment before the speaker makes the request (e.g., 'may I ask you a favour?')

(ii) Disarmers:

Disarmers are used to soften the requestee's attitude and gain his/her compliance (e.g., 'I really don't want to trouble you but ...').

(iii) Sweeteners:

Flattering the requestee is a strategy to get him/her to do something. For example, admiring somebody's collection of books, paves the way for the requester to borrow some (e.g., 'your collection of books is very interesting').

(iv) Supportive reasons:

When a requester presents his/her explanations, justifications, etc., the hearer may be more willing to comply with the request (e.g., 'could you take in the washing, please? It looks as if it's about to rain').

(v) Cost minimizing:

Referring to factors that can minimize any possible costs to the requestee is a strategy that can lead to compliance (e.g., 'would you mind driving to the airport to pick up Mary? I'll pay for the petrol').

(vi) Promise of a reward:

In order to make the request more attractive the requester can offer the requestee a reward (e.g., 'if you do the dishes, I'll give you my movie ticket').

8.5 The tactful use of terms of address in softening the illocutionary force of requests in Chinese, Akan and Persian

As said earlier, requests are by definition face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987), requiring a requester to tone down the force of his/her request to persuade the requestee to comply with the plea. Different languages employ different means to mitigate the illocutionary force of requests. For example, terms of address in some languages (e.g., Akan,

Chinese and Persian) can play a more important role in softening the face threats aroused by a request than others. In societies in which age, social status, gender and kinship ties are still highly significant, the ways that people employ terms of address can significantly affect their polite behaviour. Even in egalitarian societies such as America, as Brown and Levinson (1987) note, terms of address can have an important role in conveying in-group membership (e.g., 'come here, buddy') and softening the force of imperatives (e.g., 'bring me your dirty clothes to wash, honey/darling/Johnny') indicating that they are not power-backed commands (pp. 107-8). "Address forms", as Lee-Wong (1994) points out, "as cultural embeddings represent the verbal handshake in daily routinized rituals of face to face interaction" (p. 498). In the course of routine communications, address terms can convey the most subtle feelings such as deference, intimacy, empathy, in-group solidarity and membership (see Brown and Levinson, 1987, pp. 107-8). In Akan, as Obeng (1999) points out, terms of address have a mitigating effect on direct requests. According to Obeng (1999), direct requests in Akan are usually in the form of commands (p. 239). As such, to soften the requests, they are usually prefaced by appropriate terms of address. Terms of address in Akan serve several communicative functions, conveying rapport, closeness and deference (Obeng, 1999). For example, through the use of a lineage address term such as *me dehyeɛ* ('my relative'), the requester negotiates his/her relationship with the requestee and hence strategically places himself/herself and the requestee in a favourable communicative context (Obeng, 1999, p. 238); a deferential address term such as *Wɔ fa* ('uncle') helps to persuade the requestee to comply with the plea since it portrays the hearer as respected and cultured (Obeng, 1999, p. 235); a fictive kin title such as *braa* ('brother') helps to establish a personal relationship with the recipient and hence soften the difficulty inherent in the request (Obeng, 1999, p. 241). Obeng (1999), as an example, mentions a case where a bus conductor's request from passengers to move closer so that another passenger may have a seat is bluntly turned down by passengers since the conductor fails to preface his direct request with a deferential address form such as *mpaninfoɔ* ('elders') to gain the cooperation of the requestees (pp. 238-9).

As mentioned earlier, there are a number of mitigating devices that can add politeness effects to requests in Chinese (see Hong, 1999). In Chinese, honorific titles are extensively used to convey politeness in structuring a request. "Appropriate use of address terms", as Hong (1999) puts it, "is considered good manners and a means of insurance of having the request realized, while their absence could possibly often result in social sanctions" (p. 75). For

example, a proper address form such as *Lǎo dàyé* ('old grandpa') used for an elderly male can turn a direct request into a polite request (Hong, 1999, p. 75). Referring to the importance of terms of address in Chinese requestive behaviour, Lee-Wong (1994) points out that more than 70% of internal modifiers fall within the category of politeness markers (address forms and polite expressions) (p. 498). In Chinese, as Lee-Wong (1994) points out, kin titles are widely used for strangers, known as 'fictive kin terms' (p. 498). For example, *Dama* ('elderly mother'), *Daye* ('elderly father'), *Xiao Di* ('little brother') and *Da Ge* ('big brother') are widely used in requestive environments. Fictive kin terms, as Lee-Wong (1994) points out, reduce the social and psychological distance between interactants and hence pave the way for the requester to impose upon the requestee (p. 499). Thus, to a Chinese addressee, utterance (2) below, which is a direct request prefaced with a fictive kin term, is perceived to be more polite than utterance (1), which is a conventionally indirect request:

(1) *Ni neng Hongshu wo Beijing huochezhan zai nar ma?*

Can you tell me where Beijing station is?

(2) *Daye, qingwen, Beijing huochezhan zai nar?*

Elderly father, please may I ask where is Beijing station?

Likewise, terms of address in Persian have a crucial mitigating effect in phrasing requests. The proper usage of terms of address calls for high linguistic as well as socio-cultural knowledge. In different contexts, speakers indicate their relationships, inner feelings, and attitudes towards their interlocutors by choosing appropriate forms of address. In Persian, terms of address are extensively used with RPF, adding social meanings, affect or emotional weight to the RPF. Terms of address in Persian have different levels of formality, which in turn can increase the politeness of utterances (Eslamirasekh, 1993, p. 98). Since terms of address in Persian have already been introduced in chapter two, here I shall refer to two cases in which the choice of terms of address can affect the act of requesting. In Persian, terms of address can accompany both direct and indirect requests.

Kin titles (KTs), as terms of address and/or summonses, play an important role inside as well as outside the Iranian family, and their frequency of usage takes precedence over other forms of address. Something noteworthy about KTs in Persian is that some of them can be extended beyond their primary use: that is, they are used not only for kinsmen but for non-relations among acquaintances or strangers. To put it differently, persons with whom there are no

blood relations (e.g., complete strangers) might be addressed with some KTs to express respect, affection, rapport and closeness towards them. As Braun (1988) contends, "when a KT is used for addressing someone who is not related to the speaker in one way or other, this is called a fictive use of a KT" (p. 9). A young person, for example, searching for an address might come across an old man or woman on the street and preface his/her request with fictive kinship terms such as *pedær jun* ('dear father'), *pedærbozorg* ('grandfather'), *madær jun* ('dear mother'), or *madærbozorg* ('grandmother'). Eslamirasekh (1993) attributes the fictive use of kin titles in structuring requests to a sense of "groupness" or culture of collectivity (see also Koutlaki, 2010) where people in society consider each other as members of an extensive family (p. 97).

According to Trosborg (1995) if one wishes somebody to do something for him/her, a possible strategy is to flatter the requestee (p. 17). In Iranian culture and society, terms of address including names, honorific titles, endearment terms, religious titles, occupational titles and their combinations can be manipulatively employed. For example, the use of occupational titles (OTs) as terms of address and/or summonses can perform certain unwarranted social functions, such as flattery. When people seek the favour of others (usually phrased as requests), they choose to address their interlocutor with OTs that actually signify a higher status than that of the real status of their addressee. According to Dunkling (1990), by using titles to which the addressee has no right, the speaker can flatter the addressee on purpose (p. 16). This manipulative usage of terms of address will pave the way to imposing upon the requestee and to get him/her to comply with a request, which might sound demanding. For example, in requestive environments, a police sergeant who should normally be addressed as *sar goruhban* ('sergeant') might intentionally and manipulatively be addressed as *jenab særvan* ('captain'); a *pæræstar* ('nurse') as *khanom/agha-ye doktor* (Mrs/Mr Doctor), just to mention a few. Males and people with less education are more likely to use OTs manipulatively. These examples illustrate the intricate social and interpersonal roles that the deliberate choice of terms of address can have in daily routine interactions in general and in requestive environments, as sweeteners, in particular. In the following sections, I shall deal with the ways that Iranians structure requests, introducing the expressions that are used as requestive formulae, and elaborating on their form and function.

8.6 Politeness markers in Persian

Politeness markers are a subclass of 'lexical mitigating devices' (see Aijmer, 1996, pp. 163-4). According to Aijmer (1996), mitigating elements do not have an illocutionary function, but rather they modify speech acts (p. 163). Politeness markers are frequent with imperatives, and they can turn a bare imperative into a polite request (see Aijmer, 1996, p. 166). House (1989) refers to politeness markers as requestive markers (p. 118), and Faerch and Kasper (1989) refer to them as mitigating devices (p. 224). House and Kasper (1981) classify politeness markers as 'downgraders' (p. 166). According to them (1981), politeness markers, as optional elements, play down the impact X's utterance is likely to have on Y (p. 166). In other words, as Trosborg (1995, p. 212) as well as House and Kasper (1981, p. 166) mention, by employing the politeness marker the requester shows deference to the requestee and pleads for their cooperative behaviour.

In Persian, politeness markers such as *lotfæn*, *bizæhmæt*, *ghorbun-e dæstet* and *khahesh mikonæm* are widely used to turn a bare imperative sentence into a mitigated polite request. They stand for 'please' in English or '*bitte*' in German (see House, 1989). Politeness markers in Persian usually precede an imperative sentence; however, some can either precede or follow imperatives (e.g., *lotfæn*, *bizæhmæt*). They have the general structure of 'please, do A' or 'do A, please'. A common feature among politeness markers is that they are usually used to seek small favours and services in routinized situations. In what follows, politeness markers in Persian are introduced as separate dictionary entries. Politeness markers are usually preceded by some optional elements called alerters. Alerters, as Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) define, are employed to alert the hearer's attention to the ensuing speech act (p. 277). They include apology expressions and terms of address (names, honorific titles, endearment terms, etc.). Apology expressions used as alerters can precede or follow terms of address, or there might be more than one apology expression. Thus, a mitigated direct request can have one of the two following structures:

(i) (apology expression) + (VOC) + **politeness marker** + S (HA)

(ii) (VOC) + (apology expression) + **politeness marker** + S (HA)

Formula form: *bizæhmæt*

bizæhmæt is a politeness marker used in requestive environments. It means 'without trouble'/'if it does not bother/trouble (you)'. As a compound word, it is made up of *bi* and *zæhmæt*: *bi*, a negative prefix, means 'without' and 'less' in English; *zæhmæt*, a noun, corresponds to 'trouble' or 'inconvenience'. This derived form simply corresponds to 'please' in English. *bizæhmæt* is widely used in both formal and informal situations, with both close people and strangers. It may either precede or follow a bare imperative. *bizæhmæt* can expand into *æge zæhmæti nist* or *æge zæhmæt nemishe* ('if it will not be too much of a bother to you'/'if it would not trouble you too much') functioning as a conditional clause for a main clause (a bare imperative), which follows it. It can also appear as *ye zæhmæt bekeshin* ('do me a favour') when preceding an imperative sentence. *bizæhmæt* and its variants denote an acknowledgment of an imposition on the requestee. In other words, they give the requestee the opportunity to turn the request down, though in real life situations, interactants usually behave cooperatively and they try not to refuse requests that are undemanding and polite.

Formula structure:

START (Alerters) + *bizæhmæt* + S (imperative/interrogative) STOP

START (Alerters) + {*æge zæhmæti nist*/*æge zæhmæt nemishe*/*ye zæhmæt bekeshin*} + main clause (imperative) + STOP

Formula form: *lotfæn*

lotfæn is a politeness marker used for making polite requests in everyday requestive situations, which corresponds to 'please' in English. It is of Arabic origin and means 'of your kindness' or 'kindly'; however, in that language, it is not used as a politeness marker in requestive environments. It is highly formal and hence solely used in formal situations. *lotfæn* can either precede or follow an imperative, turning a bare imperative sentence into a polite request. It can also appear as *lotf konid* ('be kind') with the same function. To further reinforce politeness markers, they can appear as compound politeness markers such as *bizæhmæt lotf konid* ('if it will not be too much of a bother to you, be kind').

Formula structure:

START (Alerters) + {*lotfæn*/*lotf konid*} + S (imperative) STOP

START (Alerters) + OBJ + {*lotfæn/lotf konid*} + (V) STOP

START (Alerters) + *bizæhmæt* + *lotf konid* + S (imperative) STOP

Formula form: *ghorbun-e dæstet*

ghorbun-e dæstet is a politeness marker used for making polite requests in requestive environments. It means 'may I be sacrificed for your hand (= you)', roughly corresponding to 'please' in English. It is less formal than *bizæhmæt* and *lotfæn*, and it is mostly used in informal situations. It is solely used by seniors and adults. It is also gender-specific and with respect to the sex segregation rules in Iranian society it is not usually used across genders.

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *ghorbun-e dæstet* + S (imperative/interrogative) STOP

START *ghorbun-e dæstet* + (VOC) + S (imperative/interrogative) STOP

Formula form: *khahesh mikonæm*

khahesh mikonæm is a politeness marker used for making polite requests in requestive environments, which means 'I beg (you)' and corresponds to 'please' in English. As a politeness marker, it is more polite than *lotfæn*. As regards its higher formality, and because it contains the concept of begging/imploring in its meaning, its usage compared to other common politeness markers is more limited. *khaheshæn*, with the same meaning, is considered as its colloquial variant used in circles of close friends and peers (in-groups).

Formula structure:

START (Alerters) + {*khahesh mikonæm/khaheshæn*} + S (imperative) STOP

Formula form: *to ro khoda*

As earlier mentioned, the speech act of request may range in illocutionary force from ordering to begging (see Trosborg, 1995, p. 189). Therefore, if we consider the speech act of requesting as a continuum, at one extreme we have orders and at the other extreme begging. In the middle of this continuum lie conventional and non-conventional requests. Requests can appear as begging when their outcomes are wanted or needed badly. In Persian, *to ro khoda*

('I swear you to God') is used to ask the hearer for something in an especially anxious way because it is wanted or needed urgently. It can appear in both formal and informal situations. It is also used affectionately among intimates. Among the illiterate and religious people, it is also common to swear the requestee to the Imams (twelve religious leaders of the Shiite sect of Islam) especially the third Imam, *Hossein*, and to *Fatimah*, daughter of the Prophet Mohammad.

Formula structure:

START (Alerters) + *to ro khoda* + S (imperative) STOP

START (Alerters) + *to ro be Imam Hossein/Fatimah Zahra* (*ghœsam*) + S (imperative) STOP

8.7 Preparators in Persian

Requests (especially when they are demanding) are considered face-threatening acts for both the requestee and the requester. As such, there are different ways to make a request less threatening. Generally, if the request is not demanding (e.g., small favours), or if the requester is almost certain that the requestee (e.g., family members or close acquaintances) will fulfil his/her wish, the request can be presented on the spot (see Trosborg, 1995, p. 216). Other than that, one should carefully prepare his/her request, and modify the request HA with appropriate supportive moves to plead for the hearer's cooperation. Preparators can also be described as pre-requests since their major function is to signal that a request will follow and to assess whether a request is likely to succeed (see Levinson, 1983, p. 356). Salmani Nodoushan and Allami, (2011) consider two functions for preparators in Persian: (i) to prepare the hearer for an upcoming request, and/or (ii) to introduce the request (p. 88). A requester, as Trosborg (1995) points out, can prepare his/her request in the following ways (pp. 216-7).

(i) preparing the speech act

By employing some formulae such as 'there is something I'd like you to do for me' or 'I need your help', the requester can let the requestee know that s/he is to expect a request. In Persian, a number of formulae such as '*ye zœhmœti dashtœm bœratun*' ('I **had** some trouble for you'), *mishe* ye *zœhmœti behetun bedœm* ('can I give you some trouble?') or *ye ʔœrzi*

khedmæetetun dashtæm ('I **had** a word with you') are employed for this intention. As can be seen, the inclusion of past tense (*dashtæm* (I had) vs. *daræm* (I have)) can increase the level of politeness since it can further tone down expectations as to the fulfilment of the request (see Trosborg, 1995, p. 210). Just as these request preparators are formulaic and conventionalized, the responses to them are usually fixed and conventionalized. Concerning the priority of positive politeness over negative politeness in Iranian culture, the requestee usually responds positively to the preparators. Once hearing the request, the requestee can then figure out if s/he can fulfil the requester's wish or not. *khahesh mikonæm* ('I beg'), *tæmænna mikonæn* ('I beg'), *estedʔa mikonæm* ('I beg'), *befærma'id* ('please go ahead'), *dær khedmæetetunæm/dær khedmæetetun hæstæm* ('I am at your service') or their combinations are widely used as suitable responses for these preparators.

Formula structure:

START (Alerters) + (*ghæræz æz mozahemæt*) *ye zæhmæti* {*dashtæm/dashtim/daræm/darim*} ({*khedmæetetun/bæratun*}) STOP

START (Alerters) + {*mishe/momkene/mitunæm*} *ye zæhmæti behetun bedæm* STOP

START (Alerters) + *ye* {*ʔærzi/khaheshi*} *khedmæetetun* {*dashtæm/daræm*} STOP

(ii) checking on availability

Before making a request, and as a preparatory move, the requester should ensure whether or not s/he has approached the requestee at the right time. If not, as an excuse, the requestee may turn the request down because it has come at an inopportune time (Trosborg, 1995, p. 216). In Persian, there are a number of conventional formulae that can serve this function: *mishe ye chænd læhze mozahemetun beshæm*, which corresponds to 'may I disturb you for a moment?' in English. *khahesh mikonæm* ('I beg'), *befærma'id* ('Please go ahead'), *dær khedmæetetunæm/dær khedmæetetun hæstæm* ('I am at your service'), *tæmænna mikonæn* ('I beg'), *estedʔa mikonæm* ('I beg') or their combinations are widely used as suitable responses to these preparators.

Formula structure:

START (Alerters) + {*mishe/momkene/mitunæm*} *ye chænd* {*læhze/dæghighe*} {*mozahemetun/ mozahem-e væghtetun*} *beshæm* STOP

START (Alerters) + *mishe ye chænd {læhze/dæghighe} væghtetun ro begiræm?* STOP

START (Alerters) + *{mishe/momkene/mitunæm} ye chænd læhze mozahemetun beshæm* STOP

START (Alerters) + *mikhastæm æge {mishe/momkene} chænd kælum bahatun sohbæt konæm* STOP

START (Alerters) + *mikhastæm æge ejaze {bedin/befærma'id} chænd {dæghighe/læhze} bahatun hærf bezænæm* STOP

(iii) getting a pre-commitment

In making requests, a requester tries to avoid a dispreferred response, namely, a rejection. Thus, securing a pre-commitment prior to the actual request can pave the way for gaining compliance. In Persian, there are a number of conventional formulae that can serve this function, e.g., *mishe ye khaheshi æzætun bokonæm* ('Is it possible that I make a request from you?'), which corresponds to 'may I ask you a favour?', or 'would you mind doing me a favour?' in English. This formula and its variants are widely used to secure pre-commitment in making requests. *khahesh mikonæm* ('I beg'), *tæmænna mikonæn* ('I beg'), *estedʔa mikonæm* ('I beg'), *befærma'id* ('please go ahead', 'go for it'), *dær khedmætetunæm/dær khedmætetun hæstæm* ('I am at your service') or a combination of them are widely used as suitable responses to these preparators.

Formula structure:

START (Alerters) + *{mishe/momkene/mitunæm} ye khahesh/khaheshi {æzætun/æzæt} bokonæm* STOP

START (Alerters) + *ye {khaheshi/khahesh} {æzætun/æzæt} {bokonæm/daræm}* STOP

START (Alerters) + *{mishe/momkene/mitunid} ye lotfi dar hagh-e man bokonid* STOP

START (Alerters) + *mituni ye kari bæram bokoni* STOP

START (Alerter) + *(mæn) (rastesh) mikhastæm bæra ye {æmr-e kheyri/kari} æz shoma komæk begiræm* STOP

8.8 Request strategies in Persian

Requests in Persian may be direct or indirect. Variables such as the context of the situation (e.g., home vs. service encounters), the relationship between interlocutors (e.g., husband-wife relationship vs. boss-employee relationship) and the degree of imposition (demanding vs.

non-demanding request) can affect the ways that requests are structured. In a traditional and conservative society such as Iran, other variables such as the interlocutors' gender or the presence of audience and the level of familiarity among them can also have a bearing on the ways that people can structure requests. As mentioned earlier, Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) distinguish three major levels of directness (direct requests, conventional indirect requests, non-conventional indirect requests) manifested by nine requesting strategies (pp. 8, 17). In what follows direct and conventional/non-conventional indirect requests in Persian are dealt with.

8.8.1 Direct requests in Persian

The easiest way that a speaker can get a hearer to perform an action is to structure a request directly or on-record (see Brown & Levinson, 1987). Directness refers to the explicitness of illocutionary intent of the request HA, i.e., the speaker directly expresses his/her wish and hence directly imposes upon the hearer. As Aijmer (1996) points out, direct (or assertive) requests do not consider the hearer (p. 140). In direct requests, appearing as orders or commands, utterance meaning and the speaker's meaning are almost identical, and thus they require minimal decoding effort from the requestee to interpret them as requests, when compared to conventional/non-conventional indirect requests (see Lee-Wong, 1994, p. 494). In situations where clarity is more important than politeness (e.g., military settings, an operation room in a hospital), requests are phrased directly. Likewise, Laver (1981) writes, "There are of course very many occasions in conversation where the need for maximum efficiency of communication over-rides the need to be polite [indirect]" (p. 295).

In English, as Trosborg (1994) notes, in order to formulate a direct request, a requester can make use of a plain imperative (e.g., 'leave the place at once'), a performative statement (e.g., 'I ask/request/order/command you to leave'), or statements of obligation or necessity (e.g., 'you should/ought to leave now') (pp. 202-4). In the literature (especially on European languages), direct requests have been considered as less polite compared to indirect requests. The existence of polite imperatives, as Aijmer (1996) points out, has been either denied or ignored (p. 182). However, as she claims, imperatives can also be used to make polite requests but "under other conditions", e.g., when they are mitigated by suitable downtoners (Aijmer, 1996, pp. 182). She (1996) also mentions that imperatives that occur in routinized situations (mostly elliptical imperatives), as in 'extension two five eight please' (in talking to

a telephone operator) are totally polite and do not bear an imposition on the hearer (pp. 182-3). Moreover, as was already mentioned, there are languages (e.g., Chinese, Akan, Persian, and Polish) in which imperatives can be widely used in both routinized and non-routinized situations without running the risk of being marked as impolite.

In Persian, direct requests are mainly realized as plain imperatives; however, statements of obligation or necessity and performative statements may occur to lesser extent. "The imperative", as Trosborg (1994) points out, "is the canonical grammatical form for getting somebody to do something" (p. 190). In Persian, direct requests can occur in both routinized and non-routinized situations. Direct requests can occur in situations where compliance is expected, either because there is intimacy and solidarity among interlocutors (e.g., family members, close friends and peers), or because the speaker has much power over the hearer (e.g., teacher-pupil or officer-soldier relationships). In justifying why people should use imperatives in daily interactions, Aijmer (1996) draws attentions to the importance of stressing common ground and group membership in human interaction (p. 184). Scollon and Scollon (1983) describe this type of politeness as 'solidarity politeness' (corresponding to Brown and Levinson's positive politeness, 1987) (p. 167). In Persian and some other cultures such as Chinese and Akan (see Lee-Wong, 1994; Hong, 1999; Obeng, 1999), which favour positive or solidarity politeness, the use of direct requests in a circle of family members and close friends and peers (in-groups) is neither face-threatening nor imposing. Instead, they can imply closeness, intimacy, and camaraderie. Since Iranian culture is more positive-politeness-oriented, imposition on negative face (the desire to be free from imposition) is tolerated within limits with the intention of strengthening in-group solidarity and securing social harmony and cohesion among interactants. Accordingly, the use of direct requests in Persian is a sign of closeness, affiliation or solidarity (Salmani Nodoushan & Allami, 2011, p. 87).

According to Trosborg (1994), "The imperative is the grammatical form directly signalling that the utterance is an order" (p. 204). Unmodified or plain imperatives, as Trosborg (1994) mentions, are very authoritative, and hence, they are used in quite limited situations (e.g., teacher-pupil relationships) (p. 204). Other than that, imperatives are often mitigated by appropriate lexical and prosodic devices. These are known as mitigated imperatives (see Aijmer, 1996). As regards lexical devices in Persian, plain imperatives are often mitigated with politeness markers (e.g., *bizæhmæt*) and/or alerters (e.g., affectionate terms of address and apology expressions). In Persian, due to different levels of politeness, verbs can be replaced with more polite forms, which as a redressive action can mitigate the illocutionary

force of a request per se. In the examples below, *bedin* ('give') is a neutral verb, *lotf konid* ('give') is a deferential verb and *mærhæmæt befærma'id* ('give') is an honorific verb. Therefore sentence (3) is more polite than sentence (2) and sentence (2), in turn, is more polite than sentence (1).

(1) *un fenjun ro bedin* ('give that cup to me') [plain/neutral]

(2) *un fenjun ro lotf konid* ('give that cup to me') [polite]

(3) *un fenjun ro mærhæmæt befærma'id* ('give that cup to me') [honorofic]

As regards prosodic devices, in a circle of intimates, bare imperatives are often softened by a polite and friendly intonation. In Persian, a polite and soft (humble) tone of voice can substantially soften the illocutionary force of a direct request, indicating that it is not a power-backed command, and hence gaining the compliance of the hearer. Concerning the limitations of this study, I did not intend to provide a full articulatory account of these distinctions; however, in a few words, mitigated imperatives tend to be lower in pitch, slower in speed, and less emphatic in the articulating onsets of syllables. Lexical and prosodic devices are usually used in concert to mitigate the force of plain imperatives as much as possible.

Additionally, in justifying the use of direct requests with family members and peers, one needs to pay attention to the *khodi* (people of the inner circle) and *ghæribe* (people of the outer circle) distinction in Iranian culture and society (see also Koutlaki, 2010, pp. 22-24). People of the inner circle (in-groups) include one's parents, siblings, spouses and children, as well as close friends and peers with whom one boasts close emotional bonding. On the other hand, people of the outer circle (out-groups) include those with whom there is no or little emotional bonding. This distinction has had a significant influence on interpersonal communication in Persian. That is, in talking to ingroups, people prefer informality, while, with outgroups, formality is favoured. As regards the recurrent nature of requests, in requesting something from the people of the inner circle, one can use direct requests appearing as plain imperatives without running the risk of offending one's requestee. In this context, the use of imperative direct requests with intimates implies emotional closeness, intimacy and camaraderie. Having said this, for example, a child can ask his/her mother to hand him/her a thing simply by a plain imperative, when they are alone or when they are in the company of other in-group members. In this requestive context, the child does not even need to thank his/her mother in receiving the item since explicit thanks are for outsiders

rather than intimate insiders. However, the presence of out-groups even as overhearers (or bystanders) can force the child to formulate his/her request indirectly. This will be dealt with in more detail in chapter nine.

8.8.2 (Conventional/Non-conventional) Indirect requests in Persian

In this section, I discuss both conventional and non-conventional indirect requests in Persian. A request is considered indirect when a speaker tries to give the hearer an option not to comply with the request. Indirect requests, as negative politeness devices, involve a show of deference to the requestee. Conventionality refers to the degree that the indirect formulae are conventionalized in a language as specific means of requesting (e.g., 'Modal+you/I+VP' in English (see Aijmer, 1996, p. 147)). Non-conventional indirect requests are introduced first.

8.8.2.1 Non-conventional indirect requests (hints) in Persian

When a speaker (requester) does not want to state his/her impositive intent explicitly, s/he resorts to hinting strategies (Trosborg, 1995, p. 192). Hints are considered a type of non-conventional indirectness. By making a statement (e.g., 'it's cold in here'), or by asking a question (e.g., 'shall you be using your car tonight?') the speaker can imply to the hearer what s/he wants to be done (Trosborg, 1995, p. 192). In so doing, the speaker can leave out the desired wish altogether, known in the literature as mild hints (e.g., 'I'm a nun' (in response to the persistent boy)), or his/her wish can be mentioned in part, known as strong hints (e.g., 'you've left this kitchen in a right mess'). Hints have been called an "off-record" strategy by Brown and Levinson (1987). According to Weizman (1989), in the hierarchy proposed by the CCSARP coding scheme, hints are classified as the most indirect and nonconventional in form (p. 74). This unconventionality necessitates more inferencing activity for the hearer to derive the speaker's requestive intent. Hints, as an off-record strategy in Brown and Levinson's terms (1987), are inherently vague and non-transparent (Weizman, 1989, p. 71). In fact, the speaker does not make his/her intent explicit and it is left to the hearer to read the speaker's intention. Therefore, through the use of contextual clues or pragmatic knowledge, a speech act such as 'it's cold in here' can be interpreted as a request to close the window. In such requests, there is usually a gap between the utterance meaning and the speaker's meaning, which is being intentionally exploited by the speaker to secure a

high degree of potential deniability. In other words, "by using a Hint ..., the speaker intends to get the hearer to carry out some (implied) requested act in such a way that the recognition of his or her intention will not be grounded in the utterance meaning of the Hint" (Weizman, 1989, p. 71). In so doing, as Weizman (1989) notes, both the requester and the requestee will have this opportunity to legitimately opt out at some stage of the interaction (p. 71). In other words, this allows S(peaker) to deny making the request and H(earer) to ignore the request if they wish so. As regards request strategies, hints have been theoretically considered the most polite strategy; however, empirical studies on Hebrew and American English by Blum-Kulka (1987) showed that conventionally indirect strategies, rather than hints, are the most polite. As such, Blum-Kulka (1987) argues that politeness calls for both avoidance of coerciveness and pragmatic clarity, which is merely manifested in conventionally indirect strategies. Hints by definition lack such pragmatic clarity.

In Eslamirasekh's study (1993), 4% of requests in Persian were phrased as hints. In Salmani-Nodoushan (2008), that ratio was 12.14% (p. 266). In the soap opera data, no examples of non-conventional indirect requests were identified, which might be attributed to the author's ignorance about the nature of hints during the early phase of data collection.

8.8.2.2 Conventional indirect requests in Persian

Conventional indirect requests (CIRs), as the name suggests, are both 'conventional' and 'indirect' in form. As Brown and Levinson (1987) point out, conventional indirect strategies entail opposing tensions: on the one hand, the desire to give the hearer an 'out' by being indirect, and on the other hand, the desire to go on-record (p. 132). Unlike hints (non-conventional indirect requests), which require the hearer to go through an elaborate interpretation process, CIRs, as routine or fixed patterns, can be interpreted as requests with less processing effort. In the case of CIRs in English, the speaker exploits (a) the grammatical structure of a question with modals such as 'can', 'could', 'will' or 'would' (e.g., 'can you do the shopping today, please?'), and (b) the semantic meaning of a politeness marker such as 'please'. The interrogative form of CIRs entails that the hearer has the option of refusing the request (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Suggestory formulae are also included in the category of CIRs.

In English, according to Trosborg (1995), the main strategy in formulating indirect requests is reference to the requestee's 'ability' and 'willingness' to fulfil the requester's wishes and wants (p. 197). Requests can be hearer-oriented or speaker-oriented. "Requests that are hearer-oriented", as Trosborg (1995) mentions, "convey that the hearer is in a position of control to decide whether or not to comply with the request" (p. 197). As such, hearer-oriented requests (e.g., 'can you reach this jar for me?') are more polite than speaker-oriented requests (e.g., 'I would like to have some more coffee'), and hence, they are considered as heavily routinized request forms. In English, various suggestory formulae (e.g., 'how about cleaning up?') can also be employed as conventionally indirect formulae. In using suggestory formulae the requester does not question any particular hearer-based conditions (ability and willingness); rather s/he tests the hearer's cooperativeness (Trosborg, 1995, p. 201). In so doing, "the speaker makes his/her request more tentative and plays down his/her own interest as a beneficiary of the action" (Trosborg, 1995, p. 201).

In Salmani-Nodoushan's (2008) study on requests in Persian, conventionally indirect requests comprise about 71% of the requests (p. 266). Querying the hearer's ability and willingness to do an action, as well as asking about the possibility of the desired act to happen, are considered important requestive norms in Persian. Similar to other languages certain fixed forms have acquired conventional uses. In what follows, query preparatory formulae or conventionalized requestive expressions in Persian are introduced as separate entries. Questioning H's ability and willingness on the one hand, and the possibility for an action to happen on the other, have been conventionalized in spoken Persian as polite indirect requests. In the following, I shall go through the conventional utterances that are used as conventional indirect requests in Persian.

Formula form: *momkene* + (*desirable act*)?

'*momkene* + *(desirable act)?*' is a query preparatory utterance used for making conventionally indirect requests in Persian. It means 'is it possible that ...?', questioning the possibility of the desired act to take place, the hearer's ability to do it, and whether the hearer is willing to do it. As such, this conventional routine corresponds to 'can/could you/I ...?', 'may I ...?', 'will/would you ...?' and 'would you mind...?' in English (Modal + You/I + VP). It is used in both formal and informal situations. It has some variants, including *æge momkene* ('If it is possible for you'), *emkan dare* ('Is it possible that ...?') and *æge emkan*

dare ('If it is possible for you'), all with more or less the same meaning and function. To increase the politeness level, *momkene* can be preceded or followed by politeness markers such as *lotfæn*, or *bizæhmæt* ('please'). It can also be followed by *khahesh konæm* ('May I beg/ask you') as *momkene khahesh konæm* ('May I beg/ask you ...?') to increase the level of politeness.

Formula structure:

START (Alerters) + *momkene* + (politeness marker) + (*khahesh konæm*) + (*desirable act*) STOP

START (Alerters) + *emkan dare* + (*desirable act*) STOP

START (Alerters) + (politeness marker) + (*mikhastæm*) + *æge* {*momkene/emkan dare*} + main clause (desirable act) STOP

Formula form: *mishe + (desirable act)?*

'*mishe + (desirable act)?*' is a query preparatory utterance used for making conventionally indirect requests in Persian. It means 'is it possible that ...?', inquiring about the possibility of the desired act and the hearer's willingness and ability to make it happen. As such, this conventional routine corresponds to 'can/could you/I ...?', 'may I ...?', 'will/would you ...?' and 'would you mind...?' in English (Modal + You/I + VP). *mishe* is less formal than *momkene*. It has some varieties, such as *æge mishe* ('if it is possible'), with more or less the same meaning and function. To increase the politeness level, *mishe* can be preceded or followed by politeness markers such as *lotfæn*, or *bizæhmæt* ('please'). It can also be followed by *khahesh konæm* ('may I beg/ask you') as *mishe khahesh konæm* ('may I beg/ask you ...?') to increase the level of politeness.

Formula structure:

START (Alerters) + *mishe* + (politeness marker) + (*khahesh konæm*) + (*desirable act*) STOP

START (Alerters) + (politeness marker) + *mishe* + (*khahesh konæm*) + (*desirable act*) STOP

START (Alerters) + (politeness marker) + (*mikhastæm*) + *æge* {*mishe/beshe*} + main clause (desirable act) STOP

Formula form: *mitunid + (desirable act)?*

'*mitunid + (desirable act)?*' is a query preparatory utterance used for making conventional indirect requests, but it is not as popular as *momkene* and *mishe*. It means 'would you be able to ...?' or 'are you able to ...?' and corresponds to 'can/could you ...?' in English (Modal + You + VP). Unlike *momkene* and *mishe*, it merely questions the hearer's ability to do an action. *mituni* ('can/could you (T-form)?') is the informal variant of *mitunid* ('can/could you (V-form)?'). As regards perspective, *mitunid* merely shows the second person perspective. Its variant *mitunæm* shows the first person perspective, standing for 'may I?', 'can/could I?' in English (Modal + I + VP).

Formula structure:

START (Alerters) + *mitun-i/-id* + (politeness marker) + (*desirable act*) STOP

START (Alerters) + *mitunæm* + (*desirable act*) STOP

Formula form: *ejaze hæst + (desirable act)?*

'*ejaze hæst + (desirable act)?*' is a query preparatory utterance used for making conventional indirect requests in Persian. It means 'is it allowed ...?', corresponding to 'can/could I...?', 'may I...?', and 'I wonder if I could...?' in English (Modal + I + VP). As regards perspective, it is impersonal. It is formal and is mostly used with strangers. *æge ejaze bedin* ('if you allow me') is a variation with almost the same function.

Formula structure:

START (Alerters) + *ejaze hæst* + (*desirable act*) STOP

START (Alerters) + *æge ejaze* {*bedin/befærma'id*} + main clause (desirable act) STOP

8.9 Continuation patterns: request responses in Persian

Just as there are numerous ways of making requests, there are many ways of responding to them (Clark & Schunk, 1980, p. 121). Generally, a response to a request may be an offer or a denial. As regards the interpersonal relationship (e.g., friend-friend), the social context of the discourse and the type of request (e.g., demanding vs. undemanding), the requestee can comply with the request or can turn it down. Compliance with a request usually implies

verbal responses and/or non-verbal responses, which might take place in some steps (see Aijmer, 1996, p. 143). Verbal responses are usually fixed and conventional. Non-verbal responses may involve body language and/or physical acts (e.g., fetching the requested item and handing it over to the requester). The requested act (e.g., a favour/service), as Trosborg (1995) points out, is to take place post-utterance, either in the immediate future (requests-now) or at some later stage (requests-then) (p. 187). Aijmer (1996) considers a request the first part of an adjacency pair where a response (verbal and/or non-verbal) occupies the second position (p. 142). The response to a request (either offer or denial) might be adjacent to the request or may be separated from it by "insertion sequences" (Obeng, 1999, p. 230). Types of request responses in Persian are introduced in table 33.

In every day routinized situations, responses to requests are more or less automatic and fixed; however, in less routinized situations, as Aijmer (1996) points out, "the hearer is free to manoeuvre, to express reservations or to ask for further details before responding" (p. 142). Moreover, as Aijmer (1996) points out, compliance with a request may take place in several steps (p. 143). Based on the nature of a request, there might also be some follow-up moves (see Aijmer, 1996, p. 143). In the example below from a soap opera, person A enters the barbershop of his acquaintance to make a telephone call. He asks person B if he can use the telephone line and B responds positively. Then, as a follow-up move, A thanks B for his favour. The following discourse structure rule can be offered for this excerpt:

R1.   Request ---> Request (by requester) + Offer (by requestee verbally/non-verbally) + Acceptance of offer (expression of gratitude by requester verbally/non-verbally) + (Responder by requestee verbally/non-verbally)

01   A: *bebækhshid NP, ejaze hæst ye telefon bezænæm?*

       ('Excuse me NP, could I make a telephone call?')

02   B: *khahesh mikonæm*

       ('Please, go for it')

03   A: *mæmnun*

       ('Thanks')

04   B: Ø

While compliance with a request is more or less routinized, rejecting it is not so routinized and requires more planning (see Aijmer, 1996, p. 143). According to Aijmer (1996) negative

responses to requests are usually longer than affirmative ones and have special structural features such as pauses, apologies, disarmers, softeners and accounts (p. 143). In my data, I did not find any example of a request being rejected.

Table 33: Types of request responses

	Formula form	Literal meaning	Idiomatic sense
1	*chæshm*	aye	yes, okay, all right, I will, certainly
2	*be ru-ye cheshm/bechæshm*	on my eye	yes, okay, all right, I will, certainly
3	*ru tokhm-e cheshmam*	on the ball of my eye	yes, okay, all right, I will, certainly
4	*ru cheshmæm*	on my eyes	yes, okay, all right, I will, certainly
5	*khahesh mikonæm*	I beg (you)	go for it, here you are, sure, yes, certainly
6	*hætmæn*	certainly	most certainly
7	*bashe*	sure	sure, okay, certainly
8	*ælbæte*	sure things, of course	sure things, of course
9	*bæle*	yes	yes, yeah, yup
10	*(mæn) dær khedmætæm/mæn dær khedmætetunæm*	I am at your service	yes, yeah, yup
11	*æmr befærma'id*	you can command me	I am at your service
12	*ba kæmal-e meyl*	by all means	by all means
13	*ghabel-e shoma ro nædare*	It is not worthy of you	It is not worthy of you

8.10 Summary

Requesting is certainly an inevitable social act used in daily communications. Because of the face-threatening nature of requestive speech acts, making appropriate and tactful requests and responding to them properly is an important part of communicative competence of every competent speaker of any language. In Persian, politeness markers are widely used to turn a bare imperative sentence into a mitigated polite request. Three types of preparators are used to make the requests less threatening. Finally terms of address can accompany both direct and indirect requests to mitigate their illocutionary force.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

This thesis explores one type of speech formulae in Persian that is routinely used in recurrent situations for politeness purposes, termed routine politeness formulae (RPF). The study places RPF in context by looking at their particular social functions and their appropriate conditions of usage. RPF from five types of speech act are discussed and represented as dictionary entries and their forms and functions are investigated. In addition, since some of the RPF are indexed for their role in discourse, wherever necessary discourse structure rules are introduced. As regards the honorific system of Persian, characterised as speech levels, each RPF usually has a number of variants with different levels of politeness, which have been introduced under the title of 'formula structure'.

This study is based on data from Persian soap operas and role-plays. The data are conceived of as phraseological units, which are represented as dictionary entries. Moreover, RPF have been analysed within the framework of Brown and Levinson's (1987) face-saving model of politeness. This chapter outlines the main themes of the five data chapters, where the major findings are revisited in 9.2 and the broader implications discussed in 9.3. This study's limitations and avenues for further research are presented in 9.4.

9.2 RPF and the socio-cultural values and practices underpinning the polite exchanges in the Persian-speaking community

An appropriate linguistic site that demonstrates the correlation between language, culture and society is the routine formulae used for politeness purposes. This is because RPF are linked to particular social tasks and are used to perform social functions. Within the large family of phrasal lexical items, RPF are rich sources of socio-cultural information reflecting the common beliefs, cultural practices, habits, customs, values and attitudes of a speech community passed down over generations. They also illustrate the communicative competence of the native speakers of a given language. In addition, because every competent, mature language speaker knows these repetitive, day-to-day, non-specialised formulae, they

can depict aspects of the social order in Persian community, i.e., its social structures, social practices and social institutions. As such, the formulaic inventory can be used "to explore and critique socio-cultural practices and assumptions since the formulaic inventory is a cultural artefact and each formula thus has things to say about the culture in which it functions" (Kuiper, 2004, p. 46). Similarly, Teliya et al. (1998) argue that phrasal expressions can be a rich source of cultural information, encoding worldviews shaped over generations.

Iran is a complex society, and it is often difficult for outsiders to understand interpersonal behaviour among Iranians (see Beeman, 1986). As Beeman (1986) writes, "It is not unreasonable to compare interpersonal relations in Iran to art, for negotiating the webs of everyday personal relations and interaction situations requires consummate skill for even those born into the system" (p. 2). With that in mind, the examination of the form and use of RPF in Persian provides an insight into the dynamics of interpersonal behaviour among Persians and exposes the following socio-cultural values and practices underpinning the polite exchanges in Iranian society: (i) its group-oriented nature, (ii) a tendency towards positive (or solidarity) politeness understood as positive face strokes, (iii) the importance of seniority in terms of age and social status, (iv) differentiation between members of the 'inner circle' and the 'outer circle', (v) sensitivity to remaining in people's debt (debt-sensitivity), (vi) a high premium on reciprocity in interpersonal communications (or reciprocity of favours), and (vii) sensitivity to giving trouble to others (trouble-sensitivity). This thesis also reveals the dominance of the strategy of self-lowering and other-elevating in daily polite interactions. This principal and pervasive strategy is also manifested by two further sub-strategies: (i) a propensity to exaggerate favours received from others, and (ii) giving precedence to others over oneself. Finally, it is suggested that Islamic teachings have significantly influenced the formation and use of certain RPF. In the sections that follow, these socio-cultural values and practices in Iranian society and their relationship to the use and formation of RPF in Persian are discussed.

9.2.1 Collectivity vs. individualism

Different human societies, as Hofstede (2001) writes, exhibit gregariousness (or sociability) to different degrees (p. 209). Similar to those in Eastern societies, Iranians enjoy and appreciate less individuality than Westerners, who value individualism (or self-identity) over collectivity (or group-identity). For instance, in Eastern cultures (see Kinnison, 2000), people

deem themselves as part of networks (group-identity) rather than being merely individuals (self-identity). Group consciousness and interdependence in social relationships are central aspects of Iranian culture (see Koutlaki, 2002). The existence of extended families (at least until recently) and clans or tribal units (until last century), as well as its rich social traditions and customs, underline this cultural preference for collectivity in Iran.

In classifying cultures, Hofstede (2001) proposes a spectrum that has individualistic societies (e.g., the US) on one extreme and collectivistic societies (e.g., Guatemala in Latin America) on the other (pp. 214-19). The rest of the world's cultures lie somewhere between these two extremes. As an example, in highly individualistic American society, Johnson (1985) says that each individual "should be encouraged to make decisions for themselves, develop their own opinions, solve their own problems, have their own possessions, and, in general, learn to view the world from the point of view of self" (p. 133). In such societies, people value independence and self-reliance and each person attends to his/her own affairs. By contrast, as Eslamirasekh (1993) indicates, this concept of individualism is alien to Iranian culture (p. 97). In fact, in the Persian language, the term 'individualism' carries negative connotations and is approximately equivalent to selfishness and self centeredness. Collectivity, on the other hand, puts emphasis on the interdependence of all members of society and concern for the well-being of the group. A collective way of life implies that obeying social norms and conventions is more important than pursuing one's self interest, to the extent of total subordination of one's self to others or precedence of others over oneself. The Iranian culture is closer to the collectivist rather than the individualist end of Hofstede's 'individuality vs. collectivity scale', rating 41, while the U.S. and Guatemala rated 91 and 6 respectively (Hofstede, 2001, p. 215). Moreover, the findings of the present study suggest that Iranian culture is largely group-oriented. Adhering to group values can give rise to other values and qualities such as having high regard for social harmony and cohesion, mutual social obligations towards one another, as well as a high degree of mutual interdependence, among others.

As a group-oriented culture, Iranian society reflects this vital social tendency in the Persian language through: (i) the presence of an elaborate address system that can finely characterize people's relationships in terms of age, sex, family ties, social status and rank (see chapter two), (ii) the presence of an honorific system characterized by various speech levels by which one can tell who is who in terms of familiarity, status and rank (see chapter two), and (iii)

valuing positive (solidarity) politeness over negative politeness, manifested as "positive face strokes" (see Smith, 1991, p. 68).

In the following section, the soothing effects of some RPF on Persian social interpersonal relationships, known in the literature as 'positive face strokes' shall be elaborated upon.

9.2.2 Positive face strokes

As formerly quoted from Brown and Levinson (1987) in chapter two, our 'public self-image' or 'face' consists of wants and wishes that can only be satisfied by others. According to Scollon & Scollon (1995), "there is no communication without face" (p. 49). Depending on socio-cultural values, attitudes, and conventions, certain societies might attend mainly to negative face wants while others to positive face wants. Reviewing the use of RPF in Persian, one can claim that Iran is mainly a positive-politeness-oriented society, differing in attitude to politeness from conspicuously negative-politeness oriented societies such as New Zealand. Eslamirasekh (1993) argues that "The use of positive politeness strategies in Persian stems from the value of group orientedness in Iranian culture" (p. 97). In societies where group values and collectivity take precedence over individuality, expanding, strengthening and maintaining social ties and connections with other members of the society is vital. Consequently, over the centuries, the Persian language appears to have mobilised its resources to fulfil this aim by prioritizing positive (or solidarity) politeness over negative politeness; the former is usually characterized as "positive face strokes" (see Smith, 1991, p. 68).

The routine and frequent use of politeness formulae play a crucial role in attending to a co-participant's positive face in daily social interactions, communicating the crucial messages of care, warmth, intimacy, and support. Therefore, the everyday use of certain RPF by interactants can be visualized as gentle strokes or pats on the head or hand of co-participants (see Smith, 1991, p. 68). The use of RPF as positive face strokes can make participants feel liked and appreciated, and that in turn can give the participants a good feeling about the interaction. Put differently "Just as we stroke a cat to make it feel good, POSITIVE FACE STROKES are used to 'stroke' the addressee's positive face to make them feel good about the interaction" (upper case in original) (Smith, 1991, p. 68). Positive face strokes can enhance the sense of intimacy and solidarity among interactants and it may have some

psychological effects as well. Like physical strokes and touching in humans and other mammals, the prolific use of certain RPF in recurrent situations can deepen and strengthen human and social bonding (see chapter four). This finding seems to contradict mainstream beliefs regarding politeness formulae, also touched on by Laver (1981), that "The chief function of much of the routine linguistic material of everyday conversations is a ceremonial, ritual function" (p. 289).

9.2.3 The importance of seniority (in terms of age and status)

In Iranian society, seniority in terms of age and social status is a determining parameter in daily social interactions. Seniority, as a socio-cultural value, has an enduring impact on the ways that RPF are formed and used.

Iranians are obliged to show respect to elders in the way they speak and behave. From early on, children are enjoined to give due respect to elders, both inside and outside the family. As such, showing respect for elders is perceived as a sign of good upbringing. Inside the family, the presence of elderly parents is seen as a blessing, and the responsibility of caring for the elderly rests with the immediate family. Scriptures as well as Persian literature are full of advice on the importance of showing respect to elders. The Prophet Muhammad, for example, is quoted as saying that, "he is not of us who does not have kindness for our young and respect for our old". Culturally, old age is equated with wisdom, as it is publically held that wisdom resides among the elderly, and that the words of elders are words of wisdom. Therefore, the older you are, the higher your status in the hierarchy of power in Iranian society. Moreover, age as a social factor usually overrides other social factors such as occupation, wealth, etc. Accordingly, the way that RPF are used reflects this socio-cultural outlook towards age seniority. In greeting an older person, for example, it is the duty of the younger person to move forward and initiate the greeting sequence by proffering *sælam*. (see chapter four).

Further to the high status of elders in Iranian society, some RPF give direct reference to the importance of seniority in age. Older people, for example, in expressing their gratitude and thanks to younger people, might employ a conventional formula such as *pir beshi (elahi)*. This gratitude formula means 'you may grow to old age (by God's mercy)', but, as for its

idiomatic sense, it has the same function as generic expressions of gratitude simply meaning 'thanks' or 'thank you' in English (see chapter seven).

Seniority is also expressed in terms of one's social status. Beeman (1986) seems to consider hierarchical differentiation as a more or less universal feature of human life (p. 12). Iranians are highly conscious of social status, and naturally the politeness system of Persian can reveal that. Baumgardner (1982) maintains that "Respect for authority pervades all aspects of Iranian behaviour" (p. 72). Similarly Beeman (1986) adds, "There are few societies that take the obligations of status as seriously as does Iranian society" (p. 12). Higher social status, in Persian, is related to a higher level of politeness or more polite RPF. Respect for status is usually shown by terms of address and honorifics. Further, most of the RPF exhibit the three levels of plain, polite and honorific variedly used depending on the hearer's social status. For example, for 'how are you?' in English, there are a number of equivalents in Persian, demonstrating different levels of politeness through which the interactants signal to each other their respective social status and rank: (i) *chetowri?* (plain), (ii) *hal-et chetowre?* (plain), (iii) *haletun chetowre?* (polite), (iv) *hal-e shoma chetowre?* (polite) and (v) *hal-e hæzræt-e ʔali chetowre?* (honorific), among others. In addition, as stated earlier, terms of address are extremely frequent in daily social interactions in Persian. Thus, alongside grammatical devices, terms of address (e.g., occupational titles) precede or follow the RPF to further increase the level of politeness. As such, *hal-e shoma chetore agha-ye doktor?* ('How are you Mr. doctor?'), which is followed by an occupational title is more polite than *hal-e shoma chetore?* ('How are you?') alone. The use of the occupational title (*agha-ye doktor*: 'Mr doctor') can indicate the higher social status of the hearer.

9.2.4 *khodi* (people of the inner circle) vs. *ghæribe* (people of the outer circle)

One socio-cultural characteristic of Iranian culture, which has significant influence on the way politeness formulae are used, is the distinction observed between people of the inner circle (in-groups) and people of the outer circle (out-groups). In section 9.2.1 I discussed how group consciousness is a central aspect of Iranian culture. In-groups are those with whom one has close emotional bonding, including one's parents, siblings, spouses and children as well as relatives, close friends and peers. Koutlaki (2010) notes that *khodi* or insider relationships are usually characterized by mutual help, self-sacrifice and warmth, making the people of the

inner circle feel safe and secure (pp. 22-24). Out-groups, on the contrary, are those with whom there is little or no emotional bonding (e.g., acquaintances or total strangers). This distinction has had an enduring influence on Persian interpersonal communication, including the ways that RPF are used both inside and outside the family. As stated earlier, owing to the presence of speech levels in Persian, most of the RPF can show the three levels of plain (neutral), polite and honorific. For example, the plain forms of RPF are usually reserved for people belonging in the inner circle as informality can imply closeness and intimacy, whereas the polite and honorific forms of RPF are reserved for those in the outer circle as formality can imply social and emotional distance.

As articulated in chapter eight, when requesting something from people in the inner circle, one can use direct requests as plain imperatives (e.g., 'Give that pen to me') without running the risk of offending the requestee. In fact, the use of imperative direct requests with other members of the in-group can imply emotional closeness, intimacy and camaraderie (see chapter eight).

9.2.5 Sensitivity to remaining in people's debt (or Debt-sensitivity)

Like other Eastern cultures (see Matsumoto, 1988; Coulmas, 1981b; Kinnison, 2000), in Iranian culture, sensitivity to debt or not to be/remain in somebody's debt in interpersonal relationships is prominent. According to Koutlaki (2002), Persian culture is a debt-sensitive culture. As such, sensitivity to debt is responsible for the formation and use of a number of RPF in Persian. Dictionaries define 'debt' as something that is owed, such as money, goods or services. For the purpose of this study, however, debt is used metaphorically to also include moral obligations. As such, debt-sensitivity can loosely refer to awareness of the state of being indebted and that the debt (burden) should be paid back properly (if not in deeds then at least in words and through the use of certain RPF).

We can imagine a hypothetical situation in which person A has already done or has promised to do person B a favour (Z). In accordance with the 'strategy of maximizing the favours/services that one receives', (Z) is intentionally taken by person B to be exceptionally prodigious. Person B (the debtor/beneficiary) becomes deeply indebted to person A (the creditor/benefactor). As a socio-cultural rule in Iranian culture, B should properly pay back his/her debt (burden) to A either in deeds and/or words (e.g., through the use of certain RPF) in order for B not to remain indebted to A for the personal favour s/he received. This in turn

attends to person A's positive face, i.e., the desire to be liked, valued and to be treated as superior. In a closely-knit society such as Iran, with a high degree of mutual interdependence, we can imagine that person A may in turn be involved in another relationship where s/he is indebted to person X, and person B in his/her turn may have done another person, person Y, a favour. As a result, sensitivity to debt can in principle turn the whole society into endless interrelated chains of individuals who are simultaneously debtors/beneficiaries and creditors/benefactors. Each person attends to the positive face needs of another person, leading to the formation of a crucial sense of intimacy and solidarity among people. Consequently, these are the ties of obligation that bind people to one another, strengthening the social bonds among them.

Indebtedness also means to be grateful to somebody for their help. Thus, expressing indebtedness is one way to express one's deep gratitude. Iranians are very conscious of having others do things for them, and thanking can usually entail indebtedness to a benefactor. Debt of any sort should be paid back in deeds or at least should be properly acknowledged in words. As such, a sense of indebtedness in Iranian society is a significant driving force behind polite behaviour in general and the formation and use of a number of gratitude expressions in particular (see chapter seven). Upon expressing gratitude, one of the ways that somebody may reinforce their sense of gratitude and attend to the positive face needs of co-participants is to present themselves as deeply indebted for the services or favours received. Expressions of gratitude that explicitly articulate indebtedness are usually stronger than common gratitude expressions and are reserved for occasions where the object of gratitude is either exceptionally large or is taken to be so. By presenting oneself as being indebted, whether genuinely or just as a formality, one lowers oneself as a debtor and raises one's interlocutor as a creditor. This complies with the principal strategy of self-lowering and other elevating, which in turn attends to the creditor's (benefactor's) positive face, i.e., the desire to be valued and appreciated. In Persian, there are a number of expressions of indebtedness that are used when expressing gratitude (see chapter seven).

Furthermore, debt-sensitivity in Iranian culture is responsible for the formation of a special type of gratitude expressions, termed 'apologetic gratitude expressions'. Following the strategy of maximizing the favours that one receives, it is not surprising that a slight favour can instantly turn the beneficiary into a big debtor. The debt (burden) should be paid back in appropriate ways as soon as possible in order for the beneficiary not to remain in debt. If the beneficiary feels incapable of repaying the debt fully, apologizing on the spot is an

instantaneous and sincere way to free one's shoulders from the burden of indebtedness (see chapter seven).

Debt-sensitivity is closely connected to the concept of reciprocity of favours, which is addressed in the following section.

9.2.6 Reciprocity (of favours)

The sense of indebtedness in Iranian community is connected to another socio-cultural value, known as reciprocity (of favours). Reciprocity is regarded as a key principle of cooperative interaction. Referring to the Japanese cultural setting, Lebra (1976) notes, "Reciprocity must be distinguished from pure economic exchange in that its significance lies in the creation or maintenance of a social relationship rather than in the transfer of goods from hand to hand" (p. 101). According to Eslamirasekh (1993), one important aspect of positive or solidarity politeness in Persian is the assumption and assertion of reciprocity (p. 96). The reciprocity of favours can guarantee the continuation of social relationships among people. Person A has done (or has promised to do) person B a favour. In response and as an act of appreciation, person B expresses indebtedness and a desire to return, repay or reciprocate the favour (see also Lebra, 1976). As stated earlier, in a society where expressing solidarity with other members of society can guarantee one's wellbeing, showing oneself indebted and expressing the will to repay (or reciprocate) favours can maintain and enhance social bonding, cohesion and harmony in the society. Therefore, at the time of expressing gratitude, for example, one can express the intention to reciprocate or compensate for the favour by employing special types of RPF such as *inshallah ke betunæm (lotfetun ro) jobran konæm* ('God willing, I hope that I can compensate or reciprocate your favour') (see chapter seven).

9.2.7 Sensitivity to giving trouble to others (or trouble-sensitivity)

To reiterate, Iranian culture is known to favour positive (solidarity) politeness over negative politeness. However, daily interactions need to attend to the negative face of co-participants too. While imposition on the negative face of insiders/in-groups (e.g., immediate family members) is not very important and can even be regarded as a sign of closeness, intimacy and camaraderie (if it does not exceed appropriate limits, of course), people are usually extremely

conscious of imposition on the negative face of outsiders (non-intimates/out-groups). Therefore, Iranians are very cautious about elaborately acknowledging any imposition on the negative face of outsiders, such as the troubles they go through in order to provide a favour. As such, sensitivity to 'trouble' in Iranian culture is shorthand for sensitivity to imposition on the negative face of outsiders.

(i) Asking others for a favour puts the supplicant under a moral obligation to express his/her gratitude using the proper formulae. However, there are times when a benefactor goes through a lot of trouble and inconvenience to confer a benefit without being asked. Coulmas (1981) refers to the gratitude appropriate for this as "thanks for some action initiated by the benefactor" (p. 74). In such cases, the recipient is under a greater sense of obligation than if s/he asked for the favour. Therefore, there is a greater obligation for the beneficiary to express acknowledgement (gratitude). There are a number of conventional formulae used lavishly for acknowledging and thanking these troubles/inconveniences such as *chera zæhmæt mikeshin*? ('Why do you trouble yourself?'/'You needn't have bothered') (see chapter seven for more examples).

(ii) In justifying the existence of 'apologetic gratitude expressions', where one apologizes to one's interlocutor to express thanks, the concept of debt-sensitivity in Iranian culture was referred to. However, there is another reason behind the use of apologetic gratitude expressions which involves the way Iranians approach the notion of favour. Favours received from others can have two aspects (see Coulmas, 1981): the trouble that the benefactor has undergone to provide a favour/service (or the benefactor's sacrifice on behalf of the beneficiary), and the pleasure of the beneficiary in benefiting from the favour (p. 83). In Iranian culture, a beneficiary tends to ignore the latter part of a favour, and to exclusively concentrate on the troubles that the benefactor has gone through, which by itself can produce a sense of guilt and embarrassment in the beneficiary for which s/he should apologise to the benefactor immediately (see chapter six).

(iii) As noted in chapter five, in Persian, permission needs to be asked by employing the 'announcing leave-taking' (ALT) formulae prior to leaving the company of associates in order to avoid offending them (see chapter five). The prevailing sentiment in most of the ALT formulae is that the leave-taker is going to leave the company of his/her associate in order to put an end to the troubles the latter has been going through: *ba ejaze bænde dige*

ræfʔ-e zæhmæt mikonæm ('With your permission this humble fellow would lessen the trouble of his/her presence'), among others.

9.2.8 Self-lowering and other-elevating

For Tannen and Öztek (1981) 'putting oneself down' and 'building the other up' are regarded as two main strategies for establishing rapport between participants, especially in cultures where relative status and rank is socially significant (e.g., Turkish) (p. 41). Likewise, Brown and Levinson (1987) say that submission and deference can be shown in two ways: one in which the speaker abases himself/herself, and another where the speaker raises hearer (pp. 178-9). Deference and submission can be shown both linguistically and non-linguistically. In almost all known cultures and religions, people physically lower themselves (e.g., bowing, kneeling, prostrating, crouching, lowering their gaze, etc.) before an important person or a Supreme Being to show respect and submission. The person who bows, kneels, prostrates or gazes down makes himself/herself appear physically lower than the other person or Supreme Being. By contrast, things of importance such as persons or religious symbols are put in a higher physical position to appear more prominent and superior than others. Therefore, in a royal court where the king or queen is sitting on a high seat and the subjects bowing or prostrating themselves in a much lower position in front of them (self-humility), utmost deference and/or submission is implied. Interestingly, on a par with body language, body gestures and postures, the grammatical systems of languages (e.g., honorific systems and terms of address) provide speakers with linguistic means to lower (humiliate/debase) themselves in front of others and/or to make others appear more superior than themselves. To achieve maximum effect, these non-verbal and verbal means of abasement often go hand in hand. The physical lowering of the head, or gaze, kneeling or prostrating can linguistically be translated into using humble forms in reference to oneself (self-humility) and/or using honorific forms in addressing others (other-elevating). As noted in chapter two, one of the features of Persian is that linguistic forms, including the formulaic inventory, can display different levels of speech/politeness. In Persian, like some other languages, there are two axes of distinction: the axis of reference and the axis of address (cf. Korean, in Martin, 1964). The axis of reference encompasses plain (neutral) and humble levels, whereas the axis of address encompasses plain (neutral), polite, honorific (deferential) and royal levels. The royal level, however, has not featured as part of the language since the 1979 revolution, after the fall of

almost 2500 years monarchy. More recently, the highest level of politeness is achieved when a speaker uses a humble form to refer to himself/herself and an honorific form to address a hearer, enhanced through lexical alternatives in both the verbal and pronominal systems. This strategy attends to the positive face of the hearer, making them feel liked and appreciated.

As regards speech levels in Persian, RPF of various types can usually show various levels of politeness (e.g., neutral, polite, honorific). As such, one common strategy to increase the politeness level is to lower oneself and to simultaneously raise/elevate the addressee. Thus, the speaker employs humble forms for himself/herself, treating himself/herself as inferior, and uses honorific forms for his/her addressee, treating him/her as superior. To demonstrate, let us look at one formula (see chapter five) used for the announcement of leave-taking in Persian, understanding that leave-taking is not an abrupt act of saying goodbye and simply leaving: *æge ejaze befærma'in, bænde kæm kæm æz hozuretun morkhæs mishæm* ('If you (V-form) grant me permission, this slave/humble fellow would leave your respected presence gradually'). Firstly, in this subjunctive sentence, *ejaze færmudæn* ('to grant permission') implies a superiority-inferiority relationship where one party asks for permission and the other party grants that permission. This attends to the positive face needs of the hearer since the speaker presupposes that the hearer has the rank/status to refuse permission. Secondly, *morkhæs shodæn* ('to be released') as a humble verb form compared to *ræftæn* ('to go/to leave'), a neutral verb form, entails a superiority-inferiority relationship where one person has enough power over somebody to release him/her. In other words, in attending to the positive face needs of the hearer (e.g., a host/hostess), the speaker presupposes that the hearer has the rank/status to refuse his/her request for leave-taking. Thirdly, the use of *bænde* ('slave') as a humble form (or humiliative form) for *mæn* ('I'), the neutral form, further lowers the position of the speaker and hence increases the social distance between speaker and hearer, communicating more deference. Fourthly, the adverb *kæm kæm* ('gradually') signifies that the speaker is to leave but not abruptly since the other party might feel ignored and rejected.

As another example taken from chapter six, at the time of leave-taking (e.g., after a dinner party) the host/hostess might lavishly apologize to the leave-taker for not being able to provide a better time and service for the leave-taker by saying *bebækhshid dige æge bæd gozæsht* ('Sorry if you had a bad time'). In response, the leave-taker would promptly reply with conventional formulae such as *khahesh mikonæm, in hærfa chiye?* ('I beg you not to say this') and *kheyli hæm khosh gozæsht* ('Actually, I enjoyed myself a lot'). The apology by the host/hostess is in line with the strategy of self-lowering and other-elevating. In so doing, as

Koutlaki (2010) contends, the Iranian host/hostess assumes that the hospitality s/he provided was not sufficient to what the guest would deserve, thereby communicating utmost deference to the leave-taker and utmost humility and abasement of himself/herself (p. 47).

Another example (see chapter four), culled from a greeting exchange, the importance of seniority in terms of age, is exhibited by the younger person in a dyad usually moving towards the older party and initiating the greeting sequence by offering *sælam*, disclosing his/her relative rank and status as lower (self-lowering).

Almost all RPF in Persian allow for the use of this pervasive strategy (self-lowering and other-elevating) in one way or another. In addition, as we shall see in the following sections, the strategies of 'maximising the favours that one receives from others (and belittling the favours that one provides)' as well as 'precedence of others over oneself' are regarded as subcategories of 'self-lowering and other-elevating'.

9.2.9 Exaggerating the favours/services received from others

The sub-strategy of exaggerating the favours/services received from others (and belittling the favours/services given to others) is in accordance with the fundamental and pervasive strategy of 'self-lowering and other-elevating' and is a prominent feature of polite behaviour among Iranians. Hence, exaggerating the favours/services that one receives from a benefactor is a means through which the beneficiary can attend to the positive face wants of the benefactor, strengthening solidarity and social bonding.

(i) When an Iranian is handed something, upon expressing due gratitude, the beneficiary may express the wish to be sacrificed for the benefactor. For example as shown in chapter seven, when handed a cup of tea, in expressing gratitude, the recipient might say '*ghorbunet*' or '*fædat beshæm*' ('May I be sacrificed in your place'). Considering this hypothetical example, the intensity of gratitude is not proportional to the 'object of gratitude' (benefaction), which in many languages simply requires mild thanking. Exaggerating favours/services that one receives from others attends to the positive face needs of the co-participants, i.e., the desire to be liked and appreciated, making the hearer feel good about the interaction (see chapter seven).

(ii) The strategy of exaggerating favours/services received from others is mainly evident in the formulating a special type of gratitude expression termed 'exaggerated gratitude expressions' (see chapter seven). One common feature of exaggerated gratitude expressions is that the beneficiary feels unusually grateful and does not know how and with what language to express his/her gratitude. Put differently, the favour/benefit bestowed on the receiver is supposed to be so great that the beneficiary is unable to express his/her appreciation to the benefactor adequately: *mæn nemidunæm ba che zæbuni æz shoma tæshækkor konæm* ('I do not know with what language/words I can thank you') meaning that, owing to the enormity of the favour, even language (or words) is inadequate in fulfilling the act of thanking (see chapter seven).

(iii) As aforementioned, a good number of gratitude expressions in Persian are benedictory in nature, termed 'God-bound gratitude expressions' (see chapter seven). That is, they are short invocations for God's blessing, help and support towards one's interlocutor. As mentioned, we usually thank people for the favours and/or services that we receive, referred to as the object(s) of gratitude. The underlying reason in employing God-bound gratitude expressions is the strategy of 'exaggerating the favours/services received from others'. In expressing thanks and gratitude towards a benefactor, the beneficiary assumes that the benefaction is so great that as a human being (and therefore necessarily weak) s/he is unable to thank the benefactor enough and that only God, who as the source of unlimited power and mercy (being magnificent and merciful), can reward and/or repay the benefactor, and thereby release the beneficiary from the huge burden of indebtedness (debt-sensitivity). God-bound gratitude expressions are usually reserved for thanking for major favours and services. Among them are: *khoda ʔævæzetun bede* ('Let God repay you (for your kindness)') (see chapter seven).

9.2.10 Precedence of others over oneself

Another element of the self-lowering and other-elevating strategy is the putting of others over oneself. The politeness convention in Iran dictates that, in social interactions, others generally take priority over oneself. As discussed extensively in chapter five, upon leave-taking, the leave-taker often needs to resort to some excuses or accounts, termed I-patterned excuses and/or You-patterned excuses to justify his/her intention for leave-taking. I-patterned excuses involve the personal needs of the leave-taker (e.g., 'I'm afraid I must be off. I've a million

things to do'), while You-patterned excuses are directed towards the needs of the host/hostess (e.g., 'you've been busy for a whole day and are very tired') (see Laver, 1975; Kinnison, 2000). Based on the data in the present study, in Persian, both types of reasoning are employed. As with the Chinese (see Kinnison, 2000), to Iranians, the use of other-oriented excuses for leave-taking does not seem indirect and/or imposing. Instead, considering the strategy of 'precedence of others over oneself', other-oriented excuses are regarded as appropriate, caring and totally polite means of attending to the positive face needs of the hearer.

As mentioned in chapter five, in informal situations and with the people of the inner circle, it is not unusual for the host/hostess to persuade/convince the leave-taker to stay a bit longer even though, the leave-taker has already turned down the request to stay longer and has already risen to his/her feet to leave. In Brown and Levinson's politeness model (1987), this might be regarded as a threat to the leave-taker's negative face, wishing to have his/her freedom of action unhindered. However, from the leave-taker's perspective, given the strategy of precedence of others over oneself in Iranian culture, the leave-taker's face wants do not take precedence over those from whom s/he is taking leave.

9.2.11 The influence of Islamic teachings on the formation and use of some RPF

In most languages and cultures, a number of RPF have religious overtones (see Tannen & Öztek, 1981, p. 41). Reviewing the RPF of various types in Persian, the abundance of direct/indirect reference to religious symbols, values and events is very striking. There are many conventional formulaic expressions that are religiously loaded. Iranians usually identify themselves with a particular belief or religion. As an old nation state, Iran has always boasted a state religion throughout her 2571 years of official history. Zoroastrianism was the first state religion until the Islamic conquest of Persia in the seventh century that saw the gradual conversion of people to Islam. Besides Zoroastrianism and Islam, there have been large Christian and Jewish communities living in Iran. As the mirror of society, language naturally reflects the religious beliefs popular among the people. These old religions usually dictate the rules that apply in every aspect of life, including people's social behaviour or etiquette.

(i) A good number of RPF, as demonstrated in the data chapters, contain direct or indirect reference to *khoda*/*Allah* ('God'), the Prophet Muhammad, Shiite Imams (twelve religious

leaders), verses of the Koran, scriptures and *Hadith* (narrations from the Prophet Muhammad and Imams). Some speech acts, e.g., greetings (see chapter four), and the related array of RPF are so deeply connected with Islamic teachings and practices that in using them one is truly engaging in a religious act (see Caton, 1986, p. 294). The Islamic (Koranic) model of greeting deals with both non-verbal and verbal aspects. Greeting people by offering *æs-sælamu ʿælæykum* ('Peace be upon you') holds a special place in Islamic proprieties. In the Koran (*Surah Al-An'am*, 6: 54), believers have specifically been urged to greet other Muslims by *sælamun ʔælæykum* ('Peace be upon you') (see chapter four).

Most lay people are not usually aware of the strong religious connotations of the greeting expressions. However, due to their literacy and their familiarity with the Koran and scriptures, some religious people insist on following the Koranic model of greeting as a badge of identity. Accordingly, imitating the exact Koranic model of greeting and adhering to the exact pronunciation of the expressions convey deep faith and loyalty towards Islam – so much so that one can easily be identified as religious simply by the way one employs RPF for everyday greetings. For example, as explained in chapter four, in Iranian society, those who insist on using the greeting formula *sælamon ʔæleykom* ('Peace be upon you') instead of more common expressions such as *sælam* for opening a greeting sequence are usually marked as religious or *Hezbollahi* (a member of God's party), understanding that one of the general functions of the formulae, as Tannen and Öztek (1981) note, is "to establish the person who uses them correctly, as a group member" (p. 46).

(ii) Muslims are very conscious of committing sins against God or other people. This exquisite sensitivity to sins, possibly originating from the myth of the fall of man, elaborated in the Koran and Shiite scriptures, may explain the formation and prolific use of some RPF used for apologizing in Persian. The act of *hælaliyyæt tælæbidæn* (beseeching forgiveness from the offended person) is a commonly recommended virtue observed mainly among Shiite believers. Given this religious context, in Iranian culture, *hælal konid* ('forgive me'), as a marked and strong expression of apology, is usually reserved for severe violations and offences for which the offender must ask for forgiveness in person. This formula entails a strong sense of guilt and indebtedness on the part of the apologizer (see chapter six).

(iii) Benedictions are short conventional prayers, called 'benedictory formulae', that are mostly from Arabic which are abundantly used with the RPF in Persian. Some greeting

formulae (see chapter four) used as second and third person information elicitations can be followed by benedictions such as *ælhæmdollah* ('Praise be to *Allah*') and *inshallah* (May God desire so) to further increase the cordiality of the enquiries. As such, *hal-e shoma khube ælhæmdollah?* signifies more affection and warmth than *hal-e shoma khube?* ('How are you?') alone.

(iv) RPF can also directly reference religious figures and important events in the history of Islam. As shown in chapter four, the proper name *Ali*, the first Imam in the Shiite sect of Islam, has been employed as part of a common leave-taking formula among Iranian Shiites: *Ya Ali* ('O' *Ali*') simply corresponds to 'goodbye' in English. Through constant use, this expression has become lexicalised and retained in the collective memory of the Persian speaking community as a common leave-taking formula, not to mention its other formulaic usages in everyday language. In fact, this peculiar leave-taking formula marks an important historical event in the Islamic world, which eventually split the Muslims into the two major rival groups, the Shiites and the Sunnis. Whether or not Iranians are aware of the historical background and religious connotations of such formulae, they are widely used in daily social interactions, particularly in informal situations. Interestingly, this author is acquainted with educated, secular people who use *Ya Ali* when leaving the company of others, having forgotten about (or ignoring) its once strong religious connotations. This confirms the notion that repetition strips an expression of their original literal meaning (Coulmas, 1981, pp. 4-5).

9.3 Cultural relativity in formation and use of RPF

Ethnography, as Johnstone (2004) writes, "presupposes (...) that the best explanations of human behaviour are particular and culturally relative" rather than being general and universal (p. 76). In her paper titled 'Different cultures, different languages, different speech acts', Wierzbicka (1985) claims that without reference to cultural values and attitudes, speech acts of various types cannot be truly understood. Likewise, Coulmas (1981) says that although, for example, the speech acts of apology and thanks may exist across cultures, the pragmatic considerations of their usage are defined culturally (p. 89). For this reason, RPF can readily provide much information about the values that are upheld in a given culture.

As regards the speech act of apologizing, Suszczyńska (1999) maintains that while English, Hungarian and Polish have relatively the same IFIDs ('expression of regret', 'offer of

apology' and 'request for forgiveness'), they cannot perfectly be mapped onto one another across these three languages (p. 1058). For example, the IFID formulae expressing regret (e.g., 'sorry') are more represented in English than in Polish or Hungarian. IFID formulae requesting forgiveness are more represented and routinized in Hungarian than in English or Polish. Moreover, while Hungarian and Polish make use of 'don't be angry' as a common IFID, English does not employ this expression as an apologetic formula. Thus, Suszczyńska (1999) contends that apologizing as a speech act is culture-sensitive reflecting culture-specific values and attitudes of different languages and cultures (p. 1053). For example, as noted in chapter six, expressing shame, embarrassment and guilt is a popular way to express apology in Persian. *shærmænde* (means 'I am/feel ashamed/embarrassed'), as an explicit humble apology, roughly corresponds to 'I am sorry', 'excuse me' and 'pardon me' in English used in situations of high offence. Studies on apology speech acts in other languages (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989) seem to reveal that the expression of shame, embarrassment and guilt for the act of apology is specific to Persian (see Wouk, 2006b: 1468; Afghari, 2007; Shariati and Chamani, 2010).

To sum up, although the same type of speech acts are found in various cultures, the pragmatic consideration of their usage is defined culturally (Coulmas, 1981, p. 89) and, more importantly "(...) there is cultural variation as to which formulas become routinized as an apology" (Wouk, 2006b, p. 1468).

9.4 Winds of change: The change of RPF through time

Language continually changes over time as societies themselves change. While the phonological and grammatical systems of a language change very slowly, changes in politeness system/behaviour are usually much quicker to address the changes in the socio-cultural milieu of a society. As proposed above, Iranian society has always been group-oriented and this has left its imprints on the Persian language in general and the formulaic inventory in particular. However, since the early twentieth century and the modernization of the country, Iran's socio-cultural structure has undergone dramatic changes. Although Iran is not yet a totally modern society in its strictest sense, the tides of change have already swept away many of its customs and cultural practices, especially under the influence of European/American culture. Clans and tribal units are already gone, the extended family is becoming weaker, and rituals and customs are observed less seriously. In line with these

changes in the Iranian society, politeness behaviour and the related formulaic inventory are undoubtedly undergoing some changes as well, e.g., reduction, simplification and secularization. These changes and developments, for example, resemble the changes that have happened in the politeness systems of European languages in recent centuries, and in Syrian Arabic in recent decades (see Ferguson, 1983, p. 68). Likewise, Tannen and Öztek (1981) report that in both Turkey and Greece older people tend to use formulas more than younger people in daily interactions (p. 46). In Greece, formulas are far more widely used in the villages than in Athens. It is usually the younger generation of speakers who, due to their urbanization, secularization and familiarity with Western cultures, have developed a tendency for more simplicity in their polite behaviour, characterized by using fewer formulae, less complex patterns, fewer honorific terms of address, fewer religious-bound formulae, and by using forms that are more egalitarian or simply 'cool'. Although it is outside the limits of this study to track changes in the use of the politeness formulae through time, the review of RPF shows that over the past few decades the Persian politeness system has undergone changes, making a number of RPF either outdated or no longer fashionable. Inside data chapters four to eight some RPF have been designated as archaic or old-fashioned that means they are not used by younger generations any more (e.g., see sections 5.4, 6.3.1, 7.4.2). Further studies can reveal how much the politeness system in Persian in general, and the RPF in particular, have changed concurrent with the inevitable transition of Iranian society into modernity.

9.5 Implications of this study

This thesis is not simply a collection of the politeness formulae; rather, it places RPF in context by looking at their particular social functions. It shows how RPF are used in daily social interactions and how they can define co-participants' relationship in terms of age, social status, religious affiliation, etc. This thesis can be regarded as an introduction to the dynamics of interpersonal polite behaviour among the Persians. In addition, this study has pedagogical implications. Teachers of Persian to non-Persian speakers and textbook writers can use it as a resource to explicitly teach students the forms and social functions of RPF. Lastly, this study has shown that the use of soap operas is a valid and effective method of collecting data for the analysis of speech acts and RPF.

9.6 Limitations and future research

It should be noted that what was introduced in this thesis was not an exhaustive analysis of RPF in Persian. Owing to limitation of time and data collection, as elaborated upon in chapter three, this study is not quite as comprehensive as originally intended.

During the data collection phase, it was initially planned to collect data on all types of RPF found in the soap operas. Therefore, the RPF of approximately 23 types of speech acts were identified, extracted as short video clips, transcribed on paper (transcription forms) and then coded and classified for further analysis. However, during the writing phase it became clear that this study could not cover all types of RPF in Persian within the time and space limits of a PhD. The viable solution arrived upon by this author was to focus on five major types of speech act, namely, greeting, leave-taking, apologising, thanking and requesting. The reason these speech acts were chosen was that they are central to interpersonal communication and the speech community. That is, every native speaker of Persian must be able to perform such speech acts if they are to be considered encultured members of Iranian society. Also, they have a higher frequency of occurrence in the collected data than other speech acts. Future studies should make an effort to study other types of speech act and RPF not included in this study.

The sources of data in this study are regarded as non-natural. It is recommended that future studies use more naturalistic data to determine if they validate the data derived from soap operas and shed light on the reliability of this data source for use in other future studies.

In this study, some general clues were given regarding the non-verbal aspects of using some RPF, especially for the speech acts of greetings and leave-taking. Future research could also investigate the non-verbal aspects and prosody of RPF more extensively.

Finally, this study did not attempt to address the question of actual usage (e.g., frequency of RPF, the impact of social variables, etc.). Therefore, future research could investigate these factors more closely.

Appendix A

♦ **Sub-phase one of the third phase of a LT sequence:** Announcement of leave-taking by the person leaving

►**Formula form:** *ejaze-ye morkhæsi be bænde mifærma'in?*

('Would you please allow this slave/humble fellow to leave your respected presence?')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + *ejaze-ye morkhæsi* (*be* {*mæn/bænde*}) {*midin/mifærma'in*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *æge ejaze befærma'in, bænde kæm kæm æz hozuretun morkhæs mishæm*

('If you grant me permission, this slave (I) would leave your respected presence little by little'.)

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + (*æge ejaze* {*bedin/befærma'in*}) ({*mæn/bænde/ma*}) (*dige*) ({*felæn/kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) (*æz* {*hozuretun/khedmætetun*}) *morkhæs* {*mishæm/beshæm/mishim/beshim*} STOP

►**Formual Form:** *æge ejaze befærma'in, bænde dige zæhmæt-o kæm konæm*

('If you grant me permission, I would save the trouble of my presence.')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + *æge ejaze* {*bedin/befærma'in*} {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) ({*felæn/yævash yævash*}) *zæhmæt-o kæm* {*mikonæm/bekonæm/konæm/mikonim/bekonim/konim*} STOP

►**Formual form:** *æge ejaze befærma'in, bænde dige ræfʔ-e zæhmæt mikonæm*

('If you grant me permission, I would lessen the trouble of my presence'/'I would humbly take my leave')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + *æge ejaze* {*bedin/befærma'in*} {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) ({*felæn/kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) *ræf?-e zæhmæt* {*mikonæm/bekonæm/konæm/mikonim/bekonim/konim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *khob, ba ejazætun, ma morkhæs mishim*

('Right then, with your permission, we (I) take our leave')

Formula structure:

START *khob* + (VOC) + *ba* {*ejaze/ejazætun/ejaze-ye shoma*} {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) ({*felæn/kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) *morkhæs* {*mishæm/beshæm/mishim/beshim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *ba ejaze bænde dige zæhmæt-o kæm mikonæm*

('With your permission this slave (I) would lessen the trouble of his/her presence')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + *ba* {*ejaze/ejazætun/ejaze-ye shoma*} ({*mæn/bænde/ma*}) (*dige*) ({*felæn/yævash yævash*}) *zæhmæt-o kæm* {*mikonæm/konæm/mikonim/konim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *bænde dige zæhmæt-o kæm mikonæm*

('This slave would lessen the trouble of his/her presence'/'I would humbly take my leave')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) ({*felæn/kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) *zæhmæt-o kæm* {*mikonæm/bekonæm/konæm/mikonim/bekonim/konim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *ba ejaze bænde dige ræfʔ-e zæhmæt mikonæm*

('With your permission this slave would lessen the trouble of his/her presence, or 'if you grant me permission, I would humbly take my leave')

Formula Structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + (*ba* {*ejaze/ejazætun/ejaze-ye shoma*}) {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) ({*felæn/kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) *ræfʔ-e zæhmæt* {*mikonæm/konæm/mikonim/konim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *æge æmri nædarid, bænde dige zæhmæt-o kæm konæm*

('If I can be of service to you in no other way, I would save the trouble of my presence')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + *æge* {*kari/æmri/færmayeshi*}{*nædarid/nist*} + {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) ({*felæn/kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) {*zæhmæt-o kæm/ræfʔ-e zæhmæt*} {*mikonæm/ bekonæm/konæm/mikonim/bekonim/konim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *behtær-e ke bænde æz hozuretun morkhæs beshæm*

('It is better for me to leave your respected presence', or 'I'd better humbly leave your respected presence')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + *behtær-e ke* ({*mæn/bænde/ma*}) (*dige*) ({*kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) (*æz* {*hozuretun/khedmætetun*}) *morkhæs* {*beshæm/beshim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *behtær-e ke bænde dige zæhmæt-o kæm konæm*

('It is better for this slave (me) to lessen the trouble of his/her presence', or 'I'd better humbly leave your honored presence')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + *behtære ke* {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) (*yævash yævash*) *zæhmæt-o kæm kon-æm/-im* STOP

►**Formula form:** *behtær-e ke mæn dige ræfʔ-e zæhmæt konæm*

('It is better for this slave (humble fellow) to save the trouble of his/her presence', or 'I'd better humbly leave your honored presence')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + *behtære ke* {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) ({*kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) *ræfʔ-e zæhmæt kon-æm/-im* STOP

►**Formula form:** *bænde dige bayæd ræfʔ-e zæhmæt konæm*

('I should save the trouble of my presence', or 'I humbly wish to take my leave')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) ({*kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) *bayæd ræfʔ-e zæhmæt kon-æm/-im* STOP

►**Formula form:** *bænde dige bayæd zæhmæt-o kæm konæm*

('I should save the trouble of my presence')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) (*yævash yævash*) *bayæd zæhmæt-o kæm kon-æm/-im* STOP

►**Formula form:** *bænde dige bayæd æz hozuretun morkhæs beshæm*

('I should leave your respected presence')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + {*bænde/mæn/ma*} (*dige*) ({*kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) *bayæd* ({*æz hozuretun/æz khedmætetun*}) *morkhæs besh-æm/-im* STOP

►**Formula form:** *æge ejaze bedin, mæn dige miræm*

('If you grant me permission, I would leave')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + *æge ejaze* {*bedin/befærma'id*} {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) ({*felæn/kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) {*miræm/beræm/mirim/berim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *jenabali ba bænde færmayeshi nædarin?*

('You (exalted Sir) have no other business with me?'/'Is there anything I can be of service with?')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + (*shoma/jenabali/særkar/hæzræteʔali*) *ba* {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) {*kari/æmri/færmayeshi*} *nædar-i/-in* STOP

►**Formula form:** *æge kari nædarin, mæn dige miræm*

('If there was no other business with me, I would leave'/'If I can be of service to you in no other way, I would leave')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + (*æge* {*kari/æmri/færmayeshi*} *nædarin*) {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) ({*felæn/kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) {*miræm/beræm/mirim/berim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *ba ejazætun, mæn dige miræm*

('With your permission, I am leaving')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + *ba* {*ejazætun/ejaze-ye shoma/ejazæt*} {*mæn/bænde/ma*} (*dige*) ({*felæn/kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) {*miræm/beræm/mirim/berim*} STOP

Formula form: *khob dige mozahemetun nemishim*

('I would not trouble you any more')

Formula structure:

START *khob* + (VOC) + *dige* ({*bishtær æz in/æz in bishtær*}) {*mozahemtun/mozaheme shoma/mozahemet*} {*nemishæm/næshæm/nemishim/næshim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *kari nædari?*

('Anything else?', 'Is there anything I can be of service with?')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + ({*to/shoma/jenabali/særkar/hæzræteʔali*}) ({*ba mæn/ma/bænde*}) (*dige*) {*kari/æmri/færmayeshi*} *nædar-i/-in* STOP

►**Formula form:** *behtær-e ke mæn beræm*

('I'd better go now')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + *behtære ke* ({*mæn/bænde/ma*}) (*dige*) ({*felæn/kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) {*beræm/berim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *mæn daræm miræm*

('I am leaving/going')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + (*pæs*) {*mæn/ma*} (*dige*) ({*kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) {*daræm miræm/darim mirim*} + (VOC) STOP

►**Formula form:** *mæn ræftæm*

('I left')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + (*pæs*) {*mæn/ma*} (*dige*) {*ræft-æm/-im*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *mæn bayæd beræm*

('I should go')

Formula structure:

START (*khob*) + (VOC) + {*mæn/ma*} (*dige*) ({*kæm kæm/yævash yævash*}) bayæd {*beræm/berim*} STOP

♦ **Sub-phase two of the third phase of a LT sequence:** Persuading the leave-taker to stay longer

►**Formula form:** *khahesh mikonæm, tæshrif darin hala*

('Stay longer please'/'You could stay longer')

Formula structure:

START (*khahesh mikonæm*) + (VOC) + *tæshrif* {*darin/dashtin*} {*hala/felæn*} STOP

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►Formula form: *khahesh mikonæm, tæshrif dashte bashin hala*

('Stay longer please'/'You could stay longer')

Formula structure:

START (*khahesh mikonæm*) + (VOC) + *tæshrif dashte bashin* {*hala*/*felæn*} STOP

►Formula form: *khahesh mikonæm, dær khedmætetun hæstim hala*

('Let's be in your respected presence a little longer')

Formula structure:

START (*khahesh mikonæm*) + (VOC) + *dær khedmætetun* {*budim*/*hæstim*/*bashim*} ({*hala*/*felæn*}) STOP

►Formula form: *khahesh mikonæm, tæshrif dashtin hala, dær khedmætetun budim*

('Let's be in your honored presence a little longer'; 'Please stay longer'/'You could stay longer')

Formula structure:

START (*khahesh mikonæm*) + (VOC) + *tæshrif dashtin hala* + *dær khedmætetun budim* STOP

►Formula form: *khahesh mikonæm, neshæstin hala*

('Stay longer'/'You could stay longer')

Formula structure:

START (*khahesh mikonæm*) + (VOC) + *neshæstin* {*hala*/*felæn*} STOP

►Formula form: *khahesh mikonæm, hala bashim dær khedmætetun*

('Please, let us be in your presence longer')

Formula structure:

START (*khahesh mikonæm*) + (VOC) + ({*hala*/*felæn*}) *bashim dær khedmætetun* STOP

►Formula form: *nesheste budin hala*

('Stay longer'/'You could stay longer')

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *nesheste budin hala* STOP

►Formula form: *koja (baba)? neshæstin hala*

('Where are you going?', 'Stay longer', 'You could stay longer')

Formula structure:

START (*koja*) + (VOC)? + *neshæstin* {*hala*/*felæn*} STOP

►Formula form: *agha, neshæstin hala, koja?*

('Please stay longer', 'Why are you going?')

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *neshæstin* {*hala*/*felæn*} + (*koja?*) STOP

►**Formula form:** *koja? che ʔæjæle'i darin hala?*

('Why are you going?', 'Why are you rushing off for leaving?')

Formula structure:

START (*koja?*) + (VOC) + {*che ʔæjæle'i darin/che ʔæjæle'iye*} (*hala*) STOP

►**Formula form:** *hala koja ba in ʔæjæle?*

('Take your time', 'Why are you rushing off?')

Formula structure:

START (*hala*) *koja* {*ba in ʔæjæle/be in zudi*} + (VOC) STOP

►**Formula form:** *dor-e hæm budim*

('Let us still be together')

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (*hala*) *dor-e hæm budim* (*hala*) STOP

►**Formula form:** *neshestim dor-e hæm*

('let's still be together')

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *neshestim dor-e hæm* (*hala*) STOP

►**Formula form:** *hala ye shæb-o bæd begzærunin*

('Let's spend this one night more humbly')

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (*hala*) {*ye shæb-o/emshæb-o*} *bæd begzærunin* STOP

►**Formula form:** *koja? beshinid hala, taze ævæl-e shæb-e*

('Why are you going?', 'Do stay longer', 'The night is still young')

Formula structure:

START (*koja?*) + (VOC) + *beshinid* {*hala/felæn*} *taze* {*ævvæl-e/sær-e*} *shæb-e* STOP

►**Formula form:** *hala ævæl-e shæb-e, mikhay koja beri?*

('The night is still young', 'Why are you rushing off?')

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *hala ævæl-e shæb-e* {*mikhay/mikhayn*} *koja ber-i/-in?* STOP

►**Formula form:** *hala bud-i/-in*

('Do stay longer')

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *hala* {*budi/budin*} STOP

►Formula form: *hæstin hala*

('Do stay longer')

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *hæst-i/-in hala* STOP

►Formula form: *koja? beshin hala*

('Why are going?' 'Do stay longer')

Formula structure:

START (*koja*) + (VOC) + {*beshin*/*beshinin*} *hala* STOP

►Formula form: *zude hala, beshin*

('It is still early, do stay longer')

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + *zude hala* {*beshin*/*beshinin*} STOP

♦ Sub-phase three of the third phase of a LT sequence: Turning down the offer to stay longer and giving a reason for the departure

►Formula form: *næ dige bishtær æz in zæhmæt nemidim*

('Not any more, I do not wish to put you to more trouble')

Formula structure:

START *næ dige* + (expressions of gratitude[n]) + *bishtær æz in zæhmæt* {*nemidim*/*nædim*/ *nemidæm*/*nædæm*} + (I-patterned excuses and/or Y-patterned excuses) STOP

START expressions of gratitude[n] + *dige bishtær æz in zæhmæt* {*nemidim*/*nædim*/ *nemidæm*/*nædæm*} + (I-patterned excuses and/or you-patterned excuses) STOP

►**Formula form:** *næ dige bishtær æz in mozahem nemishim*

('Not anymore, I do not wish to put you to more trouble')

Formula structure:

START *næ dige* + (expressions of gratitude[n]) + *bishtær æz in* {*mozahem/mozahemetun/mozahem-e shoma/mozahemet*} {*nemishæm/næshæm/nemishim/næshim*} + (I-patterned excuses and/or You-patterned excuses) STOP

START (expressions of gratitude[n]) + *dige bishtær æz in* + {*mozahem/mozahemetun/mozahem-e shoma/mozahemet*} {*nemishæm/næshæm/nemishim/næshim*} + (I-patterned excuses and/or You-patterned excuses) STOP

Formula form: *mæmnun, be ændaze-ye kafi zæhmæt dadim*

('Thanks, we have already troubled you enough')

START expressions of gratitude[n] + *be ændazeye kafi zæhmæt* {*dadim/dadæm*} + (I-patterned excuses and/or Y-patterned excuses) STOP

►**Formula form:** *næ dige zæhmæt kafi-ye*

('I/we do not wish to put you to more trouble')

Formula structure:

START *næ dige* + (expressions of gratitude[n]) + *zæhmæt* {*kafiye/bæse*} + (I-patterned excuses and/or Y-patterned excuses) STOP

►**Formula form:** *mæmnun, shoma hæm dige emruz hesabi be zæhmæt oftadin*

('Thanks, today you were put to a lot of trouble')

Formula structure:

START (expressions of gratitude[n]) + *shoma hæm dige* {*emruz/emshæb*} *hesabi be zæhmæt oftadin* STOP

►**Formula form:** *mæmnun, hesabi zæhmæt dadæm*

('Thanks, I have troubled you a lot')

Formula structure:

START (expressions of gratitude[n]) + (*emshæb/emruz*) {*hesabi/kheyli*} *zæhmæt dad-æm/-im* STOP

►**Formula form:** *næ dige bishtær æz in mosædde ʔ-e owghat nemishæm*

('Not any more, I do not wish to take your time more than this')

Formula structure:

START (*næ dige*) + (expressions of gratitude[n]) + *bishtær æz in mosædde ʔ-e owghat* {*nemishæm/nemishim*} + (I-patterned excuses and/or You-patterned excuses) STOP

START (expressions of gratitude[n]) + (*dige*) *bishtær æz in mosædde ʔ-e owghat nemish-æm/-im*} + (I-patterned excuses and/or you-patterned excuses) STOP

►**Formula form:** *næ dige bishtær æz in væghtetun ro nemigiræm*

('Not any more, I do not wish to take your time more than this')

Formula structure:

START (*næ dige*) + (expressions of gratitude[n]) + *bishtær æz in væght-et/-etun ro nemigir-æm/-im* + (I-patterned excuses and/or You-patterned excuses) STOP

START (expressions of gratitude[n]) + (*dige*) + *bishtær æz in* + *væght-et/etun ro nemigir-æm/-im* + (I-patterned excuses and/or You-patterned excuses) STOP

►**Formula form:** *mæmnun, ma kheyli væghte ke inja'im*

('Thanks, we've been here for such a long time'/ 'We've been here for quite a while')

Formula structure:

START (expressions of gratitude[n]) + {*ma*/*mæn*} *kheyli væght-e (ke)* {*inja'im*/*injam*} STOP

Formula form: *keyli mæmnun, bayæd beræm*

('Thanks, I'd better be going')

Formula structure:

START expressions of gratitude[n] + {*bayæd*/*behtære ke*} {*beræm*/*berim*} + (I-patterned excuses and/or You-patterned excuses) STOP

♦ **Sub-phase four of the third phase of a LT sequence:** Acknowledging the desire of leave-taker to leave

►**Formula form:** *khahesh mikonæm, kheyli khoshamædin*

('Not at all/ well then', 'You are always welcome here/ thank you for coming')

Formula structure:

START (*khahesh mikonæm*) + *kheyli khoshamædin* STOP

►**Formula form:** *kheyli lotf kærdin ke tæshrif avordin*

('By visiting us, you did us a favour')

Formula structure:

START (*khahesh mikonæm*) + *kheyli* {*lotf*/*mohæbæt*} *kærdin ke tæshrif avordin* STOP

►**Formula form:** *khahesh mikonæm, kheyli khoshhal shodim*

('Not at all/Well then, it was really nice to see you')

Formula structure:

START (*khahesh mikonæm*) + *kheyli khoshhal shodim* (*æz* {*ziyaræetetun*/*didænetun*}) STOP

►**Formula form:** *khahesh mikonæm, kheyli khoshhal shodim tæshrif avordin*

('Not at all/Well then, it was really nice of you to pay us a visit')

Formula structure:

START (*khahesh mikonæm*) + *kheyli khoshhal shodim* (*ke*) *tæshrif avordin* STOP

►**Formula form:** *khahesh mikonæm, ma dær khedmæetetun hæstim*

('Not at all/Well then, we are at your service')

Formula structure:

START (*khahesh mikonæm*) + (*be hær hal*) *ma dær khedmæetetun hæstim* STOP

♦ **Sub-phase five of the third phase of a LT sequence:** Inviting the leave-taker to a future reunion

►**Formula form:** *tæshrif biyarin baz*

('Please do come to visit us again'/'Drop in again when you have time')

Formula structure:

START (*VOC*) + (*inshallah*) *tæshrif biyarin* {*baz*/*bazæm*/*dobare*} STOP

START (*VOC*) + (*inshallah*) (*ke*) {*baz*/*bazæm*/*dobare*} *tæshrif biyarin* STOP

►**Formula form:** *dær khedmæetetun bashim dobare*

('Let us be in your respected presence again')

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + (*inshallah*) (*ke*) *dær khedmætetun bashim* {*baz/dobare*} STOP

START (VOC) + (*inshallah*) (*ke*) (*baz/bazæm/dobare*) *dær khedmætetun bashim* STOP

►**Formula form:** *sær bezænin baz*

('Do visit me/us again')

Formula structure:

START (hær vækht forsæt kærdin) sær bezænin {baz/bazæm/dobare} STOP

START (*hær vækht forsæt kærdin*) {*baz/bazæm/dobare*} *sær bezænin* STOP

►**Formula form:** *bazæm æz in kara bokonin*

('Pay us a visit again')

Formula structure:

START (VOC) + {*baz/bazæm/dobare*} *æz in kara bokonin* STOP

►**Formula form:** *mæmnun, inshallah dige nobæt-e shomst*

('Thanks, God willing it is your turn to pay us/me a visit')

Formula structure:

START (expressions of gratitude[n]) + (*inshallah*) *dige nobæt-e shomst* STOP

START (expressions of gratitude[n]) + {*næ dige/dige*} *nobæt-e shomast ke tæshrif biyarin* STOP

►**Formula form:** *mæmnun, inshallah dige dæʔfe-ye baʔd shoma tæshrif biyarin*

('Thanks, it's your turn to pay us a visit')

Formula structure:

START (expressions of gratitude^n) + (*inshallah*) (*dige*) *dæfʔe-ye baʔd shoma tæshrif biyarin* STOP

START *næ dige* + (expressions of gratitude^n) + *nobæt-e shomast* (*ke*) *tæshrif biyarin* STOP

►**Formula form:** *mæmnun, inshallah shom hæm biyayn tæræfa-ye ma*

('Thanks, God willing, it's your turn to pay us a visit')

Formula structure:

START (expressions of gratitude^n) + (*inshallah*) *shoma hæm biyayn* (*un*) *tæræfa-ye ma* STOP

►**Formula form:** *khahesh mikonæm, dige indæfʔe nobæt-e shomast*

('Thanks, this time is your turn to visit us')

Formula structure:

START *khahesh mikonæm* + *dige indæfʔe nobæt-e shomast* STOP

♦ **Sub-phase six of the third phase of a LT sequence:** Apology and acknowledgement by the leave-taker for the troubles that the host/hostess has gone through

►**Formula form:** *bebækhshid dige, hesabi zæhmæt dadim*

('So sorry, I/we put you to a lot of trouble'/ 'I/we are/am sorry to have bothered you for so long')

Formula structure:

START expressions of apology^n + (*dige*) + {*kheyli*/*hesabi*} + *zæhmæt dad-im*/*æm* STOP

START {*kheyli*/*hesabi*} + *zæhmæt dad-im*/-*æm* + (*dige*) + expressions of apology^n STOP

►Formula form: *bebækhshid dige, hesabi baʔes-e zæhmæt shodim*

('So sorry, I/we put you to a lot of trouble', 'I/we are/am sorry to have bothered you for so long')

Formula structure:

START expressions of apology[n] + (*dige*) + *hesabi* + *baʔes-e zæhmæt shodim* STOP

►Formula form: *bebækhshid dige, hesabi be zæhmæt oftadin*

('So sorry, you troubled yourself a lot', 'I am sorry to have bothered you for so long')

START expressions of apology[n] + (*dige*) + *hesabi* + *be zæhmæt oftadin* STOP

►Formula form: *bebækhshid dige, hesabi vækhtetun ro gereftim*

('So sorry, I/we wasted your time a lot')

Formula structure:

START expressions of apology[n] + (*dige*) + {*kheyli/hesabi*} + *vækhtetun ro gereft-im/-æm* STOP

START {*kheyli/hesabi*} + *vækhtetun ro gereft-im/-æm* + expressions of apology[n] + (*dige*) STOP

►Formula form: *khahesh mikonæm, che zæhmæti, kheyli khosh amædin, in hærfa chiye*

('Please do not mention it, no trouble at all, you are always welcome here')

Formula structure:

START *khahesh mikonæm* + {*che zæhmæti?/zæhmæt kodume?*} + (*kheyli khosh amædin*) + *in hærfa* {*chiye?/kodume?*} STOP

♦ **Sub-phase seven of the third phase of a LT sequence:** Apology by the host/hostess for not providing a better time and service for the leave-taker

►**Formula form:** *bebækhshid dige æge bæd gozæsht*

('Sorry if you did not have a better time')

Formula structure:

START expressions of apology^n + (*dige*) *æge bæd gozæsht* STOP

♦ **Sub-phase eight of the third phase of a LT sequence:** Giving thanks or expressing appreciation and acknowledgement for the trouble taken by the host/hostess (by leave-taker)

►**Formula form:** *kheyli mæmnun, kheyli zæhmæt keshidin*

('Thank you so much, you troubled yourself a lot')

Formula structure:

START (expressions of gratitude^n) + *kheyli* + *zæhmæt keshid-i/-in* STOP

►**Formula form:** *kheyli mæmnun, hesabi be zæhmæt oftadin*

('You troubled yourself a lot')

Formula structure:

START (expressions of gratitude^n) + {*hesabi*/*kheyli*} + *be zæhmæt oftadin* STOP

♦ **Sub-phase nine of the third phase of a LT sequence:** Expressing happiness and delight in the visit (by leave-taker)

►**Formula form:** *kheyli mæmnun, kheyli khosh gozæsht*

('Many thanks, we/I had such a good time')

Formula structure:

START (expressions of gratitude[n]) + {*kheyli/hesabi*} + *khosh gozæsht* STOP

START {*kheyli/hesabi*} + *khosh gozæsht* + (expressions of gratitude[n]) STOP

♦ Sub-phase ten of the third phase of a LT sequence: Requests for expanding greetings to third parties (by both parties)

►Formula form: (*be* NP) *sælam beresunid*

('Please do extend my greetings (to NP)')

START (*æz ghol-e* {*mæn/ma/bænde*}) (be NP) (*hæm*) (*kheyli*) *sælam beresunid* STOP

♦ Sub-phase eleven of the third phase of a LT sequence: No-bothering-you request (by leave-taker)

►Formula form: *to ro khoda dige zæhmæt nækeshin, ma khodemun mirim*

('I swear you by God not to bother yourself any more to see me out, I see myself out'/ 'Please do not see me out, I see myself out')

Formula structure:

START {*to ro khoda/khahesh mikonæm*} *zæhmæt nækeshin* (*dige*) {*ma khodemun mirim/ma rah ro bælædim*} + (*shoma befærma'in*) + (gratitude expressions[n]) STOP

►Formula form: *to ro khoda dige bishtær æz in ma ro shærmænde nækonin, ma rah ro bælædim*

('I swear you by God not to trouble yourself more than this, we see ourselves out')

Formula structure:

START {*to ro khoda/khahesh mikonæm*} (*dige*) *bishtær æz in ma ro shærmænde nækonin* {*ma rah ro bælædim/ma khodemun mirim*} + (*shoma befærma'in*) + (gratitude expression[n]) STOP

►**Formula form:** *to ro khoda bolænd næshin dige, ma khodemun mirim*

('I swear you by God not to stand up, we go by ourselves'/'Please do not see me out, I see myself out')

Formula structure:

START {*to ro khoda*/*khahesh mikonæm*} + (*dige*) + *bolænd næshid* + *ma khodemun mirim* STOP

►**Formula form:** *to ro khoda beshinid dige, ma khodemun mirim*

('I swear you by God not to stand up, we go by ourselves'/'Please do not see me out, I see myself out')

Formula structure:

START {*to ro khoda*/*khahesh mikonæm*} {*beshinid*/*befærma'in*} (*dige*) *ma khodemun mirim* STOP

♦ **Sub-phase twelve of the third phase of a LT sequence:** Request to be in further contact (by both parties)

►**Formula form:** *hala inshallah dær tæmas hæstim*

('Let's be in contact'/ 'Let's stay in touch')

Formula structure:

START (*hala*) (*inshallah*) *dær tæmas* {*hæstim*/*bashim*} STOP

►**Formula form:** *dær tæmas bashin*

('Do stay in touch')

Formula structure:

START *dær tæmas bashin* STOP

♦ **Sub-phase thirteen of the third phase of a LT sequence:** Well-wishing or consolidatory comments (by both parties)

►**Formula form:** *inshallah ke hæmishe sælamæt bashin*

('Hope that you are always healthy')

Formula structure:

START *inshallah ke hæmishe {sælamæt/khosh o khoræm} bashin* STOP

►**Formula form:** *moragheb-e khodetun bashin*

('Take care of yourself')

Formula structure:

START *moragheb-e khod-et/-etun {bash/bashin}* STOP

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CONSENT FORM

"**Routine Politeness Formulae in Persian**"

I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. I am native speaker of Persian, and I agree to participate in this project. I consent that the audio recording of my role playing and accompanying material be:

1. Quoted in published work or broadcast or used in public performance in full or in part.
2. Used for teaching purposes
3. Used as an illustration on a web site (short and anonymous, non-personal excerpts only).

I know that my identity will be kept entirely confidential and role-plays will be identified by pseudonyms and/or number and not by name.

I understand also that I may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information I have provided.

I note that the project has been reviewed and approved by Linguistics Department as well as the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee Low Risk.

NAME (please print): ....

Signature: ....

Date: ....

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INFORMATION SHEET

You are invited to participate as a subject in the research project: "Routine Politeness Formulae in Persian: A socio-lexical analysis of greetings, leave-taking, apologizing, thanking and requesting".

Persian has quite a complex politeness system with an astonishing variety of routine politeness formulae. Reviewing the literature, unfortunately, there are no comprehensive works dedicated to Persian politeness formulae and their proper conditions of use. So this study aims to create an ethnographically annotated dictionary of such formulae, which can serve as a resource for researchers in linguistics, anthropology and the teachers of Persian to non-Persian speakers. Moreover it provides a deeper understanding of Persian language, culture and society.

The participants in this study are native speakers of Persian who have an age range from 20 to 50 years.

Your involvement in this project will be to take part in some role-plays, and to have a discussion (a miniature focus group) on the accuracy of the soap opera data already collected by the researcher to illustrate the use of politeness in Persian.

In role-plays, the researcher and the participants will act out the major routine politeness rituals in Persian such as greeting, leave-taking, apologizing, thanking and requesting. For example, as for the greeting ritual in Persian, the researcher might assume the role of a host and you would assume the role of a guest (or vice versa) trying to act out a typical greeting in Persian. Role-plays will last approximately for five to ten minutes. Then there will be a friendly discussion between you and the researcher on the accuracy of the soap opera data by providing further comments and feedback. The role-plays as well as the subsequent discussion will be recorded for research purposes.

If you are happy to participate in this project, you will be asked for some background information about yourself, such as your age, your place of birth, and your parents' native language. This may help in the interpretation of the results of the study.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw from the project at any time. This includes withdrawal of all materials resulting from the role-playing and the discussion on the accuracy of the soap opera data.

The results of the project may be published, but you may be assured of the complete confidentiality of data gathered in this investigation: the identity of participants will not be made public and will be known only to the primary investigator, Kourosh Saberi. Role-plays are identified by pseudonym or number and not by name. The data will be stored securely. The identifying data will entirely be destroyed upon completion of my degree. As for taped material, however, in linguistics, it is the standard practice not to destroy the recordings and the originals are kept in perpetuity.

The project is being carried out as a requirement for a doctoral degree by Kourosh Saberi who can be contacted at *kourosh.saberi@pg.canterbury.ac.nz*. He will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about participation in the project.

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The project has been reviewed ***and approved*** by the University of Canterbury

Human Ethics Committee.

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