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A Critical Reflection on the Book *Persian Grammar Based on Transformational Theory*, Authored by Mehdi Meshkatoddini

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Abstract

This research, conducted using a descriptive-analytical method and based on library resources, provides a critical review of the book *Persian Grammar Based on Transformational Theory* by Mahdi Meshkatoddini, which serves as the assigned textbook for the course *Persian Grammar 2* in the undergraduate Persian Language and Literature curriculum. The findings indicate that the book is a valuable source for this course in terms of its presentation and discussion of many foundational topics in linguistic grammar, detailed explanation of traditional grammatical issues from a linguistic perspective, and provision of illustrative examples. However, it also exhibits noteworthy shortcomings in several areas: In terms of alignment with the official course syllabus such as the definition of theory in linguistics, an overview of various syntactic theories, and clarification of major differences between traditional and linguistic grammars; In terms of structure particularly in the flawed chapter organization, complex language, and inconsistencies in the numbering of main and subheadings; And in terms of content such as deficiencies in definitions and conceptual explanations, and inaccuracies in some examples. These issues warrant critical attention, and this study may serve as a useful contribution toward revising and improving the book.

Keywords: *Criticism of Persian Grammar Based on Transformational Theory, criticism of the works of Mahdi Meshkatoddini, criticism of contemporary Persian grammar, revision of the Persian grammar headings.*

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1. Introduction

The book *Persian Grammar Based on Transformational Theory* by Mahdi Meshkatoddini, which has been approved and recommended as the main textbook for the course "Persian Grammar 2" by the 800th session of the Supreme Council for Curriculum Planning of the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology, has been published for years without revision. Due to its discussion of foundational issues in linguistic grammar and its detailed explanations of many traditional grammatical topics from a linguistic perspective.

especially in chapters eight through fifteen it is a practical and valuable source. However, it also suffers from notable shortcomings in four key areas: alignment of content with the approved course syllabus, structural coherence, depth of content, and quality of examples. These issues are critically analyzed in this study, and academic, effective solutions have been proposed. Attention by the author to these critiques and incorporating them in future editions would significantly enhance the effectiveness of teaching linguistic grammar concepts to Persian language and literature students.

2. Literature Review

Unlike other literary sciences, research in Persian grammar is relatively recent and mostly dates back to the last hundred years. Numerous books have been authored under the title *Persian Grammar*, which are too many to list here, though many are cited in this research.

The book *Persian Grammar Based on Transformational Theory* by Mahdi Meshkatoddini has, until now, not been critically evaluated, nor has any review been published on it. However, the following related articles address similar topics:

Zandi Moghadam (2010) reviews and critiques *Brief Modern Grammar Based on Modern Linguistics* by Khosrow Farshidvard, and *Persian Grammar Based on Linguistics* by Seyyed Behnam Alavi Moghadam and Mohammadreza Pashaie.

Shabani (2018) critiques *Persian Grammar 2* by Hasan Ahmadi Givi and Hasan Anvari, analyzing its shortcomings in structure, content, examples, and alignment with the official curriculum.

Kamran (1973) offers a critique of Parviz Natel Khanlari's *Persian Grammar*, especially noting issues in the section on noun complements.

Moshaveri and Barati (2016) review *Persian Grammar: Prepositions and Conjunctions* by Khalil Khatib Rahbar, highlighting several issues.

The present research focuses on the book *Persian Grammar Based on Transformational Theory* by Mahdi Meshkatoddini, which has not previously been approached from this perspective.

3. Methodology

This study is based on the latest printed edition of *Persian Grammar Based on Transformational Theory* by Mahdi Meshkatoddini. The text was critically examined across several dimensions, including its treatment of foundational issues in linguistic grammar, elaboration of traditional grammar topics based on linguistic science, use of examples, alignment with the official curriculum, structural organization, and content integrity. In addition, the critique relies on library sources, especially authoritative grammatical works from both major approaches to grammar: the traditional and the linguistic perspectives.

4. Results

This critical review, conducted in light of the revised undergraduate curriculum for Persian language and literature, reveals that *Persian Grammar Based on Transformational Theory* by Mahdi Meshkatoddini serves as an appropriate coursebook in terms of its coverage of foundational linguistic grammar topics, elaboration of traditional grammar from a linguistic viewpoint, and use of examples. However, some of its content does not align with parts of the approved curriculum, such as defining linguistic theory, briefly presenting different syntactic theories, and highlighting the distinctions between traditional and linguistic grammar frameworks.

Structurally, the book fails to address phonology (as in semi-sentences) and inadequately discusses adverbs and particles. The language of the book is relatively difficult, and there are numerous issues in organizing content especially in the hierarchical numbering of main and subheadings.

From a content standpoint, the book also contains shortcomings, such as marginalizing morphology in Persian grammar, limiting grammatical knowledge to linguistic instruction, excluding literary texts and examples, presenting an inconsistent view on the prescriptive vs. descriptive nature of grammar, inadequately defining linguistic units, overemphasizing native speakers' linguistic intuition, lack of clarity in explaining key sentence elements in Persian, incorrectly equating the verb phrase with the predicate, insufficient explanation of

subcategorization rules, imprecise naming of verb tenses, and incomplete classification of plural markers and nominal inflectional signs.

The explanations of adverbs, pronouns, the particle "rā," complements, and several examples also contain notable errors.

Raising awareness among readers especially students about these issues, and bringing them to the attention of the author and publisher for revision, can be seen as one of the key contributions of this research.

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