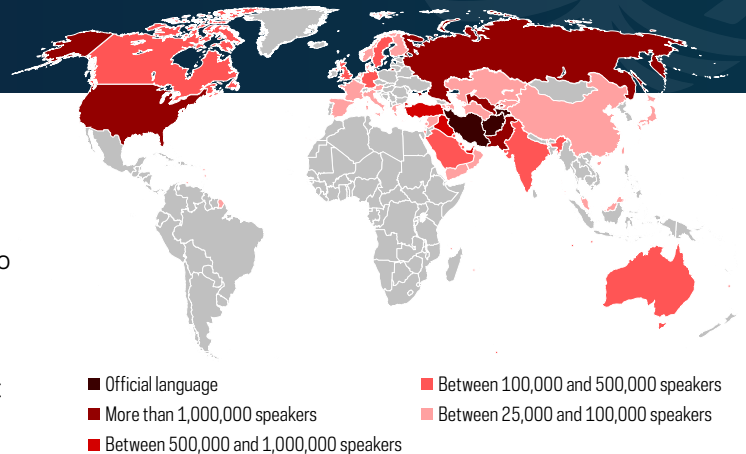


FARSI *at a Glance*

A Comparative Linguistic Analysis for Classroom Teachers

HELPFUL INFORMATION

- ▶ **Over 100 million people** worldwide speak Farsi, a language also known as Persian.
- ▶ The majority of Farsi speakers reside in **Iran**. Farsi is also spoken in parts of **Turkey, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan**.
- ▶ Throughout history, Iran has been known for producing some of the world's **great poets**. Some of Iran's greatest poets include: **Rumi, Hafez, and Saadi**.



COMPARISONS AND COMMON DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN FARSI AND ENGLISH



PRONUNCIATION

Speakers of Farsi often struggle with consonant blends in English. There is a tendency to add vowel sounds after most consonants.



PERSIAN ALPHABET

The Persian alphabet is an adaptation of Arabic and is read horizontally from right to left. In contrast, numbers are read from left to right. There are only letters for consonants. Vowels are written using diacritics (a sign, such as an accent or a dot, which when written above or below a letter serves as a pronunciation guide). In addition, there is no distinction between upper or lower case letters in Farsi.



ADJECTIVES / ADVERBS

In Farsi, almost all the words that can be used as adverbs can also be used as adjectives. As a result, students may struggle to distinguish between adjectives and adverbs when learning English.



PAST TENSE

The past tense in English can be challenging for Farsi speakers. In Farsi, the verb "to have" is used instead of "to be" to describe actions that were ongoing in the past, known as the past continuous tense. Additionally, Farsi does not differentiate between the simple past ("I studied") and the present perfect ("I have studied"), which can create confusion when learning English.

EXAMPLES AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

LINGUISTIC ELEMENT	EXAMPLES	TEACHING STRATEGIES
PRONUNCIATION	In Farsi, there is a tendency to add vowel sounds after most consonants . So, the word “from” might sound like “fe-rum” or sleep like “su-leep.”	These mispronunciations often cause spelling and reading errors . Provide ample opportunities to practice consonant blends . Celebrate students’ accents as a sign of bravery!
PERSIAN ALPHABET	همه‌ی افراد بشر آزاد به دنیا می‌آیند و حیثیت و حقوقشان با هم برابر است، همه اندیشه و وجدان دارند و باید در برابر یکدیگر با روح برادری رفتار کنند. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood. <i>- Article 1, Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i>	Because of the differences in orthography, students may struggle with writing. Provide targeted feedback on writing assignments, focusing on 1-2 skills at a time.
ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS	Farsi speakers may struggle to differentiate adjectives and adverbs in English. For example, they might find it challenging to distinguish between “The girl is quick” (adjective) from “The girl runs quickly” (adverb).	Explicitly teach parts of speech and the roles they play in a sentence using visual aids and sentence frames .
PAST TENSE	A Farsi speaker might say, “I have studying for the test” instead of “I was studying for the test” because in Farsi there is no distinction between the simple past (“I studied”) and the present perfect (“I have studied”). The simple past is used in both cases.	Review the different past tense verb forms in English (simple past, past continuous, present perfect, and past perfect) and provide sentence frames .

PONDER AND DISCUSS

- ▶ What percentage of your students speak Farsi?
- ▶ How can you integrate Farsi into your classroom?
- ▶ What countries of origin are represented in your classroom?
- ▶ What do you know about those countries? How can you learn more about them as a class?
- ▶ What Persian traditions/holidays do your students celebrate? How can you integrate these celebrations into your school year?

Resources:

- [A Comparative Study of the Use of Persian vs. English in Teaching English Grammar to Iranian Students in Junior High School](#) (Mehrseresht, Gowhary & Azizifar, 2015)
- [The Comparative Effects of English and Persian Cultural Background Knowledge on EFL Learners’ Listening Skill](#) (Widodo et al., 2022)