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# The Iranian Turkmen language from a contact linguistics perspective

**Abdollah Nazari & Judy Routamaa**

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Exposure to Persian as the dominant language and culture has influenced the linguistic behaviour of the speakers of Iranian Turkmen across all generations, from the elderly to the middle-aged and the young. This is illustrated by analysing three texts representative of the speech of each generation, highlighting the increasing level of contact-induced phenomena down the generations. It can be seen that the speaker from the older generation exhibits only minimal influence from Persian, the speaker from the middle aged generation slightly more, while the speaker from the younger generation exhibits a high degree of influence across all linguistic domains.

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## Introduction

One of the aspects of the linguistic history of Turkic languages which deserves special attention is their numerous contacts with other languages (Johanson 2002). Turkmen, as the language under study in this paper, has been in close contact with diverse languages and cultures, particularly since the separation of the Turkmen-speaking community in 1881 between the Russian empire and Iran (Goli 1986).

This paper focuses on Turkmen as spoken in Iran from the perspective of its contact with Persian as the dominant language and culture. It seeks to highlight the way in which exposure to Persian has influenced the linguistic behaviour of the speakers of the language down the generations—from the elderly to the middle-aged and to the young.

The situation will be illustrated by analysing three texts representative of the speech of each generation. The data is part of a corpus collected during 2011–2012 in the Turkmen-speaking area of Iran. It includes folktales, life stories and natural conversation.

A clear pattern emerges of an increasing level of contact-induced features down the generations, with the younger generation exhibiting a very high degree of influence across all linguistic domains.

### **The Turkmen in Iran**

The speakers of Turkmen in Iran are found in the north-east of the country, in the provinces of Golestan, Khorasan-e Shomali (North Khorasan) and Khorasan-e Razavi, in towns and villages close to the Caspian Sea and the border of the Republic of Turkmenistan. An official census of the Turkmen in Iran has not been undertaken, but various estimates have been made, varying from 400,000 (Clark 1998) to 2,000,000 (Lewis 2009). Based on the relative population of Turkmen speakers in the cities of Gorgan, Bandar-e Turkmen, Aq Qala, Gumishan, Gonbad-e Qavus, Inche Burun, Kalaleh, Maraveh Tappeh (province of Golestan), Ashkhaneh, Bojnurd (Khorasan-e Shomali), Quchan, Dareh Gaz and Sarakhs (Khorasan-e Razavi), our estimate would be around 1,500,000.

The dialects of the Turkmen of Iran, based on their current geographical distribution, is as follows (Nazari 2004):

- Yomut: Bandar-e Turkmen, Gumishan, Aq Qala, Gonbad-e Qavus and Maraveh Tappeh.
- Gökleng: Kalaleh and surrounding villages (Chaqir, Qara balqan, Gerkez, Qirq), Gulli daq and Jergelan in Khorasan-e Shomali.
- Teke: Gonbad and Jergelan.
- Nokhurli: Jergelan and Bojnurd.
- Yaziq and Salyr: Sarakhs and Mashhad.

The Turkmen of Iran are an ethnic group whose religion is Sunni Islam (in contrast to the official Shiite Islam of the country) and who seem to have a strong ethnic identity and sense of belonging to their origins. This is demonstrated in the fact that Turkmen traditions are generally valued, and that, despite most Turkmen being bilingual in Persian, Turkmen is the language of communication for all families living in the rural Turkmen areas and in the Turkmen dominated cities of Bandar-e Turkmen, Aq Qala, Gumishan, Gonbad, Kalaleh and Maraveh Tappeh. However, in Persian dominated areas, such as Gorgan, while Turkmen is often used as the language of communication in the home, in a limited number of families, the use of Turkmen is replaced by Persian.

Turkmen is used only for oral communication and for any type of written communication, including emails, letters or short notes and text messages, Persian is the first choice. Nevertheless, there are a few bi-lingual magazines, websites and local TV and radio programmes. There are also printed Turkmen materials on folk literature, but these are not read by a wide audience.

Although officially recognised as a language by the state, when considering educational and administrative uses of language, Turkmen, along with other minority languages of Iran, is rarely regarded as an option. The language of instruction in schools and universities, educational materials, official correspondence and the media is all in Persian. Furthermore, religion as the core of all social, cultural, economic and political plans from both the perspective of the government and the people (including the Turkmen) has had significant impact on the development and

value of Arabo-Persianised concepts and linguistic elements in both the spoken and written Turkmen language.

### Orthography

The Turkmen orthography in Turkmenistan, having undergone several changes during the 20th century from an Arabic script to Latin to Cyrillic, has been using a revised Latin alphabet since 1993 (Schönig 1998). Iran, however, has consistently only used an Arabo-Persian script for both the national and minority languages. This has presented difficulties in writing Turkmen, as regards both the vowels and consonants. Turkmen has 9 vowels, whereas the Arabo-Persian script has only 6 characters to represent vowels. The problem with consonants arises with the phonemes such as /θ/, /ð/, /h/ and /t/, for each of which there are two or more characters in the Arabo-Persian script. Therefore, over the years, Turkmen has been written by different people in different ways.

However, during recent years, a committee of interested Turkmen writers and authors have tried to overcome these difficulties and have produced a document proposing an alphabet based on the Arabo-Persian script (see Appendix 3).

In this paper the transcription of the texts is based on the current Turkmen Latin orthography with the addition of three consonants that are distinguished in the Arabo-Persian Iranian Turkmen orthography. These consonants, represented by their IPA symbols, are as follows:

- [x] *axyr* 'end' (text 2.28), *xuday* 'God' (text 1.45)
- [ɣ] *oylan* 'boy' (text 1.1), *yayday* 'condition' (text 2.5)
- [q] *yog* 'non-existing' (text 1.11), *quda* 'parents in law' (text 1.1)

### Contact induced features down the generations

Three texts will now be presented, one from an elderly Turkmen speaker, one from a middle-aged speaker and one from a young speaker. A short analysis focussing on the contact induced phenomena will follow each text. These elements are underlined in the texts.

#### Text 1. Elderly Turkmen speaker

This text is narrated by an elderly non-educated Turkmen woman (Gökleng dialect), aged around 65, who speaks only Turkmen. She was born, grew up and lived all her life in the village of Ajan Sengerli, near the city of Kalaleh, Golestan Province. This is a Turkmen dominated area, where Turkmen is used in all domains except education and administration. The narrator describes the traditions of Turkmen marriage customs, past and present.

- T1/1 *oylan tarab -dan gel -ýe -le quda bol -ma -na*  
 boy side ABL come PRS 3PL parents in law become NOM DAT  
 ‘They come from the boy’s side in order to become parents-in-law (to propose).’
- T1/2 *gel -enlerindä sen em qarsy çyq -ýa -ň*  
 come ANDA.CONV.3PL you.SG also opposite go out PRS 2SG  
*qujaq aç -ýa -ň*  
 embrace open PRS 2SG  
 ‘When they come, you also go out towards them and welcome them.’
- T1/3 *ondan sen öwril -ib my -ña ejaza ber -ýe -ň*  
 then you.SG return CONV this DAT permission give PRS 2SG  
*usyad ber -ýe -ň*  
 permission give PRS 2SG  
 ‘Then returning, you give permission to them, you give permission (for marriage).’
- T1/4 *gyz da göwnli bol -sa bu -la*  
 girl DA.PRCL willing be COND this PL  
*di -ýe indi biz iş -imiz ýoq*  
 say PRS now we work POSS.1PL non-existing  
*köke geçir -jek şirni geçir -jek*  
 sweets bring FUT sweets bring FUT  
 ‘And if the girl is willing, they (the boy’s side) say, ‘now we have nothing (else) to do, we want to bring sweets, we want to bring sweets.’ ‘
- T1/5 *ondan şirni geçir -ýe -le*  
 then sweets bring PRS 3PL  
 ‘Then they bring the sweets.’
- T1/6 *ondan şirni geçir -en soň ýene de byr wuly*  
 then sweets bring PST.PTCP after again DA.PRCL one big  
*şirni -miz bar*  
 sweets POSS.1PL existing  
 ‘Then after bringing the sweets, we have again one big sweets (ceremony).’
- T1/7 *ol wuly şirni -ni geçir -ýe -le*  
 that big sweets ACC hold PRS 3PL  
 ‘They hold that big sweets (ceremony).’
- T1/8 *onda hemmi -jik zad -yň -y ert -ýe -ň*  
 then all DIM thing 2SG ACC take PRS 2SG  
 ‘Then you take all your things.’
- T1/9 *meselen başqand ert -ýe -ň*  
 for example sugar cone take PRS 2SG  
 ‘For example, you take sugar cones.’
- T1/10 *miwe ert -ýe -ň*  
 fruit take PRS 2SG  
 ‘You take fruit.’

- T1/11 *çelfek ert -ýe -ň*  
 çelfek take PRS 2SG  
 'You take çelfek (type of thin pancake).'
- T1/12 *byr zaman -a şu dört kersen çelfek -i byr putlyq*  
 one time DA.PRTCL that four stack çelfek ACC one container  
*ýay -y ýaf -ardy -la*  
 oil ACC bake HAB.PST 3PL  
 'At one time they used to bake four stacks of çelfek using one container of oil.'
- T1/13 *şo dört kersen çelfek -i ert -erdi -le*  
 that four stack çelfek ACC take HAB.PST 3PL  
 'They used to take those four stacks of çelfek.'
- T1/14 *indi çelfek i -me -ýe -k di -ýe -le*  
 now çelfek eat NEG PRS 1PL say PRS 3PL  
 'They say that we do not eat çelfek now.'
- T1/15 *indi ol qal -dy*  
 now that be abandoned DI.PST  
 'That (tradition) has now been abandoned.'
- T1/16 *meselen byr oba -ny üşir -ib dört kersen çelfek*  
 for example one village ACC gather CONV four stack çelfek  
*ed -inçä -ň hem kän zad da*  
 do ADV 2SG also a lot thing DA.PRTCL  
 'It is a lot, for example, to gather one village in order to make four stacks of çelfek.'
- T1/17 *ol ýay ýap*  
 that spread bake  
 'One has to spread (the paste) and bake.'
- T1/18 *näçe heley ýay -ardy -la iki bol -yb am*  
 several woman spread HAB.PST 3PL two be CONV also  
*ýaf -ardy -la iki ýer -den*  
 bake HAB.PST 3PL two place ABL  
 'Several women in two places being two (two by two) used to spread (the paste) and bake it.'
- T1/19 *ondan nesib ed -se my -ny geçir -ýe -ň*  
 then fate do COND this ACC bring PRS 2SG  
 'Then, if (Allah) allows, you bring it.'
- T1/20 *geçir -en soňy alla nesib ed -se toý tut -ýa -ň*  
 bring PST.PTCP after Allah fate do COND celebration hold PRS 2SG  
 'After bringing it, if Allah allows, you hold the (wedding) celebration.'
- T1/21 *bu kökä -ň geç -di tamam bol -dy*  
 this sweets POSS.2SG pass DI.PST finish become DI.PST  
 'This sweet (ceremony) of yours passed and finished.'

- T1/22 *byr zaman wuly çörek -i kiçi çörek -i*  
 one time big bread POSS.3 small bread POSS.3  
*di -ýerdi -le ha*  
 say HAB.PST 3PL HA.PRTCL  
 ‘At one time, they used to call (it) the big bread and the small bread (ceremonies).’
- T1/23 *indi ýoq o -la qal -ybdyr*  
 now non-existing that PL be abandoned INDIR.PST  
 ‘Now, they are not, they have been abandoned.’
- T1/24 *indi biz -iň döwr -imiz -dä byr je şo*  
 now we GEN time POSS.1PL LOC one JE.PRTCL that  
*şirni geç -ýe tamam bol -ýa*  
 sweets be held PRS.3SG finish be PRS  
 ‘Now in our time just that one sweet (ceremony) is held and that is it.’
- T1/25 *byr kiçi şirni geç -ýe byr em wuly şirni*  
 one small sweets be held PRS one also big sweets  
 ‘One small sweet (ceremony) is held and also one big sweet (ceremony).’
- T1/26 *ol wahal byr zaman -dy doqquz geç -erdi*  
 that time one time DI.PST doqquz be held HAB.PST  
 ‘At that time there were days when the doqquz (ceremony) was held.’
- T1/27 *öylän -den soň byr dört at -ly bol -ar*  
 noon ABL after one four horse DERIV.SUFFIX become AOR  
*gid -erdi -le byr qyz dile -n -ibdir*  
 go HAB.PST 3PL one girl ask RFLX INDIR.PST  
*ol oba -lar -da*  
 that village PL LOC  
 ‘In the afternoon they used to go on four horses (to) those villages where the girl was asked (proposed to).’
- T1/28 *öylän -den soň gid -erdi -le doqquz geçir -ýe -k*  
 noon ABL after go HAB.PST 3PL doqquz hold PRS 1PL  
*di -ýerdi -le qylýal -ly*  
 say HAB.PST 3PL qylýal DERIV.SUFFIX  
 ‘In the afternoon they used to go on their qylýal (type of horse) and say, ‘we are holding the doqquz.’
- T1/29 *aňrybär -jig -ni qylýal -a ýüklä -rdi -le*  
 stuff DIM ACC qylýal DAT load HAB.PST 3PL  
 ‘They used to load the stuff on to the qylýal.’
- T1/30 *doqquz -y geçir -ib gel -ýe -k di -ýerdi -le*  
 doqquz ACC hold CONV come PRS 1PL say HAB.PST 3PL  
 ‘They used to say, ‘we are coming having held the doqquz.’

- T1/31 *onda di -ýerdi -le öylän bol -sa gün dur -maz*  
 then say HAB.PST 3PL noon be COND sun stand NEG.AOR  
*doqquz geç -se qyz dur -maz di -ýerdi -le*  
 doqquz be held COND girl stay NEG.AOR say HAB.PST 3PL  
 'Then they used to say, 'If noon comes, the sun will not stay, if the doqquz passes, the girl will not stay.'
- T1/32 *ondan my -ny doqquz -ny geçir -ib qoý -an soň*  
 then this ACC doqquz ACC hold CONV put PST.PTCP after  
*da qyz dur -ma -ýa da*  
 DA.PRTCL girl stay NEG PRS DA.PRTCL  
 'And after holding this doqquz, the girl does not stay.'
- T1/33 *eýam toý tut -ub al -maly bol -ýa da*  
 immediately celebration hold CONV take NEC be PRS DA.PRTCL  
 'One must immediately hold the (wedding) celebration and take (the girl).'
- T1/34 *onda toý tut -yl -andadäny ýene çelfek*  
 then celebration hold PASS ANDADÄNI.CONV again çelfek  
*ed -meli köýmet diý -ib*  
 do NEC type of pancake say CONV  
 'Then when the (wedding) celebration is held, one should again make çelfek, which is called köýmet.'
- T1/35 *köýmet -i -ni ed -ýe -ň iki kersen çelfek*  
 type of pancake POSS.3SG ACC do PRS 2SG two stack çelfek  
 'You make his köýmet as two stacks of çelfek.'
- T1/36 *ondan bu -ny ýaf -ýa -ň*  
 then this ACC bake PRS 2SG  
 'Then you bake it.'
- T1/37 *ondan ýaf -yl -an soňy toý -ymyz -y*  
 then bake PASS PST.PTCP after celebration POSS.1PL ACC  
*tut -ýa -q*  
 hold PRS 1PL  
 'Then after they are baked, we hold our (wedding) celebration.'
- T1/38 *meselen bu gün geňeş -i*  
 for example this day rehearsal dinner POSS.3SG  
 'For example today is the rehearsal dinner.'
- T1/39 *şo geňeş -i gün -i de*  
 that rehearsal dinner POSS.3SG day POSS.3SG DA.PRTCL  
*çelfek -imiz -i ed -ýe -k soň el*  
 çelfek POSS.1PL ACC do PRS 1PL after hand  
*deg -me -ýe diý -ib*  
 strike, touch NEG PRS say CONV  
 'On the day of the rehearsal dinner we bake our çelfek, saying that (because) there is no time later.'



- T1/40 *ondan meselen bu gün geñeş -imiz*  
 then for example this day rehearsal dinner POSS.1PL  
 'Then today is our rehearsal dinner, for example.'
- T1/41 *ertir toý -ymyz*  
 tomorrow celebration POSS.1PL  
 'Tomorrow is our (wedding) celebration.'
- T1/42 *biriwun -i de toý -dan*  
 day after tomorrow POSS.3SG DA.PRTCL celebration ABL  
*al -ýa -q geln -imiz -i*  
 take PRS 1PL bride POSS.1PL ACC  
 'The day after tomorrow we take our bride from the (place of the) celebration.'
- T1/43 *ondan nāme byr zaman -a at gid -erdi*  
 then well one time DA.PRTCL horse go HAB.PST  
*qylýal -ly gid -erdi geln al -ma -na*  
 qylýal DERIV.SUFFIX go HAB.PST bride take NOM DAT  
 'Then, well, at one time a horse used to go, (they) used to go by qylýal to get the bride.'
- T1/44 *ol oba -lar -dan am al -sa -la qylýal bilen*  
 that village PL ABL also take COND PL qylýal with  
*gid -er getir -erdi -le*  
 go AOR bring HAB.PST 3PL  
 'Even if they took (the bride) from those villages, they used to go and get (her) with qylýal.'
- T1/45 *indi xuday -a şükr maşyn wesqýyl -ly gid -meli*  
 now God DAT thanks car vehicles DERIV.SUFFIX go NEC  
*ol bendä -ň qaf -sy -na toý -ymyz -y tut -maly*  
 that person GEN door POSS.3 DAT celebration POSS.1PL ACC hold NEC  
 'Now, thanks be to God, we can go by cars or vehicles to the door of that person and hold our celebration.'
- T1/46 *gelnaljy bol -anda gid -meli*  
 ceremony of taking the bride become ANDA.CONV go NEC  
*o -nyň qaf -sy -na*  
 he/she GEN door POSS.3SG DAT  
 'When the ceremony of taking the bride comes, one should go to her door.'
- T1/47 *qyz neme -den aýd -ýa -ň usyad ber ejaza ber*  
 girl what ABL say PRS 2SG permission give permission give  
 'You say to what...the girl ('s side) you give the permission.'
- T1/48 *ol da aýd -ýa usyad alla -dan ala*  
 that DA.PRTCL say PRS permission Allah ABL there  
*adam -ňyz -y ert -iber -iň*  
 person POSS.2PL ACC take IBER.POSTV 2SG  
 'And they say, 'Permission is from Allah, go and take your person (bride) there.''

T1/49 *olar -da usyad al -ybdäni kejevä -ä*  
 that place LOC permission take YBDÄNI.CONV carriage DAT  
*mindir -ýe -le*  
 take PRS 3PL

'After getting permission at that place, they take (the bride) to the carriage.'

T1/50 *ondan al -yb gel -ýe -le*  
 then take CONV come PRS 3PL

'Then they take (the bride) and come.'

Due to the narrator's socio-linguistic background of minimal contact with Persian language and culture, this text exhibits almost no contact-induced morpho-syntactic or phonological features. However there are a few lexical copies which belong to the category of old established loan words found in many Turkic languages. The speaker adapts these to Turkmen phonology and employs Turkmen suffixes. For example: *tarabdan* [*tarab* 'side' + *-dan* ABL] 'from the side' (T1/1), *meselen* 'for example' (T1/9), *miwe* 'fruit' (T1/10), *zaman* 'time' (T1/12).

There are the words *maşyn* 'car' (T1/45) and *wesajyl* 'vehicles' (T1/45) which are used in other Turkic languages, but with a different meaning. Here, the speaker has copied these lexical items along with their corresponding semantic load from Persian.

One compound verb, used on two occasions, containing the Persian word *ejaza* 'permission' and the translation of the verb *dadan* 'to give' is used, namely *ejaza berýeň* [*ejaza* 'permission' *ber* 'give' + *-ýe* PRS + *-ň* 2SG] 'you give permission' (T1/3) and *ejaza ber* [*ejaza* 'permission' *ber* 'give'] 'give permission!' (T1/47). On both occurrences the speaker also gives the Turkmen equivalent *usyad berýeň* [*usyad* 'permission' *ber* 'give' + *-ýe* PRS + *-ň* 2SG] 'you give permission' (T1/3) and *usyad ber* [*usyad* 'permission' *ber* 'give'] 'give permission!' (T1/47). On the first occurrence (T1/3) the Persian copy is given first, followed by the Turkmen, on the second occurrence (T1/47) the Turkmen is given first, followed by the Persian copy. On other occasions (T1/48,49) the Turkmen word *usyad* is used, rather than the Persian copy *ejaza*.

## Text 2. Middle-aged Turkmen speaker

This text presents an example of the speech of a middle-aged Turkmen speaker. The narrator (Gökleng dialect) is a 46 year old educated man also from the village of Ajan Sengerli near the city of Kalaleh. His mother tongue is Turkmen, but he also speaks Persian. As previously mentioned, this is a Turkmen dominated area, where the language of the home and family is Turkmen. For education purposes, the speaker was out of the language area for a few years, but otherwise has lived in the area. In this text, he describes a local game called 'ýüzük', from a psychological perspective.

- T2/1 *indi men şu ýüzük -iň gürrüň -i -ni tekmillä -äýin*  
 now I that ýüzük GEN story POSS.3SG ACC complete VOL.1SG  
 ‘Now let me complete the story of (the game) ýüzük.’
- T2/2 *byr iki mowred -e eşara ed -esi<sup>1</sup> -m gel -ýe de*  
 one two case DAT point do OPT 1SG come PRS DA.PRTCL  
 ‘I would like to point out one or two cases.’
- T2/3 *ýüzük -de byr heýwere byr jalyb byr zad şu näme*  
 ýüzük LOC one very one interesting one thing that what  
 ‘What is one very interesting thing in the game ýüzük?’
- T2/4 *indi biz şu wat ravanşenasi di -ýe -k de*  
 now we this time psychology say PRS 1PL DA.PRTCL  
 ‘Nowadays we call (it) psychology.’
- T2/5 *ravanşenasi -da meselen taraf -yň ýüz -ü -ni*  
 psychology LOC for example side GEN face POSS.3SG ACC  
*wellä -äb de diý -ib bil -ýe şu meriz*  
 look at CONV DA.PRTCL say CONV know PRS.3SG that sick  
*di -ýe hamaly ýa meselen şu -nyň*  
 say PRS for instance or for example this GEN  
*ýäýdaý -y -ny di -ýe -le*  
 condition POSS.3SG ACC say PRS 3PL  
*ýüz -ü -ni wellä -bdäni*  
 face POSS.3SG ACC look at YBDÄNL.CONV  
 ‘In psychology, for example, by looking at the face of (the person) opposite, he can say, for instance, that he is sick or, for example, they say his condition (in what condition he is) by looking at his face.’
- T2/6 *ýüzük -de de şo gürrüň bar di -ýe -n de*  
 ýüzük LOC DA.PRTCL that story existing say PRS 1SG DA.PRTCL  
 ‘I say that in ýüzük also there is that story (the same thing).’
- T2/7 *men şo watlam bar byrtowar adam bol -ardy başlyq -da*  
 I that time existing many person be HAB.PST leader LOC  
 ‘I (remember that) at that time there used to be many people in the leader position.’
- T2/8 *oýz -da on nefer otur*  
 that side LOC ten person sit  
 ‘Ten people sit at that side.’
- T2/9 *dur -an ýer -in -de hä Mejit*  
 stand PST.PTCP place POSS.3SG LOC hey Mejit  
*sen -dä ýüzük ýoq*  
 you.SG LOC ýüzük non-existing  
 ‘At his place (the leader can say) ‘Hey, Mejit, you do not have the ýüzük.’

1 See Zal, Ü (2011) for a discussion of the optative in Turkmen.

- T2/10 *muxammed sen -de de ýoq*  
Muxammed you.SG LOC DA.PRTCL non-existing  
‘Muxammed, you do not have it either.’
- T2/11 *ay sen -de de ýoq*  
well you.SG LOC DA.PRTCL non-existing  
‘Well, you do not have it either.’
- T2/12 *bol -sa şu bilen şu -nda bol -maly di -ýärdi -le*  
be COND that with this LOC be NEC say HAB.PST 3PL  
‘If someone has it, it must be this and that (person),’ they used to say.’
- T2/13 *šo rävansenasi di -ýe -n de men öz*  
that psychology say PRS 1SG DA.PRTCL I own  
*eteqad -ym -da*  
belief POSS.1SG LOC  
‘Based on my belief, I say that is psychology.’
- T2/14 *šo diýiş -i ýanaq da ondan*  
that saying POSS.3SG similar to DA.PRTCL then  
*gid -ib damar -y wellä -ärdi*  
go CONV pulse ACC look at HAB.PST  
‘Just like what he said, he used to go and check the pulse (of the person).’
- T2/15 *my -nda ýoq sen -ä puç*  
this LOC non-existing you.SG DA.PRTCL out, excluded  
‘This (he) does not have it, so you are out.’
- T2/16 *aslan mätel et -mä -n de puç*  
at all delay do NEG PST.PTCP DA.PRTCL out, excluded  
*ed -ib qoy -yber -erdi*  
do CONV put IBER.POSTV HAB.PST  
‘Without any delay at all, (he) used to put (that person) out.’
- T2/17 *ýä kä adam -la bar -dy byr redif wellä -äb*  
or some person PL existing DI.PST one row look at CONV  
*gid -erdi*  
POSTV HAB.PST  
‘Or there were some people who used to look at one row.’
- T2/18 *ondan iz -y -na öwriň -erdi*  
then back POSS.3SG DAT return HAB.PST  
‘Then they used to return.’
- T2/19 *daş -raq -da dur -ardy sen sen sen puç*  
far COMP LOC stand HAB.PST you.SG you.SG you.SG out, excluded  
*siz iki -ňiz -de ýüzük bol -maly di -ýerdi*  
you.PL two 2PL LOC ýüzük be NEC say HAB.PST  
‘They used to stand further back and say, ‘you, you, you are out, ýüzük must be in you two.’

- T2/20 *indi şutay -da yine byr muhum byr zat bar da*  
 now here LOC again one important one thing existing DA.PRTCL  
 ‘Now here there is another important thing.’
- T2/21 *iki nefer qal -anda ol adam ke*  
 two person stay ANDA.CONV that person KE.PRTCL  
*el -i -nde yüzük bar aslan dur -ub bil -me -ye*  
 hand POSS.3SG LOC yüzük existing at all stand CONV know NEG PRS  
 ‘When two people are left, the person who has the yüzük in his hand cannot stand (stay calm).’
- T2/22 *yüreg -i tirsilda -ab otur reng -i*  
 heart POSS.3SG thump CONV POSTV colour POSS.3SG  
*ru -sy gid -ib zad ed -ib*  
 appearance POSS.3SG go CONV thing do CONV  
 ‘His heart is thumping, while the colour of his face is going away (his face drains of colour), and so on.’
- T2/23 *indi ol adam ke el -i -nde yüzük*  
 now that person KE.PRTCL hand POSS.3SG LOC yüzük  
*yoq näme ed -meli*  
 non-existing what do NEC  
 ‘Now that person who does not have the yüzük in his hand, what should he do?’
- T2/24 *şo -ña hämrahi ed -meli de*  
 that DAT companionship do NEC DA.PRTCL  
 ‘He should keep the other one company.’
- T2/25 *ol da byr towri özi -ni werked -meli*  
 that DA.PRTCL one state, manner PRN.REFX.3SG ACC show NEC  
*reng -i ru -sy gid -sin*  
 colour POSS.3SG appearance POSS.3SG go VOL.3SG  
*damar -y -ny meselen tur -ma -sa*  
 pulse POSS.3SG ACC for example wake up NEG COND  
*şu damar -y -ny turuz -jaq bol -ybdäni*  
 that pulse POSS.3SG ACC wake up FUT become YBDÄNI.CONV  
*şöd -il -erdi de hede*  
 do this PASS HAB.PST DA.PRTCL HEDE.PRTCL  
 ‘He also must show himself such that the colour of his face goes away (drains of colour) and his pulse, for example, even if it does not waken up (go fast), he should make his pulse do this, this used to be done, right?’
- T2/26 *şo zad -la da heýwere muhum zad*  
 that thing PL DA.PRTCL very important thing  
*myqa di -ý -n şu oýn -yň iç -i -nde*  
 MYQA.PRTCL say PRS 1SG that game GEN inside POSS.3SG LOC  
 ‘I suppose that these things are also very important in this game.’

T2/27 *šo zad -lar -a ýet -mek zad ed -mek de*  
 that thing PL DAT reach NOM thing do NOM DA.PRTCL  
*byr jalyb byr zad*  
 one interesting one thing

'Reaching to (understanding) these things and so on is an interesting thing.'

T2/28 *bu oýn -yň öz qyzyqly -sy da axyr -da*  
 this game GEN own climax POSS.3SG DA.PRTCL end LOC  
*šo -nsy bol -ardy da iki ýa üç*  
 that POSS.3SG be HAB.PST DA.PRTCL two or three  
*nefer -e ýet -ende*  
 person DAT reach ANDA.CONV

'The climax of this game used to be in the end when it reached two or three people.'

In this text, a number of contact-induced features can be observed, mainly in the area of lexical copies, but some instances of morpho-syntactic copies are also found.

The lexical items copied are from everyday life and education. The speaker employs the Persian word, combined with the Turkmen suffixes. For example, *mowrede* [*mowred* 'point' + *-e* DAT] 'to the point' (T2/2), *räwanşenasi* 'psychology' (T2/4,13), *räwanşenasida* [*räwanşenasi* 'psychology' + *-da* LOC] 'in psychology' (T2/5), *meriz* 'sick' (T2/5).

Two compound verbs containing Persian elements can be seen. These are composed of a copied noun from Persian followed by the translation of the Persian light verb *kärdän* 'to do' (*etmek*). The first one is *mätel etmän* [*mätel* 'delay' *et* 'do' + *-mä* NEG + *-n* PST.PTCP] 'not delaying' (T2/16), the second *hamrähi edmeli* [*hamrähi* 'companionship' *ed* 'do' + *-meli* NEC] 'should keep company' (T2/24).

In this text, with only one exception, all copied items are adapted to Turkmen phonology. The exception *räwanşenasi* 'psychology' is pronounced with the consonants [v] and [s] rather than [w] and [θ].

A Persian collocation, *räng o ru*, literally meaning 'colour and surface' is used, phonologically adapted to Turkmen, along with a direct translation of the Persian verb *raftan* 'to go', namely *renge rusy gidib* [*reng* 'colour' + *-i* POSS.3SG *ru* 'appearance' + *-sy* POSS.3SG *gid* 'go' + *-ib* CONV] 'the colour of his appearance going' (T2/22) and *renge rusy gidsin* [*reng* 'colour' + *-i* POSS.3SG *ru* 'appearance' + *-sy* POSS.3SG *gid* 'go' + *-sin* VOL.3SG] 'let the colour of his appearance go!' (T2/25).

In T2/21 and T2/23 the Persian particle *ki* is used as a restrictive relative clause marker: *ol adam ke elinde ýüzük bar...* 'the man who has the *ýüzük* in his hand ...' which results in a finite head initial relative clause structure typical of Persian.

### Text 3. Young Turkmen speaker

This text presents an example of a highly Persianised form of Turkmen, typical of young educated speakers of the language, even in rural areas. The speaker (Yomut dialect) is a 16 year old high school student who lives in the town of Aq Qala. Both

his parents were Turkmen and he grew up in a home environment where only Turkmen was spoken and highly valued. Nevertheless, due to the effects of exposure to Persian as the language of education and the media, his speech exhibits a high degree of lexical, syntactic and phonological features copied from Persian.

T3/1 *men Jemshid şahrestan Aqqala -da zendegi ed -yä -n*  
 I Jemshid city Aqqala LOC life do PRS 1SG  
 'I am Jemshid (and) I live in the city of Aqqala.'

T3/2 *onalty yaş -ym -da*  
 sixteen age POSS.1SG LOC  
 'I am sixteen years old.'

T3/3 *reşte ye täjrobi ke reştä -m -i*  
 field of study ezafe science KE.PRTCL field of study POSS.1SG ACC  
*öwez ed -jek bol -yb ýör -n*  
 change do FUT be CONV POSTV 1SG  
 '(I am studying) the field of science, but I am going to change my field.'

T3/4 *şymat debirestan -da oqy -ya -n ke*  
 now high school LOC study PRS 1SG KE.PRTCL  
*modir -im vä moşaver -im moxalefät*  
 headmaster POSS.1SG and counsellor POSS.1SG disagreement  
*ed -yäl<sup>2</sup> -le*  
 do PRS 3PL  
 'I study in a high school now, but my headmaster and my counsellor disagree (with me changing subject).'

T3/5 *koll -e şanvada -m da*  
 whole ezafe family POSS.1SG DA.PRTCL  
*reştä -ñ -i öwez ed di -yal -la*  
 field of study POSS.2SG ACC change do say PRS 3PL  
 'My whole family also tells me to change my field of study.'

T3/6 *ensani -q<sup>3</sup> gid di -yäl -le*  
 humanities DAT go say PRS 3PL  
 'They say, 'go to humanities!''

T3/7 *ohom men şu wat näme ed -jeg -m -i*  
 after that I this time what do FUT POSS.1SG ACC  
*bil -mä -n dur -n*  
 know NEG PST.PTCP POSTV 1SG  
 'So I do not know what to do now.'

2 -yäl/-yal is a dialectal variant (Yomut) of *yär/-yar* 'PRS'.

3 In the Yomut dialect, when a base noun ends in vowel, -q is optionally used instead of -na/-ne 'DAT'.

- T3/8 *nowbät -e ävväl de geç -di*  
 schoolterm ezafe first DA.PRTCL pass DI.PST  
 'The first schoolterm has passed.'
- T3/9 *özüm başar -ar -n myqa di -ýär -n*  
 PRN.RFLX.1SG be able AOR 1SG MYQA.PRTCL say PRS 1SG  
*edama -sy -ny zad ed - ma -ne*  
 continuation POSS.3SG ACC thing do NOM DAT  
 'I myself suppose that I will be able to...what...continue it.'
- T3/10 *moşaver di -ýe bol -ma -ýa di -ýe*  
 counsellor say PRS become NEG PRS say PRS  
 'The counsellor says, 'it is not possible.'
- T3/11 *byr term geç -di di -ýe bol -ma -ýa di -ýe*  
 one term pass DI.PST say PRS become NEG PRS say PRS  
 'He says, 'one term has passed, it is not possible.'
- T3/12 *ohom men şumat dorahi -da qal -yb ýör -n*  
 after that I now dilemma LOC stay CONV POSTV 1SG  
 'So now I am in a dilemma.'
- T3/13 *men byr xanvade -ýe şiş nefer -e -dä ke men*  
 I one family ezafe six person ADJ LOC KE.PRTCL I  
*orto -qy -sy di -se -m bol -jaq*  
 middle REL POSS.3SG say COND POSS.1SG POSTV FUT  
 'I am from a family of six persons, in which I can say that I am the middle one.'
- T3/14 *özüm -den olaqan byr aýaldoyan -ym bar*  
 PRN.RFLX.1SG ABL big one sister POSS.1SG existing  
 'I have one older sister.'
- T3/15 *qalan -y da özüm -den kişik aýaldoyan*  
 remainder POSS.3SG DA.PRTCL PRN.RFLX.1SG ABL small sister  
 'The remainder are young sisters.'
- T3/16 *men owqat -e färayat -ym -y bištär*  
 I time ezafe free POSS.1SG ACC mostly  
*ýan -ymyz -da byr kanun -e kudäk -an ol*  
 side POSS.1PL LOC one centre ezafe child PL and  
*nowjäwan -an bar pingpong bar -dy*  
 teenager PL existing tabletennis existing DI.PST  
*iç -i -nde bištär muya -la şo -ña gid -erddi<sup>4</sup> -k*  
 inside POSS.3SG LOC mostly time PL that DAT go HAB.PST 1PL  
 'In my free time, I mostly... we used to mostly go to a centre for children and teenagers nearby where there was tabletennis.'

4 -erddi/-arddy is a dialectal variant (Yomut) of -erdi/-ardy 'HAB.PST'.



- T3/17 *biz pingpong oýna -arddy -q äläki -räjik -den*  
 we tabletennis play HAB.PST 1PL lighthearted COMP ABL  
*bil -me -ýärdi -k hiçzad*  
 know NEG HAB.PST 1PL nothing  
 'We used to play table tennis more for fun, we did not know anything.'
- T3/18 *indi täze älaqemänd bol -dy -m*  
 now newly interested be DI.PST 1SG  
 'Now I have recently become interested.'
- T3/19 *kilas -a gid -ýä -n*  
 class DAT go PRS 1SG  
 'I go to a class.'
- T3/20 *ýanqy geç -en ýyl şahrestan -e Aqqala -da*  
 aforementioned pass PST.PTCP year city ezafe Aqqala LOC  
*nowjäwan -an -da ävel bol -dy -m*  
 teenager PL LOC first be DI.PST 1SG  
 'I was first among the teenagers in the city of Aqqala in the past year.'
- T3/21 *ohom beýn -e mädares -da final -a ýet -di -m*  
 after that between ezafe schools LOC final DAT reach DI.PST 1SG  
*ke uddur -dy -m dovjom bol -dy -m*  
 KE.PRTCL lose DI.PST POSS.1SG second be DI.PST 1SG  
 'Then in (the competition) between schools, I reached the final, but I lost and I was second.'
- T3/22 *ohom pingpong -da biz -iň ostad -ymyz byr*  
 after that tabletennis LOC we GEN teacher POSS.1PL one  
*adam -y ke byr aýaq -y köllen xarab mälul*  
 person I.CLTC KE.PRTCL one leg POSS.3 completely broken disabled  
 'Now in tabletennis our teacher is a person, one of whose legs is completely broken (and) disabled.'
- T3/23 *bainvojud keşvär -de ävel bol -ybdyr mälulan -da*  
 nonetheless country LOC first be INDIR.PST disabled people LOC  
 'Nonetheless, he was the first in the country among disabled people.'
- T3/24 *şondan biz därs al -yb bil -ýär -s ke*  
 then we lesson take CONV know PRS 1PL KE.PRTCL  
*xastän tävanestän äst di -ýäl -le*  
 will being able is say PRS 3PL  
 'So we can learn a lesson that where there is a will there is way.'

A significant number of lexical copies from Persian are observed in this text. As with texts 1 and 2, the speaker adds Turkmen suffixes to the copied lexical item.

Lexical items include mainly administrative terms, such as names of educational and government institutions. For example: *reştämi* [*rešta* ‘field of study’ + *-m* POSS.1SG + *-i* ACC] ‘my field of study’ (T3/3), *debirestanda* [*debirestan* ‘high school’ + *-da* LOC] ‘in high school’ (T3/4), *modirim* [*modir* ‘headmaster’ + *-im* POSS.1SG] ‘my headmaster’ (T3/4), *moşaverim* [*moşaver* ‘counsellor’ + *-im* POSS.1SG] ‘my counsellor’ (T3/4), *ensaniq* [*ensani* ‘humanities’ + *-q* DAT] ‘to humanities’ (T3/6), *mädaresda* [*mädares* ‘schools’ + *-da* LOC] ‘in schools’ (T3/21), *ostadymyz* [*ostad* ‘teacher’ + *-ymyz* POSS. 1PL] ‘our teacher’ (T3/22), *şahrestan* ‘city’ (T3/1,20), *keşvär* ‘country’ (T3/23). There are two instances where a Persian plural suffix is added to the copied lexical item, rather than a Turkmen suffix. These are: *kudäkan* [*kudäk* ‘child’ + *-an* PL] ‘children’ (T3/16) and *nowjäwanan* [*nowjäwan* ‘teenager’ + *-an* PL] ‘teenagers’ (T3/16, 20).

Four lexical terms are also copied from English: *term* ‘term’ (T3/11), *pingpong* ‘table tennis,’ (T3/16, 17, 22), *kilasa* [*kilas* ‘class’ + *-a* DAT] ‘to the class’ (T3/19), *finala* [*final* + *-a* DAT] ‘to the final’. This can be attributed to the influence of English on Persian through which these items have been copied into Turkmen.

Some general terms from everyday life are also copied, for example: *zendegi* ‘life’ (T3/1), *xanvadam* [*xanvada* + *-m* 1SG.POSS] ‘my family’ (T3/5), *edamasyny* [*edama* + *-sy* 3SG.POSS + *-ny* ACC] ‘its continuation’ (T3/9), *dorahida* [*dorahi* ‘dilemma’ + *-da* LOC] ‘in a dilemma’ (T3/12), *biştär* ‘mostly’ (T3/16), *älaqemänd* ‘interested’ (T3/18), *mälul* ‘disabled’ (T3/22). Ordinal numbers are also copied from Persian, for example *ävväl* ‘first’ (T3/8, 23) and *dovvom* ‘second’ (T3/21).

Four compound verbs containing Persian elements are found. These are composed of a copied noun from Persian followed by the translation of the Persian light verbs *kärdän* ‘to do’ (*etmek*) and *gereftän* ‘to take’ (*almak*). The verbs *zendegi edýän* [*zendegi* ‘life’ *ed* ‘do’ -*yä* PRS -*n* 1SG] ‘I live’ (T3/1); *öwez edjek* [*öwez* ‘change’ *ed* ‘do’ -*jek* FUT] ‘I will change’ (T3/3, 5); *därs alyb* [*därs* ‘lesson’ *al* ‘take’ -*yb* CONV] ‘taking a lesson/learning’ (3/24) can each be expressed by a single corresponding Turkmen verb, namely *yaşamaq* ‘to live’, *çalyşyрмаq* or *ütgetmek* ‘to change’ and *öwrenmek* ‘to learn’ respectively. However, for the compound verb *moxalefät edýälle* [*moxalefät* ‘disagreement’ *ed* ‘do’ -*yäl* PRES -*le* 3PL] ‘they disagree’ (T3/4) there is a corresponding Turkmen compound verb *qarşy çyqmaq* ‘to disagree’.

In some cases, whole blocks of Persian expressions are copied into the narrative, for example *kanune kudäkan o nowjäwanan* ‘centre for children and teenagers’ (T3/16) and the proverb *xastän täwanestän äst* ‘where there is a will there is a way’ (T3/24).

A number of syntactic copies are observed which include: the use of the Persian conjunction *ba in vojud* ‘nonetheless’ (T3/23); the *ezafe* construction (occurs 9 times) eg *reşte-ye täjrobi* ‘field of science’ (T3/3); *beýn-e mädaresda* ‘between the schools’ (T3/21); the use of the particle *ki* (occurs 6 times). In this text *ki* is used to mark adverbial clauses (T3/3, 4, 21), a restrictive relative clause (T3/22) in which *ki* is used along with the Persian linker *-i* (Windfuhr & Perry, 2009) attached to the

head noun, a non-restrictive relative clause (T3/13) and a complement clause (T3/24).

As regards contact induced phonological features, whenever a lexical item is copied, the corresponding Persian pronunciation is generally also copied. This is exemplified by the use of the [s] and [z] sounds rather than [θ] and [ð] such as in the words *zendegi* 'life' (T3/1), *ensaniq* 'to the humanities' (T3/6) and *xastān* 'will' (T3/24), also by the use of [v] rather than [w] in the words *vā* 'and' (T3/4) and *āvvāl* 'first' (T3/8, 23), both of which are already normally used in the language.

### Summary

As illustrated in the texts, there is a notable increase in the degree of copied elements down the generations, with the speaker from the older generation exhibiting only a few instances of lexical copies, the speaker from the middle aged generation a greater number, while the young man exhibits a high degree of copying on all linguistic levels.

This can be attributed in a large part to the many socio-cultural changes which have occurred in the life-style and attitudes of Turkmen speakers, from the nomadic, isolated way of life which encouraged avoidance of any type of contact and interaction with others, even among the different Turkmen tribes themselves, to the gradual settling down in rural areas in the north-east of Iran, and to the situation nowadays where, for various reasons, there is a high degree of interaction both within the Turkmen tribes and with Persian language and culture. Furthermore, the younger generation commonly leave their home village or town and locate in urban centres for educational and professional reasons, which in turn leads to a greater exposure to Persian.

It is this group of Turkmen speakers which exhibits a high copying variety as illustrated in text 3. It is interesting to note that even this group in general currently maintains a positive attitude towards their mother tongue and still uses it when communicating with Turkmen friends and relatives.

Nevertheless, with the rapidly increasing intensity and duration of contact (Johanson 2002), one could expect to see an increasingly higher copying version of Turkmen. This may result in tensions between the generations (Abish & Csato 2011) which in turn might create a negative attitude among the young Turkmen to speaking their language, all of which may eventually result in a diminished use of Turkmen in favour of Persian, particularly in urban settings.

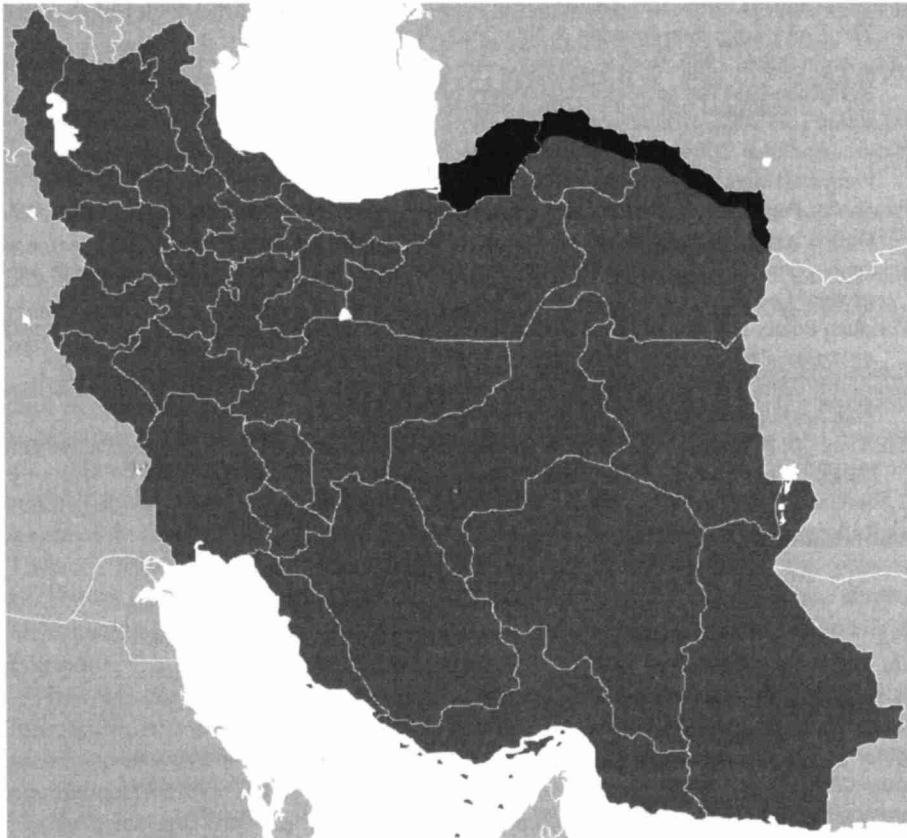
However, taking several factors into consideration, such as strong ethnic identity, religion as Sunni Muslims, and a fairly large population concentrated in one specific geographical area of the country, it may be predicted that the Turkmen language in Iran will continue to be used and spoken (Doerfer 1998). The question will be as to what extent and in what ways Persian will continue to impact its use, thus underscoring the need for further documentation and investigation across the generations.

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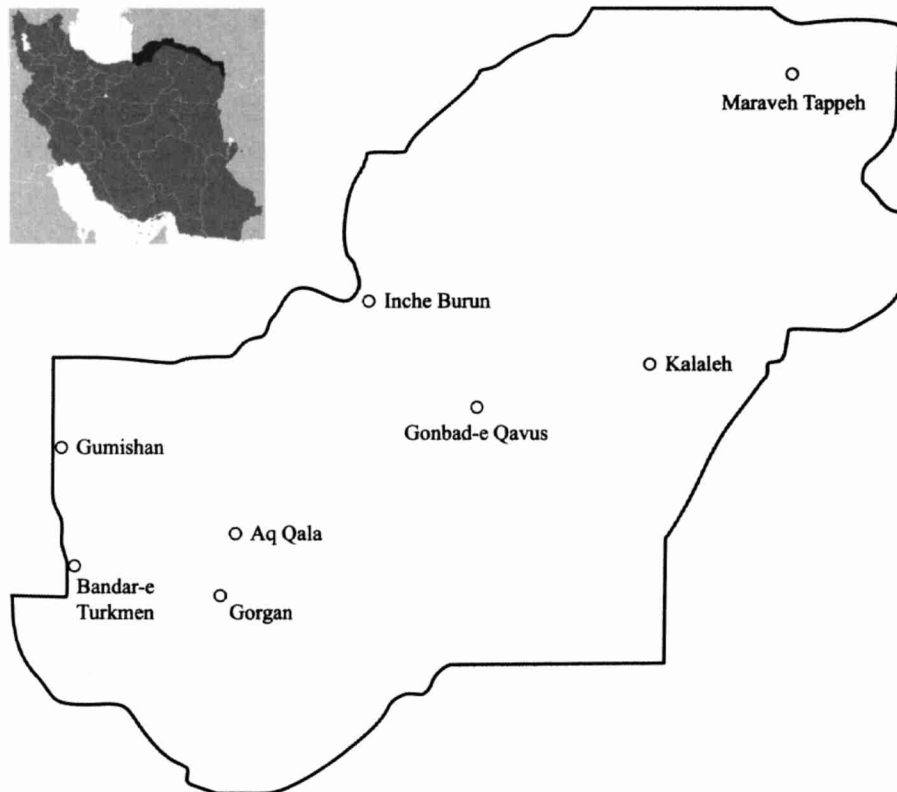
## Abbreviations

1	first person	I.CLTC	clitic <i>i</i>
2	second person	IBER.POSTV	postverb <i>iber</i>
3	third person	INDIR.PST	indirect past
ABL	ablative	JE.PRTCL	particle <i>je</i>
ACC	accusative	KE.PRTCL	ke particle
ADJ	adjectiviser	LOC	locative
ADV	adverbial	MYQA.PRTCL	particle <i>myqa</i>
ANDA.CONV	converb in <i>anda</i>	NEC	necessitative
ANDADĀNI.CONV	converb in <i>andadāni</i>	NEG	negative
AOR	aorist	NOM	nominaliser
COMP	comparative	OPT	optative
COND	conditional	PASS	passive
CONV	converb	PL	plural
DA.PRTCL	da particle	POSS	possessive
DAT	dative	POSTV	postverb
DERIV.SUFFIX	derivational suffix	PRN	pronoun
DI.PST	past in <i>di</i>	PRS	present
DIM	diminutive	PST.PTCP	past participle
FUT	future	REL	relativiser
GEN	genitive	RFLX	reflexive
HA.PRTCL	particle <i>ha</i>	SG	singular
HAB.PST	habitual past	VOL	voluntative
HEDE.PRTCL	particle <i>hede</i>	YBDĀNI.CONV	converb in <i>ybdāni</i>

**Appendix 1: Maps****Figure 1: Map of Iran showing Turkmen speaking area**

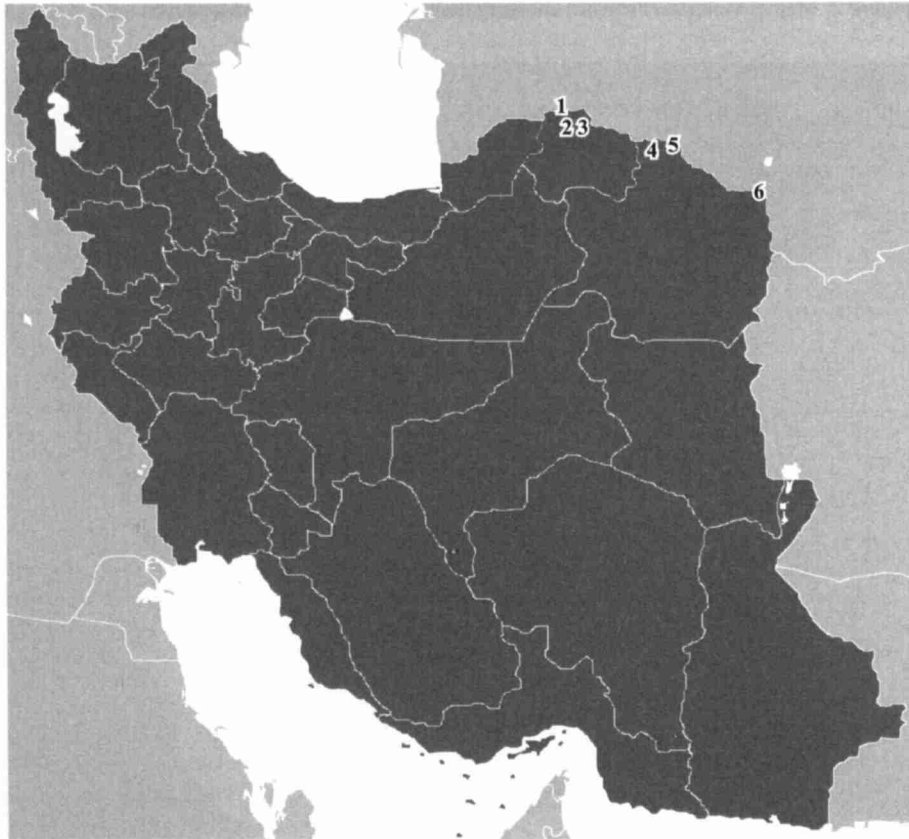
Map source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Blank-Map-Iran-With-Water-Bodies.png>  
(Shading by author)

Figure 2: Map of Golestan Province showing main Turkmen population centres



Map source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Blank-Map-Iran-With-Water-Bodies.png>  
(Shading by author. Enlargement by author.)

Figure 3: Main Turkmen population centres in North Khorasan Province (Khorasan-e Shomali) and Khorasan-e Razavi Province



Map source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Blank-Map-Iran-With-Water-Bodies.png>

**North Khorasan:**

1. Jergelan
2. Ashkhaneh
3. Bojnurd

**Khorasan-e Razavi:**

4. Quchan
5. Dareh Gaz
6. Sarakhs

**Appendix 2: Orthography Tables**

Table 1: Consonants

IPA	Cyrillic	Latin Turkmen	Iranian Turkmen
b	Б	B	ب ب
p	П	P	پ پ
t	Т	T	ت ت
dʒ	Ж	J	ج ج
tʃ	Ч	Ç	چ چ
x	X	H	خ خ
d	Д	D	د
r	Р	R	ر
ð	З	Z	ز
ʒ	Ж	Ž	ژ
θ	С	S	س س
ʃ	Ш	Ş	ش ش
ɣ	Г	G	غ غ
f	Ф	F	ف ف
q	К	K	ق ق
k	К	K	ک ک
g	Г	G	گ گ
l	Л	L	ل ل
m	М	M	م م
n	Н	N	ن ن
v	В	W	و
h	Х	H	ه ه ه
j	Й	Ý	ی ی
ŋ	Н	Ň	نگ نگ

Source: Turkmen Poetry and Literature Society of Miras, 2009.



Table 2: Vowels

IPA	Cyrillic	Latin Turkmen	Iranian Turkmen
a	A	A	آ ا
æ	Ә	Ä	اَ ا
ɪ	Ы	Y	اڭ اذ ائ
i	И	I	اي يى
e	E	E	اَ ا ه ه
u	У	U	او و
y	Ү	Ü	او ў
o	O	O	او ў
œ	Ө	Ö	او ў

Source: Turkmen Poetry and Literature Society of Miras, 2009.

Table 3: Additional letters in words of Arabic origin

IPA	Cyrillic	Latin Turkmen	Iranian Turkmen
θ	С	S	ث ث
h	X	H	ح ح
s	С	S	ص ص
d <sup>h</sup>	З	Z	ض ض
t	T	T	ط ط
z	З	Z	ظ ظ
ʔ			ع ع
ð	З	Z	ذ ذ

Source: Turkmen Poetry and Literature Society of Miras, 2009.