

Preface

This book is intended for both Persian students, and native speakers, of English. Of the first group, those who are interested in translating Persian documents into English are intended. Translating original English documents into Persian is not difficult once the person is familiar with the jargon to use.

However, translating Persian deeds into English could be a formidable task for Persian students, who face problems not only in translating documents into English, but also in understanding the legal language of Persian as well!

Contrary to much of the present literature, which is about translation of English documents into Persian, this book is intended to provide ample practice in translating Persian documents into English as the converse is rightly believed to be much easier. In fact, most people may get by the latter through resort to a few good dictionaries. However, translating Persian legal language into English cannot be accomplished without formal instruction.

This book intends to develop the students' ability in deciphering, analyzing and finally translating Persian deeds and dossiers into English. It is proposed as a useful textbook to be practiced in such university courses as 'Document Translation I' and 'Document Translation II'.

The book is designed such that it starts with easier and more common documents that all people have to deal with and then move on to more complex technical documents which not everybody encounters in his/her life.

One advantage of this book is its language. Unfortunately, the current trend in document translation courses is to run the classes in Persian because, as both the teachers and students of such courses confess, frequent resort to the use of either English or Persian can disrupt their concentration! The truth is some students might take this as an excuse to evade English in class as they believe the subject is already too difficult and speaking English in class might only 'add insult to injury'¹ However, such students should be reminded that this may be true only for a very short time, and once they 'get the hang of it', then things would look much easier.

It is hoped that this book can prepare the ground for complete resort to English in such classes as the language of the book itself is English.

Although the nature of the course might require frequent resort to Persian, students should be advised not to forget the overall objective of their major, i.e. mastering English. Therefore, English is used as the medium of instruction throughout this book.

The book also employs phonetic symbols to transliterate Persian words. The symbols are not complicated and, in order to reduce them to a minimum, are only used for sounds not present in English. Thus, the 'sh' combination is still employed to refer to the initial sound in *she*². Moreover, the **boldface** letters in such representations stand for the primary stress in the word. Thus, in *shæhrdāri:*, the Persian for 'City Hall', the stress is on the last syllable.

Here are the symbols and their sounds as they are used in this book:

Symbols	Sounds as in
æ	mat /mæt/
ā	army / ā rmi:/
i:	mean /mi:n/

1. No offence to the students, but this is the experience I have had when teaching such courses.

2. One potential argument here might be how I want to represent a phonetic realization where ‘s’ and ‘h’ are separate and each represents a different sound. The answer is ‘never mind, such a case is nonexistent in the present book.’

Symbols	Sounds as in
ū	fool /f ūl/
o	boy /boy/
ķ ¹	ķiābān (Persian for ‘street’)
ġ	as ‘r’ in French for ‘raisin’

To the second group, i.e. native speakers of English, this book may come as a tool so as to familiarize themselves with the legal language of Iran, her types of deeds, laws, regulations etc. It can also tell them of the difficulties in the translation, that is, the problems a (sworn) translator faces upon attempting to translate from either of these two languages into the other. This happens not only because of the different capacities in either language, i.e. Persian and English, but also because of the difference in their legal systems.

The book is divided into two parts and appendices. Part One discusses all types of *personal* documents. This term is used by the author to refer to documents that affect or benefit individuals only, e.g. ID cards, driving licenses, powers of attorney, educational transcripts. *Social* documents starting in Part Two, on the other hand, are documents that, as can be guessed in contrast with Part One, affect or are concerned with more than one individual. In this latter type of document, there are at least two parties involved, and the deeds are drawn to stipulate the rights, regulations, limitations and prohibitions of each party. As contrasted with the personal documents, where one side of the deal is mostly the state (the government),

in social documents the two sides represent people or private organizations. However, I do not intend to state that the distinction is clear-cut. Obviously, there are amalgamations. Yet as the texture of personal documents is easier than the latter, they could serve as a good starting point for the present book. Appendix A is concerned with the issues of date conversion between 1. This sound does not exist in English. the Gregorian and Khorshidi (solar) Calendars. If you need to know how we treat and possibly convert such dates from one calendar into another, you are advised to study this section prior to embarking upon any translation.

Appendix B provides a complete list of majors and course titles at Iranian universities. This could be of particular interest to those who wish to translate their university dossiers into English, who constitute a great majority of the readers of this book.

I would like to extend my courtesy and gratitude to whoever so eagerly and wholeheartedly assisted me in writing this book. I especially would like to thank Dr. Kambiz Parsay, my legal translation mentor, who assisted me with all his insightful comments and abundant knowledge in this field. All the flaws and inefficiencies (if any) are, nevertheless, my sole responsibility, and do not concern anybody else (except for typos!). Please send your comments to m_raee@yahoo.com.

¹ This sound does not exist in English