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Research Article

OTTOMAN TO MODERN TURKISH: PERSIAN IZAFET AND ITS COLLOQUIAL VARIATIONS

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Abstract

Persian izafet constructions were widely used in the literary and official language of Ottoman Turkish, which represents a historical period of Western Turkish. In spoken language, some Persian phrases adapted to the phonetic structure of Turkish by modifying the izafet particle over time. However, most of these phrases continued to follow Persian micro-syntactic rules until the Republican era. The limited changes in Persian phrases, which were often obscured by Ottoman orthography, can only be observed in the writings of either “careless” copyists or Western authors who recorded spoken language as they heard it. This study examines the status of the izafet particle in Persian phrases found in various Ottoman Turkish sources and Latin-script transcription texts. It also highlights notable examples where the izafet particle was omitted, providing insights into the adaptation of Persian grammatical structures in Turkish.

Keywords: Persian izafet constructions, colloquial language, Ottoman Turkish, modern Turkish.

OSMANLI TÜRKÇESİNDEN ÇAĞDAŞ TÜRKÇEYE: FARŞÇA İZAFET VE KONUŞMA DİLİ VARYASYONLARI

Öz

Farsça izafetler Batı Türkçesinin bir dönemini oluşturan Osmanlı Türkçesi edebî ve resmî dilinde Türkçenin doğal bir unsuru gibi kullanılmıştır. Osmanlı Türkçesinden günümüze sözlü dildeki kullanım sıklıklarına bağlı olarak birtakım Farsça terkipler, unsurları arasındaki yapısal ilişkiyi kuran izafet kesresi yönüyle Türkçenin fonetik yapısına uyarken bu terkiplerin büyük bir kısmı Cumhuriyet dönemine kadar Farsçanın mikro sentaktik kuralları çerçevesinde Türkçede varlığını sürdürmüştür. Farsça tamlamalarda Osmanlı imlasının gölgelediği sınırlı gelişim ve değişimleri ise dikkatli bir gözle ancak “dikkatsiz” müstensihlerin kaleminden ya da duyduklarını olduğu gibi yazıya geçirme eğiliminde olan Batılı yazarların eserlerinden takip edebiliriz. Bu çalışma yukarıda ana hatları sıralanan konularla birlikte çeşitli Osmanlı Türkçesi kaynaklarından ve Latin harfli çeviri yazılı metinlerden derlenen Farsça tamlamalarda izafet kesresinin durumunu ve düşürüldüğü ilgi çekici örnekleri de içermektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Farsça izafet yapıları, konuşma dili, Osmanlı Türkçesi, çağdaş Türkçe.

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Introduction

The Ottoman, which is a variety of West Oghuz Turkic, roughly can be diachronically examined into three periods: *Old Ottoman* (13th to 15th centuries), *Middle Ottoman* (16th to 18th centuries), and *New Ottoman* (19th century to 1928) (Kerslake, 1998, p. 181). As a language point of view, the most distinctive feature of Middle Ottoman to the others is high varieties of the literature had been strongly influenced by Arabic and new Persian. By the conquest of Constantinople which would afterwards be called *Istanbul*, an intellectual circle begins to develop near the Ottoman palace. These highly-educated people who knew Persian and Arabic as well created a new trilingual higher literary form, so-called *elsine-i selâse* ‘the three languages’. In the elite literature here one can be initially mentioned the *divan* poetry in which Turkish base but submerged beneath of Persian borrowings. On the other side, the elite prose was particularly under the influence of Arabic rather than Persian. The borrowings were not only confined to the lexical items but also some Arabic morphological elements such as plurals and gender-marked forms and many highly prevalent Persian syntactic structures, especially right-branching nominal and adjectival construction of the Indo-European type were imported (Kerslake, 1998, p. 180). Then, these structures were intensively used by the elite writers to prove their high literary skills in writing Ottoman poetry and prose; thereby they hoped to be appreciated by the sultan and to join intellectual circles close to the palace. It is possible to say that the linguistic developments in question took place mostly in the literary and official languages. However, one can say that religio-didactic texts and folk poems are more understandable and the Persian-Arabic elements in these texts are more tolerable even in this period.

1. The Persian Izafet Construction

In Turkish historical syntax, the most outstanding alien grammatical features in the elite Ottoman literary works are Persian-type nominal phrases so-called *izafet*. The *izafet* linker, which is termed from Arabic origin *idâfa* ‘annexation’, interposes between at least two lexemes and establishes a relationship between the head and its modifier. In Latin transcription, the *izafet* is usually characterised by an *-i*; however, vowel harmony can also be valid for *izafet* particle in Turkish (see, e.g. 13 and 14).

Izafet construction can be determined in these four ways (see Timurtaş, 1991, p. 259-260). Notice that the juxtaposition of *izafet* construction is right to a left constituent in examples written by Arabic letters:

(i) If the Arabic script is written with phonetic diacritic marks called *hareke* ‘vowel-point’, and the head ends in a consonant the *izafet* marker is exhibited in the last consonant of the first lexeme by a *kesra* (esre, ة) mark so-called *kesra-i izafet*. Otherwise, if there is a non-vocalised text with the marks, in this case, to be understood the text correctly, *izafet* must be induced from the context:

e.g. 1

tîr-i gamze تیر غمزہ

‘arrow of an amorous glance’

arrow-IZ amorous glance

āteş-i dil آتش دل

‘fire of heart’

fire-IZ heart

(ii) In some circumstances, the izafet is indicated by *hemze* (ء) or *ye* (ی). If the head of the construction ends with a vowel a, e (ا) or î (ی), *hemze* (ء) is placed after the vowel. This form is so-called *hemze-i izafet*:

e.g. 2

rişte-i tesbîh رشته تسبیح

‘a rope of rosary’

rope-IZ rosary

vādî-i nev وادی نو

‘a new valley’

valley-IZ new

(iii) If the head ends with the long vowel â (ا) or û (و) in this case a *ye* (ی) is added to the end of the word and this marker is pronounced as -yi. This kind of izafet construction is so-called *yây-i izafet*:

e.g. 3

hevâ-yi هوای عشق *ışk*

‘desire of love’

desire-IZ love

çārsū-yi dehr چارسوی دهر

‘the market-place of the world’

market-place-IZ world

(iv) If the head ends in *he* (ه), *ye* (ی) or *vav* (و), and these are indicating the consonants, same rule applies as in (i).

e.g. 4

râh-i راه عشق *ışk*

‘road of love’

road-IZ love

mey-i hamrâ می حمراء

‘red wine’

wine-IZ red

sehvi-i kalem سهو قلم

‘a slip of the pen’

slip-IZ pen

Additionally, it is possible to extend the izafet construction by adding new words. But the most prevalent use is with two components in Ottoman Turkish.

e.g. 5

sarrâf-i şehri-i rāz صراف شهر راز

‘the banker of the city of secret’

banker-IZ city-IZ secret

In some cases, the izafet vowel is not pronounced between the two nouns in a construction. This is also a way of constituting new compound nouns or adjectives in Persian. This type of Persian construction occurs in two forms (see Timurtaş, 1991, p. 261-262):

(i) Cases where only the izafet in between is not pronounced in the Persian izafet construction order: This is called *izafet-i maktû* ‘unconnected izafet’ (*maktû* ‘cut, amputated, unconnected’) and thus the new compounding is considered as juxtaposed or unmarked words which are written, in transcription, as a single word with a hyphen sign:

e.g. 6

NNC	<i>cāme-i hāb</i> جامه خواب	to	CN	<i>cāme-hāb</i> جامه خواب
	bed -IZ sleep			bed-IZø sleep
	‘a bed of sleep’			‘a bed’
	(Men. I-1563)			(Men. I-1563)
AdjNC	<i>sīne-i sāf</i> سینه صاف	to	CAdj	<i>sīne-sāf</i> سینه صاف
	breast-IZ pure			breast-IZø pure
	‘pure minded’			‘pure minded’
	(KOsm. IV-45)			(Ste. 719)

(ii) Cases where the Persian izafet construction is reversed and the izafet is not pronounced: This is called *izâfet-i maktûb* ‘inverted izafet’ (*maktûb* ‘inverted, transposed’).

e.g. 7

NNC	<i>berg-i gül</i> برگ گل	to	CN	<i>gül-berg</i> گل برگ
	leaf-IZ rose			rose leaf-IZø
	‘the leaf of the rose’			‘a rose leaf’
	(Bâkî 241)			(Bâkî 12)
AdjNC	<i>çeşm-i bed</i> چشم بد	to	CAdj	<i>bed-çeşm</i> بد چشم
	eye-IZ evil			evil eye-IZø
	‘the evil eye’			‘the evil eye’
	(Redh. 721)			(Ste. 162)

There is no systematic rule for the formation of ‘unconnected’ izafet constructions. On the other hand, as Doerfer (1975, p. 493) says, izafet is the most difficult problem in the entire Persian syntax, and its placement and omission vary greatly even in Persian sources. When we look at Ottoman sources, for example, we can see the same problem even in Meninski’s corpus (1680, 1687) written for Ottoman Turkish, which contains both Ottoman orthography and their Latinized forms of words. In Meninski, words like *sāhib*, *ser*, and *mīr* (*emīr*) have displayed dimorphic modes with or without izafet markers:

e.g. 8

sāhib-i or *sāhib-ihtiyār* صاحب اختیار (Men. II-2909)

possessor-IZ or possessor-IZØ free will

‘possessed of free election or option’

ser-i or *ser-* ‘*āsker* سر عسكر (Men. II-2575)

commander-IZ or commander-IZØ troops

‘a general’

emūr-i āhor, *mīr-i āhor* vulg. *mīr āhor*, *imrahor* امیر آخور, میر آخور (Men.C. IV-1339)

commander-IZ stable, commandant-IZ stable vulg. commandant-IZØ stable

‘a master of the horse’

1.1. The Syntactic Order of Persian Izafet

In Turkish syntactic order, the modifier which alters, determines or defines the substantive must stand first; however, the Persian izafet compounds are contrary to the Turkish pattern as the head is placed before the modifier. For this reason, the second word determines the type of the izafet whether it is a noun-noun or an adjectival-noun phrase. There are two types of izafet. If an adjective modifies the substantive it is termed *terkīb-i vāsfī* or *terkīb-i tavsīfī* ‘adjectival izafet’; but, if the modifier is a noun, in this case, the construction is called *terkīb-i izafet* ‘possessive izafet’ (Abrahams, 2005, p. 25; Timurtaş, 1991, p. 259, 265). These can be converted to Turkish order as seen in the examples below excerpted from some Turkish learning guides penned by Europeans in the 17th to 19th centuries. The writers show how a Persian izafet can be converted to a Turkish order with the examples¹ (Both forms were taken from the mentioned books²):

e.g. 9

	Persian syntactic order	Turkish syntactic order
	head + modifier	modifier + head
NNC	<i>müftī-i zamān</i>	<i>zamān+uñ müftī+si</i>
	the magistrate-IZ age	age-GEN magistrate-3SG.POSS
	(Sea. 151)	‘magistrate of the age’

¹ According to C. C. da Carbognano’s account in *Grammatica Turcica*, written in the 18th century, Persian izafets in Turkish are primarily specific to the written language and are rarely used in Ottoman colloquial (Kartallıoğlu, 2015, p. 21).

² For more examples taken from Ottoman transcription texts, see Duman 2000b, p. 42–43.

<i>tembih-i³ Bari</i>	<i>Allah+ın tembih+ler+i</i>
commandment-IZ God	God-GEN commandment-PL-3SG.POSS
(Vig. 368)	‘the commandments of God’
<i>Hālik-ı her dü cihān</i>	<i>her dü cihān+ı Hālik+ı</i>
Creator-IZ both two worlds	both two worlds-GEN Creator-3SG.POSS
(Redh. 179)	‘Creator of both worlds’
AdjNC <i>Medīne-i münevvere</i>	<i>münevver olan Medīne</i>
Medina-IZ illuminated	illuminated to be-PART Medina
(Men.Gr. 152)	‘the city of Medina’
<i>zebān-ı Türki</i>	<i>Türki zebān or lisān</i>
language-IZ Turkish	Turkish language
(Vig. 215)	‘the Turkish language’
<i>peder-i merhūmum</i>	<i>merhūm peder+im</i>
father-IZ late-1SG.POSS	late father-1SG.POSS
(Redh. 173)	‘my late father’

Some adjectival-noun izafet constructions, although they are *terkīb-i vasfī* due to the adjective modifier, can only be converted into modern Turkish as *-(s)I* compound, not as AdjNC; *Devlet-i Osmāniyye* > *Osmanlı Devlet+i* ‘the Ottoman Empire’ (head as a noun *devlet* ‘state’; modifier as an adjective, *Osmāniyye* ‘Ottoman’). Besides, some others can be expressed by synonyms either lexically or morphologically (with adjectives formed by Turkish suffixes): *‘ilm-i felek* > *astronomi* ‘astronomy’, *ehl-i hicāb* > *edep+li* (edep+li) ‘modest’, *gayr-i ciddī* > *ciddiyetsiz* (ciddiyet+siz) ‘frivolous’.

1.2. Gender Agreement in Persian Izafet

Whereas there is no gender distinction in Turkish and Persian, Arabic loan-words were used with their own micro-syntax rules in the izafet constructions (Lewis, 1975, p. 51). In Arabic there must be a gender and also a number agreement between the components. The external or sound feminine-plural, *cem’-i müennes-i sālīm*, by adding the *-āt* Arabic suffix to the ending (e.g. *mu’allime* ‘a woman teacher’, *mu’allimāt* ‘women teachers’) and the broken plural, *cem’-i mükesser* (e.g. *kitāb* ‘a book’, *kütüb* ‘books’) always agree with the feminine gender in Arabic. Besides that, external or sound masculine-plural, *cem’-i müzekker-i sālīm*, ends with *-īn* or *-ūn* (e.g. *mu’allimīn* or *mu’allimūn* ‘men teachers’). The following examples may illustrate

³ The origin of the word is Arabic *tenbīh*. However, there is a ‘n > m’ labial assimilation due to bilabial consonant /b/, such as Persian *çehārşenbīh* was converted into *çarşamba* in Turkish both written and spoken language.

this: the Arabic word *edebiyât* ‘literature’ is a feminine-plural substantive and the Arabic *cedîd* ‘new’ is a masculine-singular adjective. As the substantive is in feminine-plural form with *-ât*, the modifier must likewise be converted into the feminine gender by adding *-e* ending: *edebiyât-ı cedîde* ‘the new literature’. In izafet constructions both sides can be formed in singular or plural: *tarîk-i sabr* ‘the manner of patience’ (both are Arabic singular-masculines *tarîk* ‘manner’, *sabr* ‘patience’), *müverrihîn-i muhakkikîn* ‘the historians who investigate closely’ (both are Arabic masculine-plurals, *müverrihîn* ‘historians’, *muhakkikîn* ‘who investigates closely’), *meşâhir-i üdebâ* ‘the famous of the authors’ (both are Arabic broken plurals; *meşâhir* ‘famous’, *üdebâ* ‘authors’). Another plural category of Arabic is duals, *tesniye*, formed by adding *ان -ân* or *ين -eyn* to the singulars, e.g. *رَجُلٌ raculun* ‘a man’, *رَجُلَانِ raculân* ‘two men’ or *لَيْلَةٌ leyle* ‘a night’, *لَيْلَتَيْنِ leyleteyn* ‘two nights’. However, the *-eyn* form was mostly preferred in Ottoman Turkish. In the construction, components must be in dual form, and a gender agreement is necessary here, too: *devleteyn-i aliyyeteyn* ‘two eminent states’ (Arabic feminine-dual *devleteyn* ‘two states’, Arabic feminine-dual *aliyyeteyn* ‘two eminents’); *Haremeyn-i şerîfeyn* ‘the two sacred cities Mekka and Medina’ (Arabic masculine-dual *haremeyn* ‘two sacred territories’, Arabic masculine-dual *şerîfeyn* ‘two nobles’).

2. The Persian Izafet Constructions from Ottoman to Modern Turkish

The Persian izafet structure stands as the most prevalent foreign grammatical feature incorporated into Ottoman Turkish. Its frequent usage can be attributed to the extensive influx of Persian vocabulary into the language. Furthermore, these non-Turkish elements were seamlessly assimilated into the syntax of Ottoman Turkish, often functioning as if they were indigenous linguistic components, particularly in high-style syntax. The following couplet, exemplifying the use of Persian izafets, is drawn from a gazel by Neşâtî Ahmed Dede⁴:

e.g. 10

The order of the Turkish sentences is = {S (IZC) + O (IZC) + V (Turkish)}

Ser-mest-i ezel bezm-i mey ü sāgarı n'eyler

very drunk-IZ eternity banquet-IZ wine and goblet-ACC what to do-AOR

Hoş-hâl-i fenâ gülşen-i verd-i teri n'eyler

fortunate-IZ annihilation flower garden-IZ rose-IZ fresh-ACC what to do-AOR

“What would the drunkard of eternity do with the assemblies of wine and glasses!

What would one, content in annihilation, do with a garden of fresh roses!”

These structures were similarly utilized as sentence components by Bâkî (1526/7–1600), Nefî (c. 1572–1635), and Nedîm (c. 1681–1730), who are among the most highly esteemed poets of the classical age.

⁴ For the fuller poem and detailed information about the author, see Şentürk, 1999, p. 556.

Indeed, these constructions were inflected with Turkish suffixes, much like native Turkish components⁵. The following couplet, which contains Persian izafets, demonstrates this integration of Turkish suffixes and is taken from a love poem by Lâmi'î Çelebi (1472–1532)⁶:

e.g. 11

Micmer-i cānın yakaldan ışk odı ben hastenün

censer-IZ spirit-3SG.POSS-ACC to light-GER-ABL love fire-3SG.POSS I patient-GEN

Doydı bŷy-i ŷstŷhānumdan seg-i kŷyŷ senŷ

to fill-PF smell-IZ bone-1SG.POSS-ABL dog-IZ village-2SG.POSS your-GEN

“Ever since the fire of love lit the patient’s censer, the dogs in your neighborhood have been sated with the scent of my bones.”

Furthermore, it was possible to form noun–auxiliary verb compositions using Persian izafets. These constructions facilitated the creation of new verbs incorporating foreign words, even though the noun component functioned as a micro-syntactic alien element. Examples featuring Turkish auxiliary verbs are taken from the 8th volume of Evliyâ Çelebi’s *Seyahatnâme*, written in the 17th century:

e.g. 12

gark-ı āb olmak (EÇ 300b/3) [*gark-āb* is also possible]

submersion-IZ water to be-AUX ‘to be submerged’.

kat ‘-ı menāzil etmek (EÇ 319a/24)

traversing-IZ resting points to do-AUX ‘to traverse the resting points’.

bezl-i himmet etmek (EÇ 313a/32)

spending-IZ endeavor to do-AUX ‘to use one’s endeavor’.

Well-educated Ottoman writers made a deliberate effort to preserve the original forms of borrowed Persian and Arabic words in Ottoman orthography. Consequently, conducting a phonetic analysis of Ottoman Turkish borrowings is challenging due to the elevated and formal nature of such writings. Furthermore, the use of vocalization notation in the form of diacritic marks became increasingly rare in texts written after the 16th century. However, religious-didactic works intended to appeal to the general populace can be considered “plainer” in style compared to elite literature. These texts often exhibited a tendency to include subsidiary marks to ensure accurate pronunciation. In these “plainer” texts, such as the *Vasiyyet-nâme* (VN), a religio-didactic work, some deviations from the principles of traditional orthography are evident. These deviations are valuable for tracing how borrowings were pronounced in daily speech.

⁵ For detailed explanations and more examples, see Duman, 2000b, p. 41.

⁶ For the fuller poem and detailed information about the author, see Şentürk, 1999, p. 187–188.

In Ottoman Turkish, the izafet *-i* frequently changes to *-ı*, *-u*, *-ü*, or *-e* (Németh, 1962, p. 42) due to Turkish vowel harmony⁷. Two types of vowel harmony are observed in the relationship between a word root and its suffix: backness harmony, in which vowels within a word agree in backness, and labial harmony, in which vowels align in both rounding and backness. The following examples of Persian izafet groups, drawn from a 17th century religio-didactic manuscript annotated with subsidiary marks—namely, Birgili Muhammed Efendi's *Vasiyyet-nâme*—demonstrate how the izafet *-i* vowel was harmonized with the preceding vowel in daily pronunciation as reflected by the writer⁸:

e.g. 13

In rounding harmony, U-I > U-U

[expected format]

Dāvūd-i Zāhiri

‘a proper name’

[format in text]

Dāvūd-u Zāhiri داوُد ظاهر

(VN 21a/1)

hukūk-i ‘ibād

rights-IZ men

‘rights due from man to man’

hukūk-u ‘ibād حُقوقُ عِبَاد

(VN 39a/10)

hüsn-i zann

goodness-IZ opinion

‘a good opinion respecting another person’

hüsn-ü zann حُسْنُ ظَنِّ

(VN 25a/2)

Kuds-i mübārek

Jerusalem-IZ holy

‘Jerusalem the holy’

Kuds-u mübārek قُدْسُ مُبَارَك

(VN 9a/8)

An additional example from Viguier (1790) is as follows:

burc-i semā

constellation-IZ sky

‘constellation of stars; zodiac’

burc-u sema (bourdjou sèma)

(Vig. 436)

⁷ The strong influence of Persian on Turkic languages is evident in the phonological changes observed in the Turkic varieties spoken in Iran. As noted by Kırıl (2006, p. 158), “intensive language contact with Persian has led to phonological changes such as the lowering and delabialization of [ü] and [ö] in Khalaj and Kashkay.” These phonological shifts highlight the profound impact of Persian on these Turkic dialects.

⁸ Such usages are frequently observed in Ottoman Turkish texts. An insightful study evaluating the labial harmony present in Persian compounds and reference phrases interprets this phenomenon as a deliberate feature of a specific dialect. The article by Mehmet Mustafa Karaca, titled *Tarihî Türkçe metinlerde Farsça izafet ve atıf tamlamalarında görülen dudak uyumu ve çeviri yazı üzerine birkaç öneri*. *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, 31, Özel Sayı, 115–130, provides numerous examples from various texts illustrating these usages.

The determination of the /ɪ/ sound in Ottoman Turkish manuscripts is challenging, as it cannot be directly identified from the texts. Instead, its presence can only be inferred based on the consonant vocalized by kesra or the influence of neighboring sounds. However, Turkish transcription texts produced by Europeans for European audiences -such as those by Meninski (1680), Vaughan (1709), and Viguier (1790)- offer valuable insights into the representation of Turkish vowels during these periods.

e.g. 14

In backness harmony

[expected format]

pā(y)-i taht-i sultān

foot-IZ throne-IZ sultan

‘the metropolis of the sultan’

[format in text]

*pā-i táht-ı sultān*⁹ (pāi tæchtỹ sultān)

پای تخت سلطان

(Men. I-696)

tīg-i düşmen

sword-IZ enemy

‘the sword of the enemy’

tīg-ı düşmen (tỹghỹ düşmen)

تیغ دشمن

(Men. I-762)

zemān-i evāil

time-IZ beginnings

‘former times’

IZ is in two forms:

1st *zeman-i evail* (zèmani èvail)

2nd *zeman-ı evailde* (zèmane èvailde)

(Vig. 216)

Besides, the izafet *-i* to *-e* change is rarely seen:

e.g. 15

[expected format]

vech-i tahrīr-i hurūf

reason-IZ writing-IZ letters

‘the reason of writing the letter’

[format in text]

vec-e tahrir-i huruf (vege tahrıry huruf)

(Vaug. 9)

On the other hand, Turkish words were rarely used in Persian izafet constructions. Such instances are referred to as *galatât-ı meşhûre* ‘well-known mistakes’. The following examples illustrate how these usages became widespread in Ottoman Turkish. Notably, Ali Seydî’s *Galatât* dictionary records these constructions as examples of well-known mistakes¹⁰:

⁹ However, the construction is used as *pây-taht* without izafet in the Steingass dictionary (see p. 234).

¹⁰ Additional examples can be found in Deny’s grammar (1941, p. 757–758), where he cites several instances of these well-known mistakes, such as *sancâk-ı şerîf* ‘the holy flag’, *kışla-i hümayûn* ‘the imperial casern’, and *ordû-yu hümayûn* ‘the imperial army’. These constructions include Turkish words such as *sancak* ‘flag’, *kışla* ‘casern’, and *ordu* ‘army’. Deny explains this phenomenon by suggesting that Persian borrowed these Turkish words during the Mongol period, and they were subsequently reintroduced into Turkish within Persian izafet constructions. Furthermore, these usages are predominantly found in the context of Ottoman official language.

e.g. 16

sergi-i 'umūmī سرکئی عمومی (GD 137)

exhibition-IZ universal 'the public exhibition'

sürc-i lisān سُورج لسان (GD 142)

slipping-IZ tongue 'the slipping of the tongue, to say something by mistake'

top-hāne-i 'āmire طوپخانه عامره (GD 154)

arsenal-IZ imperial 'the imperial Arsenal of Ordnance and Artillery'

As demonstrated above, while the modifiers in the izafet constructions are Arabic words (*umūmī*, *lisān*, 'āmire), the headwords are of Turkish origin. For instance, *sergi* 'exhibition' is derived from the Turkish verb *sermek* 'to spread out' combined with the suffix *-gi*. Similarly, *sürc* is derived from *sürçmek* 'to slip', and *top-hāne* 'arsenal' is a compound consisting of the Turkish word *top* 'cannon' and the Persian word *hāne* 'house'.

Additionally, in another example, a Turkish word serves as a modifier: *geçit* 'a place of passage' is derived from the verb *geçmek* 'to pass':

e.g. 17

resm-i geçid رَسْم کچید (GD 127)

a state ceremony-IZ a place of passage 'a military review'

Moreover, a number of Western words can be found incorporated into Persian izafet constructions. However, these unique structures, which likely emerged in the 19th century during the Ottoman Westernization period, did not gain widespread acceptance. For instance, *bank* is derived from French, while *iskele* originates from Greek (*skāla*, meaning 'landing-place' or 'wharf'):

e.g. 18

Bank-ı 'Osmānī¹¹ بنق عثمانی (GD 56)

bank-IZ Ottoman 'The Ottoman Bank'

iskele-i mezkūre اسکله مذکوره (GD 34)

wharf-IZ mentioned 'the mentioned wharf'

Interestingly, the second construction was adapted to the feminine gender, as the Greek noun *skāla* (Kahane et al., 1958, p. 568–572; TETTL III-639) ends with the *-e* sound, which, when rendered in Turkish pronunciation, becomes *iskele*. Similarly, the Arabic word *mezkūr* 'mentioned', which has a masculine gender, was modified to feminine by the addition of *-e* to its end. This adjustment ensured that the components conformed to Persian micro-syntactic rules, achieving gender agreement within the construction.

¹¹ The Ottoman Bank was established in 1856. Afterwards the bank changed its name to *Bank-ı Osmanî-i Şâhâne* 'Imperial Ottoman Bank' in 1863.

It can be argued that the substantial influence of Persian and Arabic modes of inflection and word composition persisted until the end of the 19th century. The language reformers, in their efforts to shape “New Turkish”, primarily focused on eliminating Arabic and Persian loanwords. According to Heyd (1954, p. 65), “The chief targets of their attack were the Persian izafet construction and the Arabic plural forms, which were widely used in literary but not in spoken Turkish.” As a result of these efforts, many Persian and Arabic words, along with the grammatical elements required for agreement in Persian izafet constructions, were removed from “New Turkish”. Nevertheless, some Persian izafet constructions still remain in modern Turkish. The current *Türkçe Sözlük* ‘Turkish Dictionary’, published by the Turkish Language Association (TDK), contains a small number of Persian izafet constructions, such as *akhevvel* ‘smart’ (TS 55), *aklıselim* ‘common sense’ (TS 55), *gayrimenkul* ‘immovable property’ (TS 730), *hilaflıhakikat* ‘unreal’ (TS 891), *reisicumhur* ‘president of the republic’ (TS 1649), and *yedimin* ‘trustee’ (TS 2158). As illustrated by these examples, the structures are united without the use of hyphens in the few izafet constructions still found in the dictionary. It can be stated that an ordinary Turkish speaker today, unfamiliar with the Persian izafet structure and Arabic-Persian lexical rules, likely perceives these word compositions as single words rather than distinct components. Additionally, the *kesra-i izâfet* is formally recorded with vowel harmony in the *Türkçe Sözlük*:

e.g. 19

i > u

arz-i hâl > *arzuḥâl* (TS 127; also, see Redh. 1294 for its vulgarized form in 1890)

petition-IZ case ‘a written petition’

nûr-i çeşm+im > *nuruçeşmim* (TS 1483)

light-IZ eye-1SG.POSS ‘the light of my eye’

i > ü

zûlf-i yâr > *zülfüyâr* (TS 2243)

love-lock-IZ one’s beloved ‘the lovelock of one’s beloved’

Moreover, a small number of Persian izafet constructions in both spoken and written modern Turkish differ from their original Persian forms:

e.g. 20

[Persian form]

[Turkish form]

bâd-i havâ (Ste. 137, TETTL I-628)

to *bedava*¹² (Redh. 318; TS 231)

bâd-i hevâ (bâdī hewâ, Men. I-630)¹³

wind-IZ air ‘gratis, for nothing’

¹² Also, see for its vulgarised form in 1890 as *bedāvâ*.

¹³ According to Tietze and Eren, the Turkish form comes from Persian *bâd-hawâ* without izafet kesra (Eren, 1999, p. 46; TETTL I-544, I-628).

emîr-i āhor, mîr-i āhor (Zen. 19; see, e.g. 8)¹⁴ to *imrahor* (see, e.g. 8; TS 963)
chief-IZ stable ‘the master of the horse’

kāzî-i ‘askar (Ste. 948) to *kazasker* (TS 1122)
judge-IZ army ‘an army-judge’

Although these constructions are now largely obsolete in spoken language compared to contemporary Turkish, the following examples from the current Turkish Dictionary illustrate how some Persian izafet constructions have formed noun-auxiliary verb combinations with Turkish auxiliary verbs or have been inflected with Turkish suffixes as independent words. Furthermore, some of these forms appear to have become so deeply embedded in the language from the Ottoman to the Modern Turkish period that they have acquired idiomatic meanings.

e.g. 21

With an auxiliary verb

hüsn-i zann > hüsnüzan etmek (TS 909)

goodness-IZ opinion to have-AUX

‘to have a good opinion respecting another person’

With a suffix

alâmet-i fârika > alametifarika+lı (TS 65)

mark-IZ discerner-DER

‘trademark’

Idiomatic

zülf-i yâr > zülfüyâre dokunmak (TS 2243)

lovelock-IZ one’s beloved-DAT to touch-AUX

‘to rouse one’s jealousy or anger; to hurt an esteemed person’

3. The Omission of the Persian Izafet Kesra in Colloquial Ottoman

Turkish transcription texts can be regarded as one of the most significant sources for diachronic studies of the Turkish language. As we learn from early sources written in the Latin script, even in the 16th century, there was a distinction between the spelling and pronunciation of words in Turkish:

e.g. 22; from Filippo Argenti’s colloquial Ottoman records in Pera, Istanbul dated 1533:

[in daily Ottoman]

[in Ottoman orthography]

kapı (chapí, Arg. 193)

Turkish; *kapu* قپو

‘door’

¹⁴ Arabic origin *emîr* and Persian origin *mîr* have the same meaning: ‘chief’, see Ste. 204, 2053.

tezgâ(h) (tesghîâ, Arg. 247) Persian; *destgâh* دستگاه
‘bench’

co(v)ap (gioáp, Arg. 149) Arabic; *cevâb* جواب
‘answer’

The primary reason for this distinction lies in the stereotyped Ottoman orthography. From the beginning of the period until the adoption of the Latin alphabet on November 1, 1928, almost all words in Ottoman texts were written consistently, without any phonetic or morphological changes in their spelling over time. Consequently, in Ottoman texts, Arabic and Persian loanwords and phrases were recorded according to the form of the language from which they were borrowed, regardless of how they were pronounced in everyday speech. However as noted in previous sections, some authors recorded the daily pronunciation of the Persian *izafet kesra* in texts written in Ottoman orthography, adapting it to Turkish vowel harmony as much as Ottoman orthography would allow. This adaptation process can be traced more clearly in transcription texts (see, e.g. 13, 14, 15). On the other hand, a few examples can be found in which the Persian *izafet kesra* is omitted in Turkish pronunciation, appearing in a small number of Ottoman manuscripts written with phonetic diacritical marks.

Please note that in the examples taken from both texts below, the word endings where the *izafet kesra* is expected are marked instead with the diacritical sign *cezme*, indicating the absence of a vowel.

e.g. 23; from *Kanûn-nâme-i Sultânî Ber Mûceb-i ‘Örfi Osmânî*, dated to the second half of the 15th century prepared by Anhegger & İnalçık (2000)¹⁵:

[expected format]	[format in text]
<i>dārende-i misāl-i şerîf</i> ‘the possessor of the holy edict’	<i>dārende-i misāl şerîf</i> posessor-IZ edict-IZø holy دَارَنْدَةُ مِثَالٍ شَرِيفٍ (KS–An_In, 9a/1, 2)
<i>sāhib-i ‘ayār</i> ‘the master of the mint who ascertains the standard of the coinage’	<i>sāhib ‘ayār</i> responsible master-IZø standard purity of gold or silver صَاحِبُ عَيَارٍ (KS–An_In, 27a/1, 28b/7,8)
<i>tevkî‘-i hümayûn</i> ‘the decree bearing the Sultan’s	<i>tevkî‘ hümayûn</i> decree-IZø royal

¹⁵ A total of 153 leaves of the entire *Kanûn-nâme* were transcribed; however, at the end of their book, the two esteemed researchers included facsimiles of only 38 leaves of the manuscript. Consequently, for some parts of the original manuscript, I relied on the facsimiles provided in the *Ottoman Manual I*, published by Şinasi Tekin in 2002.

tughra'

تَوْقِيعُ هُمَايُونُ (KS–Tek, p. 94, 36a/2)

e.g. 24; from the Turkish manuscript *Terceme-i Kitāb-ı Fevāihü'l-Miskiyye fi'l-Fevātihi'l-Mekkiyye* (FM), translated from Arabic into Turkish by an unknown translator in Istanbul in 1570, by order of Odabaşı Mustafa Ağa, a palace official of Selim II:

[expected format]

[format in text]

'aded-i eyyām-ı sene

'aded eyyām-ı sene

'the number of days of the year'

number-IZø days-IZ year

عَدَدُ أَيَّامِ سَنَهِ (FM 21b/15)

hurūc-ı mulhame

hurūc mulhame¹⁶

'the rising of a bloody battle'

rise-IZø bloody battle

خُرُوجُ مُلْحَمَهِ (FM 32a/9)

tārīh-i İskender

tārīh İskender

'the era of Alexander the Great'

era-IZø Alexander

تَارِيخِ إِسْكَندَرُ (FM 20b/14)

Naturally, examples such as the one above, where daily pronunciation is transferred to writing, are not found in the works of authors like *Bâkî*, *Nedim*, *Nefî*, and *Veyisî*, who employed *elsine-i selâse* in prose and verse with exceptional skill, incorporating sophisticated puns and literary perfection. Instead, such examples appear in the works of less-educated authors who lacked proficiency in Arabic and Persian, viewed Turkish primarily as a functional means of written communication without ornamental language, and unintentionally reflected their own daily pronunciation in their writings.

At this point, Turkish dictionaries, grammars, and practical phrasebooks, in which daily Ottoman pronunciation was transcribed by Europeans using letter systems such as Latin, Cyrillic, and Greek, serve as invaluable sources for tracing the Turkish pronunciation obscured by Ottoman orthography (see, e.g. 22). These texts provide examples of loanwords that have been adapted to Turkish pronunciation contrary to their original orthography, instances where the Persian izafet aligns with Turkish sound harmony, and cases where the Persian izafet linker is omitted entirely in spoken Turkish. The fact that such usages -subtly observable in Ottoman texts- are also evident in Turkish transcription texts, which explicitly reflect the spoken Ottoman language, is noteworthy and warrants further explanation¹⁷.

¹⁶ 'mulhame < melhame'; but in the following line *hurūc-i mulhame* with izafet kesra.

¹⁷ These examples had previously attracted Duman's attention. In his article (2000b, p. 44), in which he analyzes the incorporation of Arabic and Persian phrases into Turkish, he briefly mentions cases where the izafet kesra is omitted in transcription texts and evaluates them as structures reflecting the pronunciation of everyday Ottoman Turkish.

It is also worth noting that Meninski, who occasionally emphasizes the distinction between written and spoken language in 17th century Turkish, provides significant material illustrating these differences, particularly in relation to Persian izafet constructions:

e.g. 25; from Meninski's *Thesaurus* (Lexicon 1680 and Complementum 1687):

āb-i rū, seu ferè *āb rū*, *āb rūi*, *āb-i ruy* (*ābī rū*, seu ferè *āb rū*, *āb rūi*, *ābī ruj*), Men. I-5.

water-IZ face, or generally water-IZØ face

‘water of the face, i.e. reputation’

āb seu *āb-i mürghān* (*āb* seu *ābī mürghān*), Men. I-5.

water-IZØ or water-IZ birds

‘wine; a fountain between Shiraz and Ispahan’

āb vel *āb-ı dendān* (*āb* vel *ābī dendān*), Men. I-21.

water-IZØ or water-IZ teeth

‘water of the teeth, spittle’

kādī-i ‘āsker vul. *kadī ‘āsker* (*kāzyī ‘āskī’er* vul. *kadī ‘āskī’er*), Men.C. 882.

judge-IZ army vulgarise judge-IZØ army

‘the chief judge of the empire’

kāzī-i leşker vul. *kadi leşker* (*kāzyī leşkī’er* vul. *kadi leşkī’er*), Men.C. 882.

judge-IZ army vulgarise judge-IZØ army

‘the chief judge of the empire’

vekīl-i hārc vul. *vekīl hārc* (*wekīlī chærg* vul. *wekīl chærg*), Men. III-5409.

representative-IZ expense vulgarise representative-IZØ expense

‘master of a house, purveyor’

vezīr-i ‘āzām vul. *vezīr ‘āzām* (*wezīrī æ‘zæm* vul. *wezīr æ‘zæm*), Men. III-5368-9.

vizier-IZ grand vulgarise vizier-IZØ grand

‘the grand vizier’

As can be seen from the examples above, the status of the Persian izafet linker in Ottoman Turkish was distinguished by Latin identifiers. The expressions “*seu* = or, *ferè* = usually, *vel* = and / or” indicate dimorphic uses of these compounds in 17th century Ottoman Turkish. On the other hand, the abbreviation vul. (vulgò) points to vulgarized usages—that is, according to Meninski’s explanation, *vulgaris ac plerumque vitiosè scripta aut prolata vox* ‘commonly known, and most of the time written or pronounced faultily.’

The examples drawn from Ottoman texts and Meninski's explanations indicate that the omission of the Persian izafet linker in colloquial Ottoman Turkish was not coincidental. This phenomenon is also observed in other Turkish transcription texts reflecting Ottoman spoken language. In this context, the data from prominent transcription texts of the period –such as Argenti (1533), Georgievits (1553), Molino (1641), Harsány (1672), Vaughan (1709), and Viguier (1790)– have been examined, alongside examples from Meninski (1680), to identify instances where the izafet linker was omitted in everyday usage¹⁸. Among these authors, one of the most noteworthy figures is Giovanni Molino, an Armenian from Ankara, who claimed in the preface of his dictionary that it exclusively reflects the Istanbul dialect of Turkish (Święcicka, 2020, p. 22).

Constructions featuring the izafet linker in Persian but vulgarised through the omission of the izafet kesra in Turkish pronunciation:

(i) Evidence for the examples provided in the following lines can be found in Persian dictionaries called Steingass or Burhân-ı Katı.

- Per. *āḥir-i zamān*; end-IZ time 'the end of time', Ste. 25. – Ottoman pronunciation (both vulgarised) = *ahır zaman* ~ *aḥır zemān* • 1533: *achér xamán* 'fine del mondo', Arg. 128 | 1680: *achyr zemān* 'extrema tempora, novissimi dies', Men. I-98. || Modern Turkish = The use of the Persian izafet remains the same in modern Turkish, as seen in *ahır zaman* (*ahır* 'last' + *zaman* 'time'), TS 43. What is particularly notable in this example is that the translation of the components forming the Persian izafet follows the Turkish syntactic order. In other words, the phrase is interpreted as an adjective phrase in Turkish. For differences in word order between Turkish and Persian phrases, see, e.g. 9.
- Per. *ʾaql-i bālīg*; mind-IZ maturity 'maturity of mind', Ste. 858. – Ottoman pronunciation (standard) = *áql-i bālīg* • 1680: *æklī bālygh* 'judicium maturum, circa 18. ætatis annum', Men. II-3298. || Ottoman pronunciation (vurgarised) = *akıl baluk* • 1533: *acchéł balúch* 'uno putto atto a generare' Arg. 128. || Modern Turkish = The present form is almost identical to its 16th century Ottoman Turkish counterpart: *akıl baliğ* ~ *akil baliğ* 'ergen [adolescent]', TS 51, 54, which derives from the Persian izafet construction *aklibālīg*, TETTL I-304, 305. On the other hand, according to Nişanyan and the Turkish Dictionary, the origin of this usage is *āqıl bālīg*, NS 16 and TS 51, 54; see also *ākıl bālīg olmak* 'bülûğa ermek [to reach puberty]' < *ākıl* ~ *ākil* 'rational, intelligent', MBTS 29. There is likely some confusion regarding the formation of this structure.
- Per. *bāḥr-i muḥīt*; 'sea-IZ ocean 'the ocean', Ste. 157, 1191. – Ottoman pronunciation (standard) = *báḥr-i muḥīt* • 1641: *behri muhit* 'ocean, mare grande', Mol. 198; 1680: *bæhrī muḥīt* 'ocean', Men. I-716. || Ottoman pronunciation (vurgarised) = *behr muhit* • 1641: *behr muhit* 'mare oceano', Mol. 198. *Note the dimorphic usage of *bahr* / *bahr-i*

¹⁸ An additional explanation should also be noted here. Numerous examples of this can be found in Bernardo di Parigi's three-volume Italian-Turkish dictionary, *Vocabolario Italiano-Turchesco* (1665), and Gulielmo Seaman's grammar, *Grammatica Linguae Turcicae* (1670). In these texts, instances where the Persian izafet linker is omitted in Turkish words -written in Ottoman orthography using the Arabic script- are indicated with diacritic marks. However, since this part of the study focuses on examples from Latin-script transcription texts, Persian compounds in which the izafet is omitted in both of the aforementioned works are excluded from the analysis.

muhit in Molino's dictionary. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary.

- Per. *ḳāzī-i 'asker*; judge-IZ army 'an army-judge', Ste. 948. – Ottoman pronunciation¹ = *ḳāzī 'asker*, vulgarised *ḳadı esker* ~ *ḳāzī-i 'asker* or *ḳāzīyü'l-'asker* • 1680: *kāzy 'æsk'ër*, vulg. *kady esk'ër* 'Cardinalis'; *kāzyī 'æsk'ër* seu *kāzyjü'l-'æsk'ër* 'Judex generalis, Judex regni', Men. II-3586 | 1687: idem, Men.C. 882. || Ottoman pronunciation² = *kazi esker* ~ *kazesker* ~ *kadı esker* • 1641: *kasi eskier* 'capo de'giudici; giudice generale, o vero capo di giudici', Mol. 348(2). | 1672: *kazeßker* 'Judices Imperii', NdH 64-5; 'Imperii iudices Kazeßkeri', NdH 144-45; *kazeßkerlerün* 'Kazeßkeriorum', NdH 150-1 | 1709: *kady esker* 'a Lord Chief-Justice; of which there are but two; one of Anadolý, or the Lesser Asia, and the other of Rumilly, or Thrace', Vaug. 95 | 1790: *qazèskèr* 'jege d'armée', Vig. 319, 323, 325, 330(3), 331(2), 332(2), 333, 336, 397; *Roumèli Qazèskèr Èfendi*, Vig. 319; *Qazèskèr Èfendi*, Vig. 319, 320, 321(2), 322(2), 323, 324, 329(3), 330, 338 ~ *qazi 'askèr* 'idem', Vig. 313, 397. || Modern Turkish = The term *kazasker*, defined as 'a high-ranking official within the ilmiye class and the most authoritative figure in the courts during the Ottoman period' TS 1122, is no longer in use in modern Turkish. However, it persists as a historical term referring to a key civil servant in the Ottoman judicial system.
- Per. *Ḳuds-i mubārek*; being holy-IZ blessed 'Jerusalem', Ste. 958. – Ottoman pronunciation (standard) = *Ḳuds-i mübārek* • 1680: *kudsī mübārekī* 'Hierusalem, Civitas sancta', Men. II-3642. || Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *Kutsun barek* • 1533: *chuzún barék* 'Jerusalem', Arg. 206. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary.
- Per. *Ḳur'ān-i 'aẓīm*; *Ḳur'ān*-IZ great 'The Noble Book', Ste. 962. – Ottoman pronunciation (standard) = *Ḳurān-i 'ázīm* • 1680: *kurānī 'æzým* 'sacer Coranus', Men. II-3660. || Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *Kuran azim*, *Kuran azim*, NdH. 96. || Modern Turkish = This compound is not found in the Turkish Dictionary, but the form *Kur'an-ı Kerim* with the same meaning is common in modern Turkish, TS 1257.
- Per. *tīn-i maḥtūm*; clay-IZ sealed 'sealing clay or wax', Ste. 824, 1195. – Ottoman pronunciation (standard) = *tīn-i máḥtūm* • 1680: *týnī mæchtūm* 'terra sigillata, lemnia, rubrica Sinopica', Men. II-3162. || Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *tin mahtun* • 1533: *tin machtūn* 'terra sigillata', Arg. 248. || Modern Turkish = Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary. However, in a 19th century Turkish, Arabic and Persian dictionary, it appears as follows: *tīn-i maḥtūm* 'terre sigillée', Zen. II-614.
- Per. *vekīl-i ḥarc*; representative-IZ expenditure 'master of a house, host, purveyor', Ste. 1479. – Ottoman pronunciation (dimorphic) = *vekīl-i ḥārc*, vulgarised *vekīl ḥārc* • 1680: *wek'īlī chærgē*, vulg. *wek'īl hærğ* 'condus promus, opsonator, procurator domūs', Men. III-5409. || Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *vekil harç* • 1533: *vecchil chárceçj* 'spenditore', Arg. 255. || Modern Turkish = The entry in the Turkish Dictionary also corresponds to the vulgarised form of Ottoman Turkish. In the Dictionary, the term *vekīlharç* is defined as a historical term meaning 'a person responsible for managing the shopping for a mansion', TS 2085.

- Per. *zāc-i Kıbrısī*, sulphate of iron-IZ Cyprus (formerly got from Cyprus), BK 826 (see, *zāğ*). – Ottoman pronunciation (standard) = *zāc-i kıbrūsī* or *kıbrīsī* • 1680: *zāğī kybrūsī vel kybrīsī* ‘compositio quædam medica nigra’, Men. II-2413. || Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *zaç gubrusi* • 1533: *xāccī ghiubrusī* ‘sívetriuolo’, Arg. 265. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary. However, see *zaç* ‘one of the iron compounds with sulphur’ and *zaç yağı* ‘sulfuric acid’, TS 2219.

(ii) In the following lines, we do not provide any evidence from Steingass or Burhân-ı Katı; however, these grammatically Persian izafet constructions may have exhibited dimorphic usages in Ottoman colloquial speech:

- Per. *āb-i Zemzem*; water-IZ Zemzem ‘Zemzem water; a famous well at Mecca’. – Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *ab zemzem suyī* • 1553: *ab zem-zem sui* ‘purificationis aqua’, Georg. 207. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not attested in the Turkish Dictionary. However, this example, drawn from transcription texts, presents a highly intriguing *izafe* structure from a 16th century spoken text that exhibits traces of Rumelian Turkish. In this example, a Turkish izafet compound is modified by a Persian izafet group, while the entire Persian modifier retains the same meaning as the Turkish izafet. Both head nouns, *āb* and *su(+yi)*, signify ‘water’.
- Per. *bahr-i Kuzgun / Visent*, sea-IZ Kuzgun / Visent ‘the sea of Caspian / Visent’. – Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *behr kuzgun / visent* • 1641: *behr kusgun* ‘abachù, cioè mar caspio’; *behr visent* ‘mare di terra Thedesca’ Mol. 198. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary.
- Per. *cebel-i Nuh*; mountain-IZ Noah ‘the mounth Noah’. – Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *cibel Nuh* • 1641: *gibel Nuh* ‘gibel Noe’, Mol. 220. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary.
- Per. *devr-i dā'im*; rotation-IZ lasting ‘perpetual motion or rotation’, Redh. 887, 919; Zen. II-437; Dev. 182. – Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *devr daim* • 1641: *deur daim* ‘moto perpetuo’, Mol. 242. || Modern Turkish = The form found in the Turkish Dictionary aligns with the standard Persian structure. In other words, the construction has been incorporated into standard Turkish with the izafet kesra: *devridaim*, TS 516.
- Per. *evliyā-yi pāk*; saints-IZ holy ‘saints as friends of God’. – Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *evliya pak* • 1641: *evlija pak* ‘santo’, *since this structure is not included in the relevant study, refer to the original Molino dictionary p. 372. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary.
- Per. *hacer-i pād-zehr*; stone-IZ antidote ‘the bezoar-stone’. Persian: *pād-zahr* ‘(protecting from poison) the bezoar-stone’, Ste. 229. – Ottoman pronunciation (standard) = *pādzehr* ~ *pād-i zehr* or *bad* ~ *badizehr* vulg. *panzeher* • 1680: *pādzehr*, *pādī zehr*, *bad* ~ *badizehr* vulg. *panzeher* ‘antidoto, belzoar’, Men. I-632. *Note the usage of *pād-i zehr* in Meninski. || Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *hacar bazahar* • 1533: *chaggiār bazachār* ‘lacrima di ceruio’, Arg. 178. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary; however in Turkish form *panzehir taşı* < *pād-zehr* ‘the bezoar-stone; opal’, TS 1568.

- Per. *ḥilāf-i zamān*; opposing-IZ time ‘contrary to the time’. – The izafet construction consists of two Arabic words: *ḥilāf* ‘opposing’ + *zamān* ‘time’. While Meninski does not include this exact construction, similar usages can be found, such as *ḥilāf-i ḥāḳḳ*, *ḥilāf-i inhā ile*, and *ḥilāf-i tābī‘āt* ect., I-1924. || Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *hlaf zaman* • 1641: *chlaf szaman* ‘tempo contrario al partirsi’, Mol. 317. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary; however, a similar construction exists in the Persian izafet form as *hilafihakikat* ‘imaginary’, TS 891.
- Per. *‘ilm-i hendese*; science-IZ geometry ‘geometry’, Dev. 429. – Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *ilm hendase* • 1641: *elm hendase* ‘matemática’, Mol. 264. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary.
- Per. *‘ilm-i hey’et*; science-IZ astronomy ‘astronomy’, Dev. 429. – Ottoman pronunciation (dimorphic) = *ilm-i heyet*, vulgarised *ilm heyet* • 1641: *elmi heiet* ‘geomatrica’; *elm heiet* ‘matemática’, Mol. 264. || Modern Turkish = These usages are not found in the Turkish Dictionary.
- Per. *‘ilm-i müneccim* (~*nücûm*); science-IZ astrologer ‘astrology’, Dev. 429. – Ottoman pronunciation (dimorphic) = *ilm-i münecim*, vulgarised *ilm münecim* • 1641: *elmi munegim* ‘astrologia’; *elm munegim* ‘strologia’, Mol. 264. || Modern Turkish = These usages are not found in the Turkish Dictionary.
- Per. *İskender-i zu’l-ḳarneyn*; Alexander-IZ two-horned ‘Alexander the two-horned’, Dev. 451. – Ottoman pronunciation (standard) = *İskender-i zülḳarneyn* • 1680: *isk’enderī zül kærnein* ‘Alessandro magno’, Men. I-217. || Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *Skender adulkeryn* • 1533: *Schiendér adulchierín* ‘Elexandro magno’, Arg. 236. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary.
- Per. *kānūn-i evvel*; furnace-IZ first ‘the month of December’, Dev. 586. – Ottoman pronunciation (dimorphic) = *kanun-i evel*, vulgarised *kanun avel* • 1641: *kanuni euel* ‘decembre’; *kanun auel* ‘decembre, mese’, Mol. 340. || Modern Turkish = In present-day Turkish, this Persian structure has fallen out of use and is defined as a historical term in the Turkish Dictionary; *kânunuevvel* ‘December’, TS 1065.
- Per. *kelām-i ‘izzet*; word-IZ glorious ‘glorious words of God; Quran’. – Ottoman pronunciation (standard) = *kelām-i ‘izzet* • 1680: *k’elāmī ‘yzzet* ‘sacrum verbum’, Men. II-3992. || Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *kelam izzet* • 1672: *kelam izzet*, NdH 96. || Modern Turkish = This compound is not found in the Turkish Dictionary, but the form *Kelamıkadim* with the same meaning is common in modern Turkish, TS 1129.
- Per. *kelimāt-i Türkçe*; words-IZ Turkish ‘Turkish words’ – Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *kelimat Türkçe* • 1709: *kelimāt Turkché* ‘Turkish words’, Vaug. 76. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary.
- Per. *Nil-i mubārek*; Nile-IZ blessed ‘The Blessed Nile’. – Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *Nil mübarek* • 1790: *Nil mubarek* ‘Nil’, Vig. 407. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary.
- Per. *şehir-i ‘azīm*; city-IZ great ‘a great city’. | There is no direct evidence for this izafet construction; however, a similar usage can be found in Persian dictionaries, such as

şehir-i zenān ‘a city inhabited by women’, Ste. 769. – Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *şehir azim* • 1641: *Misir, şehir asim* ‘Alcairo Città in Egitto’ Mol. 382. || Modern Turkish = This Persian izafet construction is not used in modern Turkish. Today, the equivalent phrase is expressed as a Turkish izafet construction in the form of *büyük şehir* ‘big city’.

- Per. *terk-i dünyā*; abandoning-IZ world ‘abandon the world’, Dev. 1086. – Ottoman pronunciation (standard) = *terk-i dünya etmek* • 1680: *terk’i dünja e. ‘mori’*, Men.C. 361. || Ottoman pronunciation (vulgarised) = *terk dünya* • 1533: *térch dugná* ‘monacho’, Arg. 246. || Modern Turkish = This usage is not found in the Turkish Dictionary.

4. Conclusion

Persian izafet constructions played a significant role in shaping Ottoman Turkish, particularly in literary and official texts. Despite being syntactically foreign to Turkish, these structures were carefully preserved in elite Ottoman writings with their original grammatical rules. However, historical evidence from Turkish transcription texts and other plainer Ottoman sources written in simpler language that these structures were largely adapted to the phonetic system of Turkish, undergoing a process of Turkicized in spoken Ottoman.

A particularly interesting aspect of this study is the omission of the izafet particle in certain Persian phrases within Ottoman Turkish. This phenomenon is not only documented in Latin-script Turkish texts authored by Westerners -considered oral records of Ottoman speech- but also in the works of Giovanni Molino, an Armenian from Ankara, as well as in some vocalized Ottoman manuscripts. This is unlikely to be coincidental. The omission of the Persian izafet kesra in pronunciation in texts produced by non-native Turkish speakers or “less formally trained or careless” writers suggests that speakers did not perceive these constructions as foreign multi-element syntactic structures. Instead, they assimilated them naturally, much like the transformation of the Per. *bārgir* into the Turkish *beygir* ‘horse’.

Furthermore, during the early Republican period, language reforms significantly reduced the influence of Persian izafet constructions as part of broader efforts to modernize and simplify Turkish. Today, only a small number of these structures remain, mostly as lexicalized or frozen expressions found in literary and official texts. Those that persist in spoken Turkish have undergone phonetic and morphological adaptations to align with the natural structure of the Turkish language.

Additionally, Ottoman Turkish texts do not always reflect pronunciation accurately. It should not be overlooked that some of the grammatically incorrect usages mentioned above may actually indicate a specific pronunciation.

Abbreviations

ABL: ablative

ACC: accusative

AdjNC: adjectival-noun compound

AOR: aorist.

Arg.: Argenti; see Adamović 2009

- AUX:** auxiliary verb.
- Bâkî:** see Küçük n.d.
- BK:** Burhân-ı Katı; see. Öztürk & Örs 2000
- CAdj:** compound adjective
- CN:** compound noun
- DAT:** dative
- DER:** derivational suffix
- Dev.:** Devellioğlu.
- EÇ:** Evliyâ Çelebi
- FM:** Fevâi' hü'l-miskiyye; see Yağmur 2007
- GD:** Defter-i galatât; see Ali Seyyidî hijri 1324
- GEN:** genitive case
- GER:** gerundium
- Georg.:** Georgieviz; see Yağmur 2016
- IZ:** izafet
- IZC:** izafet construction
- KOsm.:** Kâmûs-ı Osmânî; see Mehmed Salâhî hijri 1322
- KS–An_In.:** Kanûnnâme-i Sultânî; see Anhegger & İncik 2000
- KS–Tek.:** Kanûnnâme-i Sultânî; see Tekin 2002
- MBTS:** Misalli Büyük Türkçe Sözlük; see Ayverdi 2010
- Men.:** Meninski Thesaurus (reprint of 1680) 2000
- Men.C.:** Meninski Complementum (reprint of 1687) 2000
- Men.Gr.:** Meninski Grammatica Turcica (reprint of 1680) 2000
- Mol.:** Molino; see Święcicka 2020
- NdH:** Nagy de Harsány; see Hazai 1973
- NNC:** noun-noun compound
- NS:** Nişanyan Sözlük; see Nişanyan 2018
- O:** object
- PART:** participle
- Per.:** Persian
- PF:** perfective
- PL:** plural

POSS: possessive

Redh.: Redhouse

S: subject

Sea.: Seaman

SG: singular

Ste.: Steingass

TETTL: Tarihî ve Etimolojik Türkiye Türkçesi Lugati; see Tietze 2016

TS: Türkçe Sözlük; see Türk Dil Kurumu 2005

V: verb

Vaug.: Vaughan

Vig.: Viguier

VN: Vasiyyet-nâme; see Duman 2000a

vul. / vulg.: vulgarised

Zen.: Zenker

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