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The Bavadi and Their Bakhtiari Dialect

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This article was originally published with an incorrect author affiliation. The error has been corrected and the online HTML and PDF versions updated.

(Received 23 August 2024; revised 9 January 2025; accepted 9 January 2025)

Abstract

This paper provides a sociolinguistic and grammatical synopsis of Bavadi Bakhtiari, spoken in Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari Province, Iran. The results presented here are based on the collection of linguistic and cultural data through field research, including ethnographic research, recording of oral texts, elicitation of a language data questionnaire, and follow-up interviews with speakers of the language. In addition to providing a linguistic snapshot of the Bavadi variety of Bakhtiari in its social context, this study offers a novel contribution to the documentation of Iran's linguistic heritage through the presentation and analysis of culturally important oral texts of various genres. While one text belongs to the controlled and formulaic genre of the folktale, two other texts are based on free conversation among groups of speakers.

Keywords: Bakhtiari; Iranian languages; ethnolinguistics; language documentation; grammatical description; phonology; morphosyntax oral texts

Introduction¹

The Zagros Mountains of southwest Iran, and the foothills to both sides, are the domain of the Bakhtiari tribe (B. *ēl*, P. *il*). Their homeland spans parts of several provinces of Iran: Khuzestan, with Masjed Soleymān and Izeh as major centers; Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari (henceforth C&B), where Kuhrang and Ardal have been historically important; the eastern third of Lorestan Province, where the Bakhtiari cities of Aligudarz, Aznā, and Dorud are

¹ Abbreviations used in this article are as follows: **[]**, used to fill in missing information necessary to understand the text; **()**, used in translations to further interpret or give literal meanings; **-**, morpheme boundary marker; **=**, clitics; **1, 2, 3**, first, second, third person; **ADJZR**, adjectivizer; **B.**, Bakhtiari; **CMP**, comparative/superlative; **COMP**, complementizer; **COP**, copula; **DEF**, definite; **DEM**, demonstrative; **DIST**, distal; **EPEN**, epenthesis; **EZ**, ezafe; **IMPV**, imperative; **INDEF**, indefinite; **IPFV**, imperfective; **NEG**, negative; **NPST**, non-past; **Ø**, null morpheme; **OBJ**, object; **OPT**, optative particle; **P.**, Persian; **PC**, pronominal clitic; **pl.**, **PL**, plural; **PP**, past participle; **pres.**, present; **PRFCT**, perfect; **PROG**, progressive; **PROX**, proximal; **PRV**, preverb; **PST**, past; **REF**, reflexive; **SBJV**, subjunctive; **sg.**, **SG**, singular; **cf.**, compared to.



Figure 1. The Bakhtiari homeland and language area (based on Anonby and Asadi, 2018: 22)

located; and smaller parts of Isfahan and Markazi provinces (Figure 1). Moreover, a considerable portion of Bakhtiari people have migrated to the major cities in the western part of Isfahan Province over the past several years. Numbering over one million people,² the Bakhtiari are a well-organized sociopolitical confederation divided into two main branches, the Haflang (P. *haft lang*) and Chārlang (P. *čahār lang*), each of which is hierarchically divided into different parts (*bāb* or *boluk*).³ At the heart of the Bakhtiari homeland, the district of Kuhrang in C&B Province is dominated by the Haflang, among whom the Bavadi (autonym: *bāvādi*; P. *bābādi*) are one of the largest *bāb*.

This paper explores the Bakhtiari dialect of the Bavadi within its social and cultural context. The study opens with an account of our approach to the research, and a description of the Bavadi people in society and history. A précis of research on the wider Bakhtiari language, from the earliest work until the present, frames our investigation into the Bavadi dialect. The core of the paper consists of a grammatical description, focusing on salient aspects of phonology and morphosyntax. This description is based on our analysis of collected oral texts and complemented by a representative set of lexical and grammatical data elicited using the *Atlas of the Languages of Iran* (ALI) language data questionnaire.⁴ Along with the better known and described genre of the folktale, we include two texts of a basic type, which, although arguably the most common use of spoken language, rarely features in descriptions of Iranian languages: free conversation among several speakers.

² Anonby and Asadi, *Bakhtiari Phonology, Text, Lexicon*, 16.

³ Digard, “Bakhtiari Tribe.”

⁴ Anonby et al., “ALI Research Overview”; Anonby et al., “Linguistic Data Questionnaire”; and Anonby and Taheri-Ardali et al., *Atlas of the Languages of Iran*.

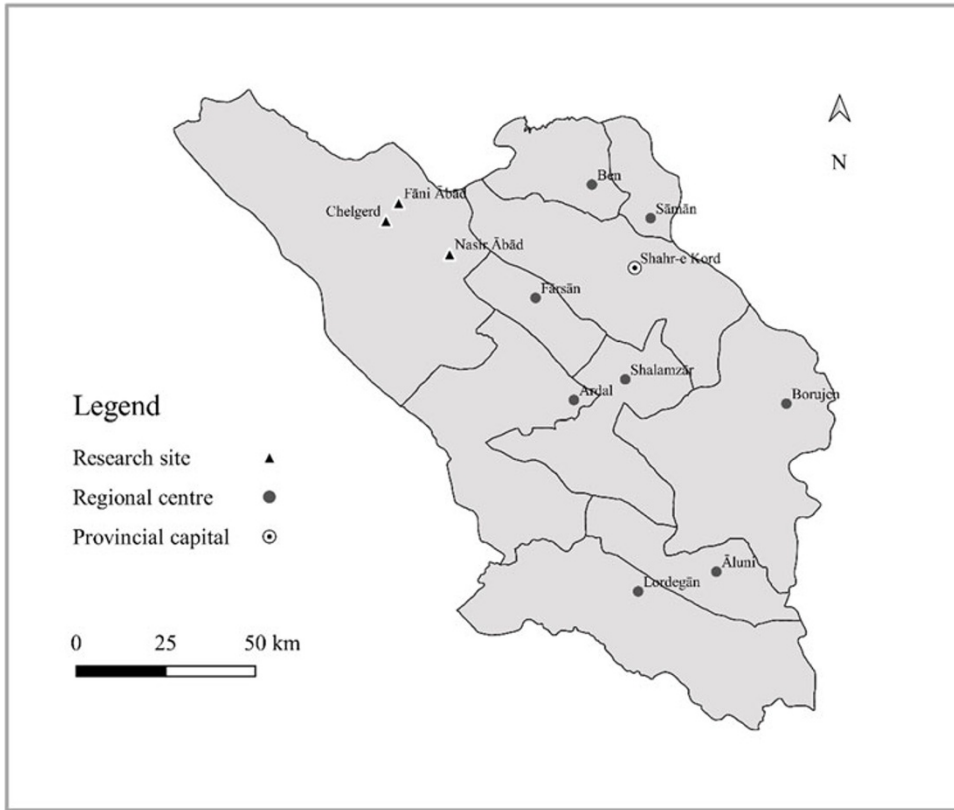


Figure 2. Research sites for this study, located in C&B Province. Map by Mortaza Taheri-Ardali, 2022.

Documentation

Our field research was conducted in the provincial sub-district (*šahrestān*) of Kuhrang, in the northwest quarter of C&B Province, in late September 2017. We visited three places: Fāni Ābād, home to 43 families and a population of 157; Nasir Ābād, home to 241 families and a population of 885; and the town of Chelgerd, the capital of Kuhrang, home to 753 families and 2,989 individuals.⁵ Figure 2 depicts the research sites.

This research was conducted in the context of an ethnographic expedition organized by Dr. Mohammad Hakim-Azar, professor at the Islamic Azad University of Shahrekord, in conjunction with the local governor Mr. Ali Badri in Kuhrang. After twenty minutes travelling uphill from Shahrekord toward the northwest, we entered “the land of the Bakhtiari” (B. *xāk-e baxtiyāri*), an informal designation for an area of roughly 75,000 km² stretching across the Zagros range all the way to the outskirts of Dezful, Shushtar, and Rām Hormoz in Khuzestan.⁶ We passed through about a dozen villages on the way to Chelgerd, itself

⁵ ISC, *Sālnāmeḥ-ye āmār-e Irān*. In this study, we excluded data collected from Chelgerd in order to carry out our analysis with a more homogeneous set of data. Although data from these localities was uniformly collected from the Bavadi of Bakhtiari, there are some minor differences in the dialects of some sub-tribes (*tāfe*). The speakers from Nasir Ābād and Fāni Ābād confirmed this. In another example reported by our speakers, the Bavadi dialects of the Ārpanāhi (B. *ārpanāhi*) and Mir Qā’ed (B. *mir kāyeδ*) sub-branches are slightly different from those of Taqi Abdollāh (B. *taqābdelā*) or Galeh (B. *gale*) (see section 3 for more information on relationships among these sub-branches of Bavadi).

⁶ The Bakhtiari homeland is comparable in size to Ireland, Czechia, or the Republic of Georgia.



Figure 3. The Salt Valley, a source of natural salt near Chelgerd. Source: Photo © Mortaza Taheri-Ardali 2021.

the seat of Kuhrang *šahrestān*, at the source of the Zāyandeh Rud River. Bakhtiari carpets, alpine honey, wild celery, mountain leek, dairy products, and natural salt are some of the renowned souvenirs of this region. Surprisingly, despite the cold climate, the Salt Valley (B. *dare nevek*, P. *darre namak*), as shown in Figure 3, is a well-known place close to Chelgerd, which produces natural salt.

Chelgerd is an attractive town, set in a valley bounded by mountains. For centuries, it has functioned as an economic hub (along with Ardal, Izeh, Lāli, Gotvand, and Masjed Soleyman) supplying nomads with goods.⁷ In Chelgerd, we walked along the main street, lined by rows of shops selling locally produced Bakhtiari goods. Nowadays, while still a center that supplies the nomads and adjacent villages, the town's economy revolves more around tourism, which thrives year-round, attracting holiday-makers from Isfahan, Khuzestan, and the rest of the nation. The Kuhrang tunnel spillway (P. *ābšār-e tunel-e kuhrang*) is one of the main tourist attractions in the area, as shown in Figure 4.

In Fāni Abād and Nasir Abād, we were welcomed by men in typical Bakhtiari clothing, as shown in Figure 5 and Figure 6: the tall rounded felt hat (B. *kolah xosravi*, P. *kolāh-e xosravi*), a straight, knee-length, sleeveless tunic of natural white wool with vertical indigo stripes (B. *čuqā*, P. *čuḡā*), and wide, black pants (B. *šavlār dabit*, P. *šalvār-e dabit*).⁸ Houses (*tu*) made of stone, mud, and mud bricks are still typical in these villages. We found no traditional black goat-hair tents (B. *bohovn*, P. *siyāh čādor*), but we still saw the occasional flock of sheep and goats on the mountainside pastures.⁹

⁷ Digard, "Bakhtiari Tribe."

⁸ For more discussion on Bakhtiari clothing, see Digard and Karimi (1973) and Digard (1992).

⁹ Although goat-hair tents are becoming less common, their absence at the time of our research may have been due to the time of year (late September), when nomads leave the summer pastures (B. *eylāḡ*) in Kuhrang to move



Figure 4. The town of Chelgerd as seen from the top of the Kuhrang tunnel spillway (P. ābšār-e tunel-e kuhrang). Source: Photo © Mortaza Taheri-Ardali 2017.



Figure 5. Conducting fieldwork with Bakhtiari people wearing traditional clothes in Nasir Ābād. Source: Photo © Mortaza Taheri-Ardali 2017.

toward the winter pastures (*qešlāq*) in Khuzestan. In addition, black tents are mostly set up in pasturing areas away from the villages and towns we visited during our fieldwork.



Figure 6. Conducting fieldwork with Bakhtiari people wearing traditional clothes in Fāni Ābād. Source: Photo © Mortaza Taheri-Ardali 2017.

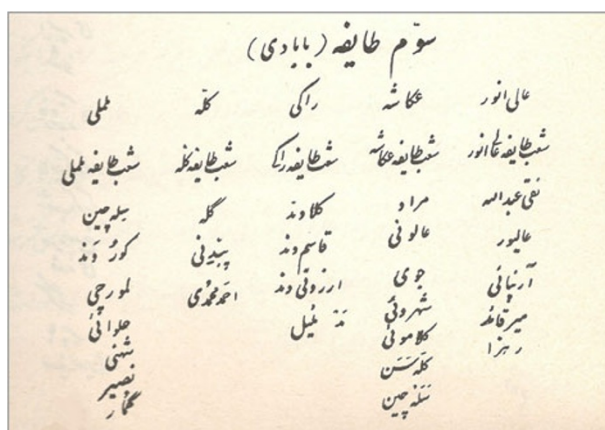


Figure 7. Internal organization of the Bavadi (Bakhtiari Sardār As'ad, 1361/1982: 534)

The settlements' names (e.g., mostly with the suffix *-ābād*) in the region nearby are relatively recent formations. Large-scale sedentarization of the nomads – forced upon the Bakhtiari by the shahs of the 20th century and continuing for economic reasons today – has deeply altered the tribes' livelihood and lifestyle. Needless to say, schooling, media, and extensive contact with larger Persian-speaking cities have affected the linguistic structures of Bakhtiari in this region.¹⁰ However, according to our observations, among those who have retained a nomadic lifestyle, the original Bakhtiari structures are more intact.

In contrast to many areas of Iran, where villages have been emptied of young people, the villages we visited in Kuhrang were vibrant. The inhabitants were from all age groups, and many families had highly educated members working in the cities of Isfahan and Khuzestan Provinces as professionals.

¹⁰ Anonby and Asadi, *Bakhtiari Phonology, Text, Lexicon*, 15.

Table 1. Transliteration/translation of Figure 7

The third <i>tāyefeh</i> (Bābādi)				
Ali Anvar	Akāsheh	Rāki	Galeh	Molmoli
branches of the Ali Anvar <i>tāyefeh</i> :	branches of the Akāsheh <i>tāyefeh</i> :	branches of the Rāki <i>tāyefeh</i> :	branches of the Galeh <i>tāyefeh</i> :	branches of the Molmoli <i>tāyefeh</i> :
Tāqi Abdollāh	Morād	Kalāvand	Galeh	Selah Chin
Alivar	Aluni	Qāsemvand	Pebdeni	Kurovand
Arpanāhi	Jovi	Arzunivand	Ahmad Mahmudi	Lemurchi
Mir Qāʿed	Shahrui	Mad Molil		Halvāʿi
Rahzā	Kalāmui			Shehni
	Kalasan			Nasir
	Salah Chin			Gomār

The Bavadi

Bakhtiari is renowned for its numerous hierarchical and interlocked tribal units, reflecting a substantial degree of lineal segmentation at different levels.¹¹ Accordingly, the tribe is comprised of two main divisions (*šāxe*), Haflang and Chārlang, each with its own distinctive linguistic features that are defined both socially and areally. After *šāxe*, from largest to smallest, *bāv*, *tāefe*, *tire*, *taš*, *korebau*, *bohoun*, and *māl* are considered as various levels in this highly organized ethnic group. In response to the question of *če kasī?* (who are you?), most Bakhtiari people are able to provide their lineage. Nevertheless, the groupings and labels vary in the literature as well as among the Bakhtiari population itself. Bavadi, as the primary focus of this research, is among the largest *bābs* in Haflang. Most Bavadi have their base in Chelgerd and neighboring villages, as well as in Masjed Soleymān, Izeh, and other cities in C&B and Khuzestan provinces. According to Ali Qoli Khān Bakhtiari Sardār Asʿad (1361/1982), the seminal reference in this regard, Figure 7 and the corresponding Table 1 depict the internal organization of Bavadi.

The Bavadi speak a dialect of Bakhtiari, a language grouping classified as Southwestern within the Iranian family.¹² More specifically, this language belongs to the Lori continuum in which three main high-level varieties have been identified: Northern Lori, Bakhtiari, and Southern Lori.¹³ As regards Persian within Southwestern Iranian, present-day Persian is a sister – rather than a parent – to varieties such as the Lori group, Lārestāni, Bandari, Kumzari,¹⁴ Bashkardi, Sistani,¹⁵ the Fārs group,¹⁶ and Garmsiri.¹⁷

With respect to other Bakhtiari varieties, Bavadi shows both similarities and differences in lexicon, phonology, and morphosyntax. As the intention here is to show differences with Persian, diachrony is integrated into this grammatical description.

Literature review

Well over a century ago, pioneering orientalist showed interest in the Bakhtiari language. In 1910, Oskar Mann made general remarks on Bakhtiari based on some texts, as part of

¹¹ Digard, “Bakhtiari Tribe.”

¹² Windfuhr, “Dialectology and Topics”; MacKinnon, “Lori Dialects”; Anonby et al., “Classification of Iran’s Languages.”

¹³ Anonby, “Update on Lori”; Anonby, “Sociolinguistic Status of Lori.”

¹⁴ Anonby, “Kumzari.”

¹⁵ Anonby et al., “Classification of Iran’s Languages.”

¹⁶ Borjian, “The Perside Language of Shiraz Jewry.”

¹⁷ Borjian, “Kerman xvi. Languages.”

a larger work in the Lori language domain.¹⁸ Valentin Zhukovskij's extensive collection of Bakhtiari songs and poetry was published posthumously in 1922.¹⁹ This was followed by the work of another Russian linguist, Y.N. Marr, who published short specimens of Bakhtiari literature.²⁰ A lion's share of early Bakhtiari documentation was carried out by the British Iranist and military officer David L.R. Lorimer (1876–1962), who published his wide-ranging collection of Bakhtiari texts with meticulous philological analyses in 1922; further unpublished materials from his collection have been made available by Vahman and Asatrian.²¹ While the geographic provenance of earlier works on Bakhtiari was unclear, Lorimer's publications indicated that his data was chiefly from Masjed Soleymān in Khuzestan. This is where he served as a British officer.

After a long hiatus, the study of Bakhtiari was continued, this time within modern linguistic frameworks, through three sketch grammars in the context of overviews of the larger Lori group: Kerimova, Windfuhr, and MacKinnon.²² All these studies rely heavily on Lorimer's data. In addition, Lecoq provided a very brief overview of Bakhtiari linguistic structures in the benchmark volume *Compendium Linguarum Iranicarum* in 1989.²³ In contrast, the wide-ranging *Bakhtiari Studies: Phonology, Text, Lexicon* by Anonby and Asadi (2014) is based on a substantial new dataset from a Haflang dialect in the area of Masjed Soleymān in Khuzestan.²⁴ In a companion volume, Anonby and Asadi elaborate a systematic orthography for Bakhtiari built on the phonological analysis of the first volume.²⁵ Up to that point, almost all studies had been based on the varieties of Bakhtiari spoken in Khuzestan. Anonby and Taheri-Ardali brought together previous research through a global overview of the language and, while their main focus was on Bakhtiari of Masjed Soleymān, they also included a glossed text from Bakhtiari of Ardal in C&B Province.²⁶

Persian-language publications about Bakhtiari include, but are not limited to, the collections of poems, proverbs, idioms, riddles, folk tales, and glossaries by writers such as Davari, Afsar Bakhtiari, Salehi, Abdollahi Mowgu'i, Kiani Haft Lang, Madadi, Ra'isi, Sarlak, Foroutan, Khosravania, and Ghanbari Odivi, among others.²⁷ So far, materials published on Bakhtiari are primarily of the Bakhtiari varieties of Khuzestan.

Since the establishment of linguistics departments at various Iranian academic institutions in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the above-mentioned works have been followed by descriptions of the linguistic structures mostly in the form of master's theses, doctoral dissertations, books, and articles. The following linguistic works on Bakhtiari are

¹⁸ Mann, *Kurdisch-persische Forschungen* II.

¹⁹ Zhukovskij, *Materialy dlja izučeniia persidskix' narečij*. This book was translated into Persian by Maryam Shafaghi and Seyyed Mehdi Dadras in 1396/2017.

²⁰ Marr, "Obrazec baxtiarskoj literatury."

²¹ Lorimer, *The Phonology of the Bakhtiari, Badakhshani*; Lorimer, "A Bakhtiari Prose Text"; Lorimer, "The Popular Verse of the Bakhtiari"; Vahman, "Two Bakhtiārī Prose Texts"; Vahman and Asatrian, *West Iranian Dialect Materials*; and *Poetry of Baxtiārīs*.

²² Kerimova, "Lurskie i Baxtijarskie Dialekty"; Windfuhr, "Bakhtiārī Tribe: The Bakhtiārī Dialect"; MacKinnon, "Lori Dialects."

²³ This work was translated into Persian by a team of scholars in two separate volumes. See Rüdiger, *Compendium Linguarum Iranicarum* [Rāhnamā-ye zabānhā-ye irāni].

²⁴ Anonby and Asadi, *Bakhtiari Studies*.

²⁵ Anonby and Asadi, *Bakhtiari Studies II: Orthography*.

²⁶ Anonby and Taheri-Ardali, "Bakhtiari."

²⁷ Davari, *Zarb-al-masalhā-ye bakhtiārī*; Afsar Bakhtiari, *Montakhabāt-i az ash'ār-e shā'er-e farzāneh*; Salehi, *il-e bozorg-e bakhtiārī*; Abdollahi Mowgu'i, *Tarānehā va masalhā-ye bakhtiārī*; Kiani Haft Lang, *Zarb-al-masalhā-ye bakhtiārī*; Madadi, *Vāzhehnāmeḥ-ye zabān-e bakhtiārī*; Madadi, *Shiveh-ye negāresh-e zabān-e bakhtiārī*; Ra'isi, *Golbāng-e bakhtiārī*; Sarlak, *Vāzhehnāmeḥ-ye guyesh-e bakhtiārī-ye chahārīlang*; Foroutan, *Ganjineh-ye masalhā-ye bakhtiārī*; Foroutan, *Chistānhā-ye bakhtiārī*; Foroutan, *Dastur zabān-e bakhtiārī*; Khosravania, *Gowgari*; Khosravania, *Shāhnāmeḥ bakhtiārī*; Ghanbari Odivi, *Adabiyyāt-e āmme-ye bakhtiārī*; Ghanbari Odivi, *Folklor-e mardom-e bakhtiārī*.

worth mentioning: Alizadeh Gelsefidi, Eidy, Khosravi, Zolfaghari, Taheri, Rezai and Amani-Babadi, Taheri-Ardali, Aliyari Babolghani, Rezai and Shojae, Talebi-Dastenaie and Ghatreh, Atashabparvar, Sadeghi, and Taheri-Ardali, Anonby, and Zaheri-Abdevand, among others.²⁸

The Bakhtiari varieties of C&B Province are currently studied in the framework of the *Atlas of the Languages of Iran* (ALI) research program, and a number of related articles have been published.²⁹ Taheri's *Guyesh-e bakhtiāri-ye kuhrang*, Anonby and Asadi's *Bakhtiari Studies: Phonology, Text, Lexicon*, and Anonby and Taheri-Ardali's book chapter "Bakhtiari" are the most relevant studies to the current research. Therefore, they are mentioned in different sections of the article below.

Grammatical outline

In this section, we provide an outline of the linguistic system of Bavadi Bakhtiari. While our presentation of the system is framed by phonological and morphological paradigms, the description of syntax in particular draws heavily from the texts that follow.

Phonology: vowels

Across the Bakhtiari-speaking area, there is significant variation in the vowel inventories. In the areas where Bakhtiari has been in close contact with Persian varieties, the vowel system tends to pattern with Persian.³⁰ The Bakhtiari dialect in question, Bavadi, is a typical of the language and can be considered its prototype in the region. According to our data, Bavadi Bakhtiari displays a basic inventory of seven simple vowels *i ē e a ā o u*, as shown in Table 2.

All of the vowels occur in both open and closed syllables, for example, *di* "smoke," *liš* "ugly," *hird* "small," *ču* "wood," *mur* "ant," *gušt* "meat," *tē* "eye," *šēr* "lion," *bepēčn* "wrap," *se* "three," *mel* "hair," *lešk* "branch of a tree," *to* "you" (sg.), *qol* "boiling," *hošk* "dry," *na* "no," *pas* "behind," *darf* "dish," *dā* "mother," *pār* "last year," and *vāst* "wait."

The vowel *ē* is a mid-high, front unrounded vowel, which occurs in all syllable positions in the data, as in *ēl* "tribe," *ēlevār* "jaw," *mēre* "husband, man," *sēste* "hawthorn," *mēš* "ewe," and *botē* "maternal aunt." Minimal sets include *bēδ* "willow tree" vs. *biδ* "be.PST"; *sšēr* "lion" vs. *sšer* "a short while"; *čēl* "mouth" vs. *čel* "arm"; and *sēr* "full" vs. *sir* "wild garlic, garlic." Bavadi speakers we consulted make a clear distinction between *dēr* "late, long," and *dir* "far" (cf. P. *dir* and *dur*, respectively). Furthermore, they also distinguish between *ē* and the segment *ey* (see below), e.g., *tē* "eye" vs. *tey* "before." In light of the evidence provided here, we posit that *ē* is a separate phoneme in Bavadi. This differs from the system in the Masjed Soleymān dialect of Bakhtiari, for which Anonby

²⁸ Alizadeh Gelsefidi, *Barresi-ye guyesh-e bakhtiāri*; Eidy, *Barresi-ye guyesh-e ardāl*; Khosravi, *Guyesh-e bakhtiāri*; Zolfaghari, "Guyesh-e bakhtiāri: baqā yā zavāl"; Zolfaghari, *The Bakhtiaris: An Anthropological-linguistic Lexical Study*; Taheri, "Fe'l dar guyesh-e bakhtiāri"; Taheri, *Guyesh-e bakhtiāri-ye kuhrang*; Taheri, "Rishehshenāsi-ye vāzehēyāzi az guyesh-e bakhtiāri"; Rezai and Amani-Babadi, "Nemud-e dasturi dar guyesh"; Taheri-Ardali, "Guyesh-e bakhtiāri: zavāl yā baqā"; Aliyari Babolghani, *Ganjineh-ye guyeshhā-ye irāni*; Rezai and Shojae, "Barkhi vizheghihā-ye radehshenākhti"; Talebi-Dastenaie and Ghatreh, "Barresi-ye sākh-tāri va ma'nāyi"; Atashabparvar, *Farhang va guyesh-e ardāl-e baxtiāri*; Sadeghi, *Guyesh-e bakhtiāri-ye masjed soleymān*; Taheri-Ardali, Anonby, and Zaheri-Abdevand, "Bahman alā'eddin va hayāt-e jāvdāneh."

²⁹ Taheri-Ardali, Mortaza et al., "Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari Province"; Anonby, Taheri-Ardali, Stone, "Toward a Picture of Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari Province"; Anonby, Taheri-Ardali, and Hayes, "The *Atlas of the Languages of Iran* (ALI)"; Anonby, Schreiber, Taheri-Ardali, "Balanced Bilingualism"; Taheri-Ardali, "Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari Province"; Taheri-Ardali et al., *The Online Atlas of the Languages of Iran*; Schreiber et al., "Contact-induced Change in the Morphosyntax."

³⁰ Anonby and Taheri-Ardali, "Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari"; Anonby and Taheri-Ardali, "Bakhtiari"; Anonby, Taheri-Ardali, and Stone, "Toward a Picture of Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari Province."

Table 2. Vowel phonemes

	front	back
high	<i>i</i> [iː]	<i>u</i> [uː]
mid-high	<i>ē</i> [eː]	
mid	<i>e</i> [ɛ]	<i>o</i> [ɔ]
low	<i>a</i> [a]	<i>ā</i> [ɑː]

and Asadi analyze historical *ē* as a vowel-glide sequence *ey* rather than a unitary mid-high vowel *ē*. In line with Taheri, however, our data shows *ē* as a separate phoneme in Bavadi.

It is not uncommon in Bakhtiari to witness the occurrence of underlying *h* after the vowels *a*, *e*, and *o* within a coda. However, typically *h* is realized in this position as the length on the preceding vowel and loses its consonantal pronunciation, e.g., *kah* *k*[aː], “chaff,” *peh* *p*[ɛː] “fat (n.),” *mahde/mehde* *m*[aː]δ*e*/*m*[ɛː]δ*e* “stomach,” and *koh* *k*[oː] “mountain.”³¹ In all these cases, there is no phonological contrast between the form with the lengthened vowel and the form with no lengthening, including the vowel [ɛː]. In other words, despite the fact that the articulation with the phonetic long vowel in the above-mentioned cases is phonetically more usual, there is no minimal pair available to show the contrast between the long and short forms. That said, the phoneme *ē* [eː] has a phonetic quality that differs from that of *eh* [ɛː], as mentioned in the examples above. In spite of this, the occurrence of *ē* in the younger generations, whose language is directly influenced by Persian, is unstable and sometimes merges with the typical high back vowel *i*. We cannot establish a parallel underlying distinction between [oː] and [ɔ] in Bavadi, similar to the findings of Anonby and Asadi and Anonby and Taheri-Ardali.³² The former, i.e., [oː], occurs rarely and speakers do not distinguish the two sounds perceptually. As a case in point, the second vowel in *kolo* *k*[ɔ]/[oː] “locust,” when pronounced in isolation, is significantly longer than the first vowel, but this extra lengthening is based on the utterance-final position and is not phonemically distinctive. In other cases where a phonetically long “o” is heard, such as in *pohδ* [p^hoːδ] “cooked,” *lohδ* [loːδ] “naked,” *sohδ* [soːδ] “burned,” *sohr* [soːr] “red,” and *gahp* [gaːp] “big,” there is an underlying *h* in the coda. This alternation – realization of *h* in codas as length on the preceding vowel – is prevalent in Bakhtiari, as discussed above. Our finding on this matter is in contrast with Taheri (1389/2010), who considers the long mid vowel *ō* as a separate phoneme in Bakhtiari of Kuhrang. Overall, as in Middle and Early New Persian, the Bakhtiari variety under investigation has retained the long mid vowel *ē*. However, the present-day Bavadi Bakhtiari, like Persian and many other Southwestern languages, has lost historical *ō* as a separate phoneme.

Nasalized vowels are evident in Bavadi, but are not phonemically contrastive. Underlyingly, they can be considered vowel-*v* sequences, for which the sequence *ov* is the most probable interpretation, such as in *hove* [hōw̃ɛ] “house,” *šove* [šōw̃ɛ] “comb, shoulder,” and *zov* [zōː^u] “tongue.”

Following Anonby and Asadi (2014), our data shows that vowel sequences in Bavadi are more widely available and varied than those in Persian. Nevertheless, in urban areas and areas where Bakhtiari is under the direct influence of Persian, the vowels are produced more like Persian simple vowels than Bakhtiari vowel-glide sequences. Noted vowel-glide sequences in our data, as already observed by Anonby and Asadi (2014), are *ey* (*tey* “before,” *seyl* “flood”), *ay* (*say* “dog,” *ay* “if”), *āy* (*pāy* “clean, all,” *sarvālāy* “steep,” *fāyde* “profit”),

³¹ Anonby and Asadi, *Bakhtiari Studies*, 49.

³² Anonby and Asadi, *Bakhtiari Studies*; Anonby and Taheri-Ardali, “*Bakhtiari*”

ov (*hendove* “watermelon”, *silov* “date sap”, *yonov* “these”), av (*lav* “lip”, *av* “water,” *aftav* “sun”), and oy (*poy* “clean,” *goy* “you said,” *toyniden* “to toss”).

There are some phonetic differences between Bavadi Bakhtiari and Modern Persian in the remaining vowel sounds, especially in the back low vowel *ā* [ɑ], which is slightly more rounded than its Iranian Persian counterpart. In the transcribed texts (see below), instability among *ov~un~uv* can be seen in a few items: *pā=sov* “their feet,” *zāniyun* “(place name),” *gorbatun* “the blacksmiths,” *ya meydūv-ē* “a circle,” *xomun* “ourselves,” *čārtā=sun* “four of them,” *gahp=mov* “our leader,” and *ramezov* “(man’s name).” This suggests that a transitional situation exists, variably capitulating to the pronunciation of their colloquial Persian counterparts: *-un*, *-sun*, and *-mun*, as in *meydun* “circle,” *čārtā=sun* “four of them,” and *bozorg=emun* “our leader,” respectively. In a comparable manner, the impact of Persian at the lexical and morphological level is also evident, as other examples of instability are discernible, such as in the words *kuče* “alley” and *mēdov* “s/he knew” (cf. the expected Bavadi forms *kiče* and *edove*, respectively), which are produced similarly to their Persian structures in the data.

Vowel diachrony

In examining the vowel diachrony of Bavadi, several noteworthy developments distinguish its vowel system from that of Persian. This subsection focuses on the phonological changes affecting original high back vowel **ū* and low back vowel **ā*, as well as the influence of pharyngeals on vowel coloration.

An original high back vowel **ū* is fronted, most often in a pre-coronal position (cf. *mi* “hair”), as in *pil* “money,” *andirin* “abdomen,” *tit* “mulberry,” *pine* “pennyroyal” (flower sp.), and *hin* “blood.” The original low back vowel (**ā*) generally remains, e.g., in *hāga* “egg” and *bāyi* “arm,” but is raised and rounded in historical pre-nasal context, as in *zamov* “time, era,” *heyvov* “animal,” and *šom* “evening.” The vowel **ā* is fronted before *h*, as in *kolah* “hat,” *mah* “moon,” and *šah* “black,” but not in *sšāh* “king,” an item typically used in Persian-sensitive registers of the language.

The coloration of vowels influenced by pharyngeals in Bavadi exhibits several notable reflexes. Syllable-final *iʃ* becomes *ah* in words like *mahde* “stomach” (< Ar. *miʃda*). Cross-syllabic *aʃ* and *aḥ* are reflected as *ā* in words such as *mālam* “teacher” (< Ar. *muʃallim*), *māhāl* (< Ar. *maḥāl*, meaning “places,” as seen in the toponym *čār māhāl* “Chahar Mahal”), *amārat* (otherwise *emārat* in Persian < Ar. *ʕimārat*, meaning “building”), and *sehāv* (< Ar. *ṣāḥib*, meaning “owner”).³³

Phonology: consonants

The consonant inventory of Bavadi is detailed in Table 3. This inventory includes a range of consonantal sounds that highlight the influence of historical and regional linguistic developments to Bavadi Bakhtiari.

In Bakhtiari, the phoneme *d* is pronounced as [d] in word-initial positions (e.g., *di* “else”) and in final positions following non-glide consonants such as *nd* in *jend* “jinn” and *rd* in *dard* “pain.” It also occurs in clusters before a vowel, as in *gajdin* “scorpion” and *abde*, a proper name. In addition, *d* is sometimes realized as [ð], particularly in postvocalic positions, such as in *doḍar* “girl, daughter,” *diḍi* “you saw,” *fešnāden* “to send,” and *bāvādi* “Bavadi.” The allophone [ð] also appears after the glides *u*, *y*, and *h*, as in *eyð* “Eid,” *meyḍun* “plaza,” *ezeyð* “he was hitting,” *zeyḍom* “I hit,” *ezeyḍen* “they were hitting,” *esteyḍom* “I grabbed,” and in *hð* as found in *sohð* “it burned,” *lohð* “naked,” and *sohḍen* “to burn.” This variation supports analyzing [ð] as an allophone of *d* in Bakhtiari. For clarity, we use the symbol *ð* or “Zagros d”

³³ Likewise, the coloration of vowels has been demonstrated in Isfahani Persian in the vicinity of pharyngeal consonants of Arabic loanwords. See Borjian, “Traces of Pharyngeal Consonants.”

Table 3. Consonants. The pairs of consonants are voiced and voiceless respectively

	labial	dental	palatal	velar	uvular	glottal
stops/affricates	<i>p b</i>	<i>t d</i>	<i>č j</i>	<i>k g</i>	<i>q ġ</i>	
fricatives	<i>f (v)</i>	<i>s z</i>	<i>š ṣ</i>		<i>x</i>	<i>(h)</i>
nasals	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>				
rhotics		<i>r</i>				
laterals		<i>l</i>				
glides	<i>u(v~w)</i>		<i>y</i>			<i>h</i>

in our transcription to reflect this phonological trait, which distinguishes Bakhtiari from Persian. However, we do not intend to imply that *δ* is a separate phoneme in the Bakhtiari dialect studied.

Bavadi Bakhtiari has the uvular consonants, i.e., voiced plosive *ğ* and voiceless plosive *q* as two separate phonemes.³⁴ The consonant *q* has frequent occurrences in the data, including *qaleh* “castle,” *qarā* “sour whey,” *qāli* “carpet,” *qarz* “loan,” *qeđim* “long past,” *qavr* “grave,” *qoyum* “hard,” *qavl* “promise,” *qavloq* “fabric hand-made bag,” *maqāš* “tongs,” *qahr* “wrath,” *qorov* “Qur’an,” *āqel* “wise,” *qāter* “mule,” and *qođu* “foal.” Examples for the consonant *ğ* are as follows: *ğār* “cave,” *ruġen* “ghee,” *ğorbatov* “blacksmiths,” *šuluğ* “crowded,” and *jeġele* “a child boy,” and also include words spelled with *ق* <*q*> in Persian orthography, such as *ğāšoğ* “spoon,” *āğā* “dad,” *ğāšang* “pretty,” and *ğārč* “mushroom.” The following examples with *ğ* prove that it is not etymological: *ğalb* “heart” (< *qalb*), *ğavz* “joy” (< *zawq*), *feğat* “only” (< *faqat*), *ağav* “behind” (< *ʔaqib*), *rafiğ* “friend” *āšeg* “in love” (< *ʔāshiq*), *hayğat* “truth” (< *haqiqat*), *etfāğan* “accidentally” (< *ettefāqan*).³⁵

The minimal pairs are *gor* “bell” vs. *qor* “throat,” *ğil* “pitch” vs. *qil* “deep,” and *qol* “boiling” vs. *ğol* in *ye ġol do ġol* “a local game played with stone.” In addition, there are a couple of near minimal pairs that show that these two are separate phonological consonants in Bavadi. To name a few: *qorov* “Qur’an” vs. *ğorbatov* “blacksmiths,” *qāli* “carpet” vs. *ğāšoğ* “spoon,” *ğavz* “joy” vs. *qavloq* “fabric hand-made bag.” This accords with the analysis of Anonby and Asadi (2014) but in contradiction with Taheri (2010), in which a single phoneme is proposed for both the voiced and voiceless uvular stops in Bakhtiari of Kuhrang.

In the Bavadi data, the segment [ʒ] occurs only in a few words and only as a dissimilated form of the phoneme *j* when it occurs as the first segment in a word-internal cluster. Examples include *qajdin* “scorpion,” *hijdah* “eighteen,” and *majma* “large tray.” Hence, in contrast with Bakhtiari of Masjed Soleymān, we do not qualify *ž* as a separate phoneme in Bavadi.³⁶

The phoneme *u* has an allophonic range among [v], [u], and [w].³⁷ Examples are as follows: [v] *orzā* “bull,” *se[v]ēl* “mustache,” *do[u~w]ā* “groom, son-in-law,” *bā[u~w]ā* “father,” *a[u~w]ođ* “he came,” and *a[u~w]om* “I came.” Moreover, *u* forms diphthong-like sounds, most frequently *av*, as in *av* “water,” *rav* “go,” *dav* “playfield,” *hav* “scream,” *šav* “night,” *šavlār* “trousers,” *ravurā* “ligament,” *avlād* “children,” *davur* “around,” *qavl* “promise,” *yonov* “these,” *silov* “date sap,” etc. As a vowel-glide sequence, we find the plural morpheme *-ov*, e.g., *širov* “lions” and plural enclitic pronouns *-mov*, *-tov*, and *-sov*.

Following Anonby and Asadi (2014) and Anonby and Taheri-Ardali (2018), the glottal stop, which behaves like a glide in many languages, is not phonemic in Bavadi Bakhtiari.³⁸

³⁴ As noted by Anonby and Asadi, *Bakhtiari Studies: Phonology, Text, Lexicon*, 45, the phoneme /*ğ*/ is classified as a stop, since it is pronounced as a voiced uvular stop [g] in most positions.

³⁵ Cf. Borjian, “Kerman xvi. Languages.”

³⁶ Anonby and Asadi, *Bakhtiari Studies*, §2.2.1.

³⁷ Cf. Anonby and Asadi, *Bakhtiari Studies*, §2.2.1.

³⁸ For behaving like a glide, see Walker, *Nasalization, Neutral Segments and Opacity*.

Consonant diachrony

The following historical sound changes are observed in Bavadi but not Persian, helping to reduce Bavadi's intelligibility to native Persian speakers, even when cognate lexical items are used.

Original nasals shift to *v* in intervocalic positions, e.g., *dova* "groom, son-in-law" (cf. P. *dāmād*), *hove* "house" (P. *xāne*), *jove* "shirt" (P. *jāme*), *avo(δ)* "he came," (P. *āmad*), *hendove* "watermelon" (P. *hendavāne*), *zovi*, *zuvi* "knee" (P. *zānu*), *ramezov* "(man's name)." This rule applies to newly borrowed words only in final position, e.g., *telefov* "telephone."

*The change *š > s in *isā* 'you' (cf. Persian *šomā*) and in the third-person pronominal clitics, singular =s and plural =sov, are attested in the data.

*d softens after vowels and glides in the following ways: it becomes the interdental approximant *δ*, as in *šād* "happy," *esbiδ* "white," *seδā* "voice," *zeyδ* "hit.PST.3sg"; changes to *y*, as in *keyvenu* "lady" (P. *kadbānu*) and *biy-om* "I was"; or is lost altogether, as in *zi* "soon," *dova* "groom, son-in-law," and *xo* =s "him/herself."

Other stops also weaken or disappear postvocally: *-b- > v or is lost entirely, as in *ču* "wood," *zov* "tongue," *ruvā* "fox," *sovah* "tomorrow," *keyvenu* "lady" (P. *kadbānu*), *av* "water," and *šav* "night"; and *-g-, *-k- > y, as in *say* "dog," *jiyar* "liver," *zendeyi* "life," *poy/pāy* "clean, all" (cf. P. *pāk*), and *doyδor* "doctor."

*x tends to weaken in certain contexts. Initial *x- > h in some words, such as *hin*, *xin* "blood," *hošk* "dry," *hāga* "egg," *hiz* "jump, attack" (P. *xiz*), and *har* "donkey," but not in *xousiδ* "sleep.PST" and *xeriδ* "buy.PST." The cluster -xr- > hr in *tahl* "bitter" and *sohr* "red." Medial -xt- weakens in *doδar* "girl" and *sohδen* "to burn," but not in *deraxt* "tree" and *baxtiyāri* "Bakhtiari."

Medial *-ft- is subject to becoming weak in *gom* "I said" and *ra(h)δim* "we went," but not in *čaft* "knee-pit," *aftav* "sun," *roftan* "to sweep," and *vufte* "it fell" (P. *oftād*).

Morphosyntax: noun phrase

Nouns may take the following suffixes and clitics: plural markers -ov, -ā, *yal/-gal*; definite marker -(ek)e; indefinite marker -i, -(e)y; object marker =(n)e; ezafe linker -e; pronominal clitics =om "1SG.PC," =et "2SG.PC," =es "3SG.PC," etc.; conjunctive =o/=yo/=vo "and"; particle =am "also"; and copulas =(o)m, =i, =ya, etc.

Number

There are three plural markers, all stressed: -(h/v/y)ā, -ov, and -yal/-gal.³⁹ A few examples include: *ketāvā* "books," *hovehā* "houses," *gerduvā* "walnuts," *baxtiyāriyā* "Bakhtiari people," *širov* "lions," *lorov* "Lors," *gorbatov* "blacksmiths," *jeğeliyal* "children," *zangal* "women," and *bozgal* "goats." In addition, the following sentences are taken from the transcribed texts:

1. *šāh* *šir-ov* *mord*.
king lion-PL die.PST.3sg
'The king of lions died.'
2. *jeğil-i-yal* = *e* *koš*.
child-EPEN-PL = OBJ kill.PST.3sg
'He killed the children.'

³⁹ Cf. Anonby and Asadi, *Bakhtiari Studies*, 93.

Definite marker

In Bakhtiari, the definite marker is typically expressed as the stressed *-e*, with an allomorphic variant *-(e)ke/(e)ka*.⁴⁰ The choice between *-e* and *-(e)ke/(e)ka* depends on discursal factors, with *-(e)ke/(e)ka* often used for emphasis or in specific syntactic environments. For example, in *mālam-*eke* *koje-n=e*?* “Where is the teacher?” (example 3), the definite marker *-eke* emphasizes the definiteness of “teacher,” while in *mālam-*e* *koje-n=e*?* “Where is the teacher?” (example 4), the simpler *-e* serves the same purpose with less emphasis. Similarly, the phrase *i *hove-ke* *gahp=e** “This house is big” (example 5) uses *-ke* to emphasize “house,” while in *hove-ke *gahp=e** “The house is big” (example 6), the same marker is used without the demonstrative pronoun *i* to denote definiteness more generally. These examples illustrate the flexibility of the definite marker in Bakhtiari, allowing speakers to modulate emphasis and definiteness depending on the context.

3. *mālam-*eke* *koje-n = e*?*
 teacher-DEF where-EPEN = is
 ‘Where is the teacher?’

4. *mālam-*e* *koje-n = e*?*
 teacher-DEF where-EPEN = is
 ‘Where is the teacher?’

5. *i *hove-ke *gahp = e*.**
 this house-DEF big = is
 ‘This house is big.’

6. **hove-ke *gahp = e*.**
 house-DEF big = is
 ‘The house is big.’

The definite marker precedes the object-marking clitic *-(n)e*. This structure is seen in both present and past tense structures (examples 7, 8, 10 and 11). The interaction between the definite marker and object marker in Bakhtiari is a clear point of difference from Persian. The definite marker precedes the object marker in singular and plural nouns in Bakhtiari. However, the definite marker is absent between the plural marker and the object marker in Persian.⁴¹ It is worth noting that the definite marker may or may not be attached to plural nouns (example 9).

7. *hey *sēv-eka = ne *xor-e*.**
 PROG apple-DEF = OBJ eat.NPST-3sg
 ‘He is eating the apple.’

⁴⁰ See Taheri-Ardali, “Definiteness marking.” Other definitions of this marker include: *-ke* corresponds to the topicalizer and vocative marker *ak(ū)* and the demarcative suffix *-ekū*. See Windfuhr 1988; MacKinnon 2011.

⁴¹ Paul, “Persian”, 588; Typologically, the definite marker *-(e)ke* in Bakhtiari attaches to the right periphery of the noun after the plural marker, which is in contrast to Kurdish, e.g., *dost-ak-ān* (friend-DEF-PL) “the friends” (Khan 2007; Haig and Khan 2019).

8. *sēv-eka = ne* *xard.*
apple-DEF = OBJ eat.PST.3sg
'He ate the apple.'
9. *i hove-hā gahp = en.*
this house-PL big = are
'These houses are big.'
10. *eney sēv-ā-ka = ne xor-e.*
PROG apple-PL-DEF = OBJ eat.NPST-3SG
'He is eating the apples.'
11. *sēv-ā = ne xard.*
apple-PL = OBJ eat.PST.3SG
'He ate the apples.'

In Bakhtiari, as in colloquial Persian, the definite marker can be affixed to a noun phrase that includes both a noun and an adjective, functioning to indicate definiteness across the entire phrase. This pattern is particularly interesting because it shows how definiteness is extended to the whole noun phrase, rather than just the noun itself.

12. *mālam jāhel-e*
teacher young-DEF
'The young teacher'
13. *hove gahp-tar-e*
house big-CMP-DEF
'The bigger house'
14. *hove gahp-tartar-e*
house big-SUP-DEF
'The biggest house'

Indefinite marker

Indefiniteness in the Bakhtiari dialect is often marked by an unstressed suffix *-i* attached to the noun, and is typically also accompanied by the numeral *ya* or *ye* meaning "one" preceding the noun. This construction serves to indicate that the noun is indefinite, referring to a non-specific entity.

15. *ya kačal-i bi ya pađešāh-i ham bi.*
one bald-INDEF be.PST.3SG one king-INDEF too be.PST.3SG
'There was a bald [person] and there was a king, too.'
16. *ya malek-e xeyr-i ya ensān-i.*
one angel-EZ good-INDEF one human-INDEF
'A good angel, a human.'

17. *ya pāzen-i be-zen.*
 one ibex-INDEF IMPV-hit.NPST-2SG
 'Hunt an ibex!'
18. *ye xātere-yi*
 one memory-INDEF
 'a memory'
19. *men-e ya qavloq-i biδen.*
 in-EZ one bag-INDEF be.PST.3PL
 'They were in a fabric hand-made bag.'

Object marking

Specific direct objects are marked by *=e* or *=(e)ne*. The following examples (20–28) highlight how Bakhtiari marks direct objects with the enclitic *=e* or its variant *=ne*. The clitic attaches to the noun or pronoun functioning as the direct object. In general, several semantic and discoursal features play a crucial role in the occurrence of object marking, including but not limited to definiteness, specificity, animacy, topicality, and emphasis. There are distinct instances in which Bakhtiari diverges from Persian in its object marking patterns, as exemplified in example 29 below. A comprehensive analysis of these divergences could provide deeper insight into the syntactic and semantic nuances that distinguish Bakhtiari from Persian.

20. *tā resiδ-om, delak = e esteyδ-om.*
 until arrive.PST-1SG stick = OBJ seize.PST-1SG
 'As soon as I arrived, I grabbed the stick.'
21. *dar = e vāz kerd.*
 door = OBJ open do.PST.3SG
 'She opened the door.'
22. *dar = ne vāz kerd.*
 door = OBJ open do.PST.3SG
 'She opened the door.'
23. *do tek = s = e i-zeyδ.*
 two calf = 3SG.PC = OBJ IPFV-hit.PST.3SG
 'He hit his two calves.'
24. *kor-e ām fatali = ne kušt-i.*
 son-EZ uncle Fatali = OBJ kill.PST-2SG
 'You killed the son of [my] paternal uncle Fath-Ali.'
25. *yo čel-ā = ne i-kašīδ.*
 this hand-PL-OBJ IPFV-stretch.PST.3SG
 'This person stretched out his hands.'

26. *yonov ze hamo duvov ke imā = ne diδ-en*
 these from that down COMP we = OBJ see.PST-3PL
 ‘These people who saw us there from the lower part.’ (i.e., they saw us as if from a long distance while they were desperate in the competition).
27. *xāst-en mo = ne zan-en.*
 want.PST-3PL me = OBJ hit.NPST-3PL
 ‘They wanted to hit me.’
28. *xo = ne loftelis kerd, vorostā.*
 self = OBJ all_ready do.PST.3SG stand.PST.3SG
 ‘He made himself ready and stood up.’
29. *bā tēy nāf-es-Ø i-bur-an.*
 with razor navel-3SG.PC-Ø IPFV-cut.NPST-3pl
 ‘They cut his/her navel string with a razor.’

The ezafe linker

As in Persian, ezafe (-e) acts as a link with modifiers, e.g., *kor-e gahp* ‘big boy’ and *dar-e hove* ‘the door of the house.’ In addition to nouns, ezafe is also suffixed to some prepositions, e.g., *men-e ravrav-e pā=s* ‘within his ligament’ and *jānev-e xoδā* ‘in the direction of God.’ This linker is realized as zero when attached to vowel-final words: *hove gahp* ‘big house,’ *šāšīrov* ‘king of lions,’ and *piyā duši* ‘the man we met/saw yesterday.’

30. *avon-e⁴² be hami sahrā gandava.*
 come.PST.3pl-PRF to this.very field Gandava
 ‘They came to this very field of Gandāb.’
31. *vand zeyδ men-e sine āgā = m abde.*
 throw.PST.3SG hit.PST.3SG in-EZ chest paternal_uncle = 1SG.PC Abde
 ‘He threw them and hit the chest of my paternal uncle Abdeh.’

Prepositions

With the exception of the object marker, which functions as a postposition, all other adpositions in the dialect are prepositions. Frequently used prepositions include *vā* ‘with, to,’ *ri* ‘on,’ *si* ‘for, to,’ *tey* ‘before,’ *ze* ‘from,’ *men* ‘in,’ *be* ‘to,’ and *tā* ‘until.’ Some prepositions in Bavadi are simple and occur without an ezafe (examples 32–36). Another group of prepositions may link to their complement through an ezafe (examples 37–42). Additionally, there are prepositional expressions formed by the combination of simple prepositions, as demonstrated in example 43.

32. *on ze bāzār i-y-ā-m.*
 PROG from market IPFV-EPEN-come.NPST-1SG
 ‘I am coming from the market.’

⁴² This is a contraction of *avoδene* (see Table 8).

33. *uā čaqu boriδ-om = es.*
with knife cut.PST-1SG = 3SG.PC
'I cut it with a knife.'
34. *rah tey bov = s.*
go.PST.3SG before father = 3SG.PC
'He went before his father.' (P. *piš-e pedar = aš*)
35. *hiz i-y-ār-i si = s.*
attack IPFV-EPEN-bring.NPST-2SG for = 3SG.PC
'You should attack him.'
36. *yo fāe n-ār-e si imā.*
this benefit NEG-have.NPST-3SG for we
'This has no benefit for us.'
37. *var-bi men ri = s.*
PRV-was in face = 3SG.PC
'He suddenly came toward him.' (P. *bar-sšod tu ru = sš*)
38. *duš diδ-om jeḡel-eke vast-e bi din dovar-ke.*
yesterday see.PST-1SG child-DEF fall.PST-PRF be.PST.3 G after girl-DEF
'I saw yesterday that the boy was chasing the girl.'
39. *mālam-e men madresa = e.*
teacher-DEF in school = is
'The teacher is at school.'
40. *mālam-e men-e madresa = e.*
teacher-DEF in-EZ school = is
'The teacher is at school.'
41. *nešast sar-e ču.*
sit.PST.3SG on-EZ stick
'He sat on the stick.'
42. *sar kuče-hā xāst-en mo = ne zan-en.*
right.at alley-PL want.PST-3PL me = OBJ hit.NPST-3PL
'They wanted to hit me at the entrance to the alleys.'
43. *ri sar-e deraxt*
on on-EZ tree
'on top of the tree'

Table 4. Pronouns, verbal endings, and copulas

		subject pronouns	object pronouns	pronominal clitics	verb endings	present copulas
sg.		<i>mo</i>	<i>mone</i>	<i>=om</i>	<i>-om</i>	<i>=om</i>
1						
2		<i>to</i>	<i>tone</i>	<i>=et</i>	<i>-i</i>	<i>=i</i>
3	proximal	<i>yo</i>	<i>yone</i>	<i>=es</i>	<i>-e, -Ø</i>	<i>=e</i>
	distal	<i>ho</i>	<i>hone</i>			
pl.		<i>imā</i>	<i>imāne</i>	<i>=mov(n)</i>	<i>-im</i>	<i>=im</i>
1						
2		<i>isā</i>	<i>isāne</i>	<i>=tov(n)</i>	<i>-in</i>	<i>=in</i>
3	proximal	<i>yunov</i>	<i>yunov(n)e</i>	<i>=sov(n)</i>	<i>-en</i>	<i>=en</i>
	distal	<i>honov</i>	<i>honov(n)e</i>			

Pronouns

There are two basic sets of personal pronouns: independent and enclitic (oblique), as shown in Table 4. The object set is constructed by adding *-ne* to subject pronouns.

In Bavadi, pronominal clitics play a crucial role by marking various syntactic functions and relationships within sentences. These clitics are used to denote possession, direct and indirect objects, and the objects of prepositions, as well as to convey experiential states. The pronominal clitics may function to indicate possession and are used to mark relationships between nouns and their possessors, as illustrated in the examples 44–46.

44. *mira = s* *rahδ.*
 husband = 3SG.PC go.PST.3SG
 ‘Her husband went.’
45. *yo* *gap = mov* *zeyδ-e.*
 this big = 1PL.PC hit.PST.3SG-PRF
 ‘This person has beaten our leader!’
46. *manizše* *levās = ene* *si* *xo = s* *o-xo.*
 Manizše piece_of_clothing = OBJ for self = 3SG.PC IPFV-want.3SG
 ‘Manizheh wants the dress for herself.’

In addition, the following examples highlight how direct objects are represented through pronominal clitics, which are attached to the verb to explicitly mark the recipient or target of the action.

47. *bi-y-o-yn* *bar-in = es.*
 IMPV-EPEN-come.NPST-2PL take.NPST-3PL = 3SG.PC
 ‘Come and take him away!’

Example 49 shows how, in Bavadi, the indirect object is indicated through pronominal clitics attached to the verb.

48. *ḡaleve i-xom = et.*
 much IPFV-want.NPST = 2SG.PC
 ‘I love you very much.’
49. *ya maqāš-i ham dā = s.*
 one tongs-INDEF also give.PST = 3SG.PC
 ‘He gave him a pair of tongs, too.’

Example 50 and 51 illustrate how prepositions in Bavadi interact with pronominal clitics to specify the objects related to the prepositional phrases.

50. *ya kār-i si = t kon-e.*
 one task-INDEF for = 2SG.PC do.NPST-3SG
 ‘He will be helpful to you.’
51. *ya nāme-yi ze = soṽ i-y-ār-i di = m.*
 one letter-INDEF from = 3PL.PC IPFV- give.NPST.IPFV = 1SG.PC
 EPEN-bring.NPST-
 2SG
 ‘You will bring me a letter from them.’ (P. *mi-deh-i = am*)

Examples 52 and 53 demonstrate how Bavadi uses experiential constructions, employing clitics and copula verbs to convey the subject’s relationship to the described state or event.

52. *gosno = m = e.*
 hungry = 1SG.PC = COP.3SG
 ‘I am hungry.’
53. *jang = sun xe na-biδ?*
 fight = 3PL.PC that NEG-be.PST.3SG
 ‘Wasn’t it their fight?’ (P. *jang = ešān ke nabud?*)

Deixis

In Bavadi, as in many other languages in the region, there are distinctions between near deixis and far deixis demonstratives. These demonstratives include *i* “this,” *o* “that,” *yunov* “these,” and *honov* “those.” As in Persian, singular demonstrative adjectives qualify plural nouns. Demonstrative adjectives are accompanied by the optional discontinuous suffix *-o*, which takes the stress;⁴³ the latter is similar to the definite marker *-e*. Other typical markers of deixis are *ičo* “here,” *očo* “there,” *hamonov* “those very,” and *hamčo* “over there.”

⁴³ Cf. Anonby and Asadi, *Bakhtiari Studies*, 72.

54. *i ġorbat-ov avo-n bi.*
 this blacksmith-PL come.PST-3PL be.PST
 ‘These blacksmiths had come.’
55. *i hove-ho ġahp = e.*
 this house-DEM big = be.NPST.3SG
 ‘This house is big.’
56. *o zamān-o xo = am māšin na-biδ.*
 that time-DEM that = too car NEG-be.PST.3SG
 ‘At that time, there were no cars!’
57. *handā diye tā avon-e ičo.*
 as then till come.PST.3PL-PRF here
 ‘Right as they arrived, ...’ (P. *hamin ke be injā āmadand*)
58. *ze ičo raδ-im u arusi-o.*
 from here go.PST-1PL that wedding-DEM
 ‘We went from here to that wedding.’
59. *dav učo šuluġ = e.*
 playfield there crowded = COP.3SG
 ‘The playfield is crowded there.’
60. *hamonov ke fis i-kerd-en.*
 they COMP joy IPFV-do.PST-3PL
 ‘Those very people who were rejoicing.’
61. *hey hamčo ġelopel i-xard-im.*
 PROG over_there wriggling IPFV-eat.PST-1PL
 ‘We were wriggling around.’

Morphosyntax: verb phrase

This section explores the morphological and syntactic features that define the verb phrase, focusing on the stems and affixes in constructing various forms. We also examine the formation and use of different tenses, progressives, and the stative verbs. Additionally, this section explores how optative and modal verbs are constructed and employed within the verb phrase.

Stems

There are two verb stems in Bavadi Bakhtiari: the non-past stem serving the present-future tense in both indicative and subjunctive moods, and the past stem, which is employed in all past tenses. The following is an example: *e-n-om* (IPFV-put.NPST-1SG) ‘I place’; *nehāδ-om* (put.PST-1SG) ‘I placed.’

Affixes

The imperfective marker is the prefix *i-* or *-e*, as in *i-zeyδ* “he was hitting” and *e-zeyδ-en* “they were hitting.” The subjunctive *be-* applies to the imperative, *be-zen* “hit!”; subjunctive, *be-zen-om* “I would hit”; and optative *be-zayδ-om* “may I hit.” It is superseded by the negative morpheme *nV-*. There are lexical prefixes, or preverbs, including *ver-/var-* and *der-*, as in *ver-ār-* “bring forth” and *der-ār-* “bring out.” Unlike Persian, the negative morpheme is followed by the preverbal element:

62. *ču ham ze men-e pā = s hani na-der-avod-e.*
 stick too from in-EZ leg = 3SG.PC still NEG-der-come.PST.3SG-PRF
 ‘The stick was still stuck in his leg.’

Personal endings are listed in Table 4. The third person singular ending is normally *-e* in present tenses and zero in past tenses.

Tenses

Table 5 summarizes the verb structures that occur in the data, offering an overview of the various prefixes, stems, and suffixes used across different tenses in Bavadi. This table outlines how specific morphological elements combine to form each tense, from the present indicative to the pluperfect subjunctive. For a more examples of these structures, including specific conjugations and variations, refer to the paradigms presented in Tables A1–A5 in the Appendix.

The present perfect is formed by attaching *-e* to the person marking on the past morpheme, as illustrated in examples 63 and 64. This present perfect ending carries the stress. In contrast to Persian, the suffix *-e* is added not only after the person marking but also after the pronominal clitics, as in example 65.

63. *ya-tarke-y biδ hālā do-tarke-y = s kerd-en-e.*
 one-stick-ADJZR be.PST now two-stick-ADJZR = 3SG.PC do.PST-3SG-PRF
 ‘It used to be a one-hit play but they now have changed it into a two-hit play.’
64. *yo gahp = mov zeyδ-e.*
 3SG.PROX leader = 1PL.PC hit.PST.3SG-PRF
 ‘This person has beaten up our leader!’
65. *tā avorden = es-e be qaleh*
 until come.PST.3PL = 3SG.PC-PRF to castle
 ‘As they took him to the settlement (lit. castle)’

Pluperfects are based on the past tense plus *bi*, the third person singular of “be” as shown in examples 66 and 67. This differs from the Persian pluperfect, which inflects the auxiliary “be,” as Bakhtiari marks the perfect stem and leaves the auxiliary uninflected. Pluperfect may also be expressed in the Persian form, with the past participle of the main verb and inflected past copulas as in example 68.

The perfect subjunctive employs the past participle of the main verb followed by the subjunctive forms of “be” as auxiliary.

Table 5. Verb Forms in Bavadi

	Prefix		Stem		Suffix		
Present indicative	<i>i-, e-</i>	+	pres. stem	+	ending		
Present subjunctive	<i>(be-)</i>	+	pres. stem	+	ending		
Optative	<i>be-</i>	+	past stem	+	ending		
Past			past stem	+	ending		
Imperfect	<i>i-, e-</i>	+	past stem	+	ending		
Present perfect			past stem	+	ending	+	-e
Pluperfect			past stem	+	ending	+	<i>bi</i>
Perfect subjunctive			PP	+	<i>bu-</i>	+	ending
Pluperfect subjunctive			PP	+	<i>biδ-</i>	+	ending

66. *xo = s* *avord* *bi.*
 self = 3SG.PC bring.PST.3SG was
 ‘He had brought [it] himself.’

67. *xeyli* *kotak* *xard-en* *bi.*
 very beating eat.PST-3PL was
 ‘They had been beaten very hard.’

68. *sar-e* *kursi* *nāδe* *biδ-en.*
 on-EZ korsi put.PP be.PST-3PL
 ‘They have been placed on the korsi (low table).’

69. *tā* *hālā* *vā* *resiδe* *bu-e.*
 till now must be.SUBJ-3SG arrive.PP
 ‘He must have arrived by now.’ (P. *bāyad reside bāšad*)

Progressives

The progressives are built with an auxiliary that appears before the imperfect form. The auxiliary is often (*h*)*ey*, *en*, or both. Occasionally, Persian forms with the auxiliary verb *dāštan* ‘to have’ are encountered in the data. Note that the imperfective prefix is omitted in examples 70 and 71.

70. *eney* *nov* *xor-e.*
 PROG bread eat.NPST.3SG
 ‘He is eating.’

71. *eney* *bin-om = es.*
 PROG see.NPST-1SG = 3SG.PC
 ‘I am seeing it.’

72. *xom = o* *ali* *en* *e-ri-m* *bāzār.*
 myself = and Ali PROG IPFV-go.NPST-1SG market
 ‘I am going to the market with Ali.’

73. *on ze bāzār i-y-ā-m.*
 PROG from market IPFV-EPEN-come.NPST-1SG
 'I am coming from the market.'
74. *ey sēv i-xor-e.*
 PROG apple IPFV-eat.NPST-3SG
 'He is eating apples.'
75. *hey hamčo ġelopel i-xard-im.*
 PROG over_there wriggling IPFV-eat.PST-1PL
 'We were wriggling around.'
76. *men dast-o-pā = sou, niyešt-im.*
 in hand-and-foot = 3PL.PC look.PST-1PL
 'We were looking at their stature.'
77. *dāsšt-om film e-dið-om.*
 have.PST-1SG film IPFV-see.PST-1SG
 'I was watching a movie.'

Stative verbs

Unlike dynamic verbs, which are used to form progressive constructions, stative verbs are typically expressed using *be*. The following examples illustrate this construction.

78. *be xav = e.*
 to sleep = is
 'He is sleeping.'
79. *be hove nešaste bið-en.*
 to house sit.PP be.PST-3PL
 'They were sitting at home.'

Optative

In the data, we were able to identify an optative form not documented elsewhere: *be-* + past stem + endings. See examples 80–82 and 87.

80. *ey.kāšš be-mord-i.*
 OPT SBJV-die.PST-2SG
 'I wish you were dead.' (P. *kāšš mi-mord-i!*)
81. *kāšš tarest-om parvāz be-kerd-om.*
 OPT can.PST.1SG flight SBJV-do.PST-1SG
 'I wish I could fly.' (P. *kāš mitavānestam parvāz kon-am*)

82. *kāški ke ye jur = i bi či mah be-zayδ-i.*
 OPT COMP one way = ADV was like moon SBJV-hit.PST-2SG
 ‘I wish that somehow you appeared like the moon.’⁴⁴

Another optative form in Bavadi is formed on the present stem + *ā* + ending + *bā*, the optative third person singular of “be” (cf. P. *bād*). In the data, this form occurs only in the negative and typically in the second person singular, e.g., *na-zan-ā-t bā* “may you not hit” or “I wish you didn’t hit,” but the morphology may be extended for other persons as well: 1sg. *na-zan-ā-m bā*, etc.⁴⁵ In the following sentence, copied from Persian, the optative mood is formally indistinct from the subjunctive:

83. *xodā bi-y-āmorz = es.*
 God SBJV-EPEN-bless.NPST.3SG = 3SG.PC
 ‘May God bless him.’ (P. *xodā biāmorzad = aš*)

Modal verbs

Major modals in Bavadi, which are usually conjugated without modal prefixes, are: *vāske*, *vā* “must”; *tar-* as in *tarest-* “can”; and *xo-* as in *xāst-* “want.” Modal verbs are followed by the subjunctive of the main verb. Note the subjunctive appear without the modal prefix *be-* in examples 85, 86, and 89–91.

84. *vāske/vā emruz be-ray-im doydor.*
 must today SBJV-go.NPST-1PL doctor
 ‘We must go to the doctor today.’
85. *tar-e Ø-bin-e = s.*
 can.NPST-3SG SBJV-see.NPST-3SG = 3SG.PC
 ‘She can see it.’
86. *tar-om qāli Ø-bahf-om.*
 can.NPST-1SG carpet SBJV-weave.NPST-1SG
 ‘I can weave carpets.’
87. *kāš tarest-om parvāz be-kerd-om.*
 OPT can.PST.1SG flight SBJV-do.PST-1SG
 ‘I wish I could fly.’ (P. *kāš mitavānestam parvāz konam*)

⁴⁴ This example is taken from Taheri-Ardali, Anonby, and Zaheri-Abdevand (1401/2023).

⁴⁵ Cf. the optative mood formed on the present stem + *ā* in Southern Lori: Shushtari, *van-h-ā-m* “may I be placed”; Dezfūli, *šaziē ger-ā-t* “may mourning seize you!”; and Bakhtiari *ne ven-ā-ī tīr* “may you not fire a shot” (MacKinnon, 2011). Persian has a comparative form only in the third person singular: *bād*, *konād*, *dārād*, *āmorzād*.

88. *xo-n* *si = s* *zine* *b-estov-en.*
 want.NPST-3PL for = 3SG.PC wife SBJV-get.NPST-3PL
 ‘They want to find a wife for him.’
89. *e-xo-m* *Ø-ro-m* *ko* *be šekāl-e* *pāzen.*
 IPFV-want.NPST.1SG SBJV-go.NPST-1SG mountain to hunting-EZ ibex
 ‘I want to go to the mountain to hunt an ibex.’
90. *ayāz* *del = es* *Ø-xās* *sovār-e* *asb* *buu-e.*
 Ayāz heart = 3SG.PC SBJV-want.PST.3SG rider-EZ horse be.SBJV-3SG
 ‘Ayaz wants to mount a horse.’ (P. A. *del-aš mixwāst*)
91. *(e-)xāst-en* *Ø-r-en,* *pašimun vāvið-en* *var-gašt-en.*
 (IPFV-)want.PST-3PL SBJV-go.NPST.3PL regretful become.PST-3PL PVB-turn.PST-3PL
 ‘They wanted to go but they regretted it and returned.’ (P. (mi)xāstand
beravand, pašimān šodand bargāstand)

Texts

Here, we present three of the oral texts collected in the course of our research on Bavadi Bakhtiari. For the first portion of each text, we provide a window into an array of its linguistic structures through full interlinear glossing. In the interest of space, the remainder of the texts are presented in a parallel Bakhtiari-English format.

Ākalbali⁴⁶ “Ākalbali man’s name”

The name Ākalbali “man’s name” was recorded in Fāni Abād. The speakers are Ardeshir Parvizi, age forty-nine, who serves as the main storyteller (Speaker A), Bizhan Parvizi, age fifty-six (Speaker B), and Nowzar Farhādi, age forty-seven (Speaker C), all from the Bavadi community. The narrative describes a memory from approximately forty years previous, involving a few local villagers and a member of the literacy corps sent to educate the population. The main speaker, Ardeshir Parvizi, was an eyewitness to the event.

Speaker A:

- xāter*⁴⁷ *az* *lotf* *ni-bi* *di* *ya* *xātere-yi*
 memory from kindness NEG-be.PST.3SG else one memory-INDEF
- ze* *merhum* *ākalbali = yo* *āḡā = m* *abde* *bo-go-m.*
 from deceased Ākalbali = and uncle = 1SG.PC Abde SBJV-say.NPST-1SG
 ‘It is fitting (lit. not empty of kindness) to share a memory from the late Ākalbali and my paternal uncle Abdeh.’

⁴⁶ The name Ākalbali is fixed structure composed of a personal name *kalbali* and the respectful vocative epithet *ā*.

⁴⁷ Likely a reconfiguration of the Persian phrase *xāli az lotf nist* “it is not uninteresting.”

Speaker B:

jang = sun *xe*⁴⁸ *na-biδ?*
 fight = 3PL.PC that NEG-be.PST.3SG
 ‘Is it their fight that you’re going to talk about?’ (lit. ‘Wasn’t it their fight?’)

Speaker A:

jang = sun *bi*, *etefāgan!*
 fight = 3PL.PC be.PST.3SG coincidentally
 ‘As a matter of fact, it was their fight!’

Speaker B:

xā!
 INTJ
 ‘Aha!’

Speaker A:

mā *bače* *biδ-im* *čand-e* *Resul*⁴⁹.
 we child be.PST-1PL equal-EZ Resul
 ‘We were just kids, the same age as Rasul.’

ya *sepāh-dāneš* *dāšt-im* *esm = es* *jahfari* *bi*.
 one literacy.corps have.PST-1PL name = 3SG.PC Jahfari be.PST.3SG
 ‘We had a member of literacy corps⁵⁰ whose surname was Jafari.’

Speaker C:

yo *xātere* *gašang-i = ya*.
 3SG.PROX memory pretty-INDEF = COP.3SG
 ‘That’s a nice memory!’

Speaker A:

yo, *ey* *xoḏā*, *na-u-m* *māl-e* *širāz* *bi*
 3SG.PROX O God NEG-know.NPST-1SG from-EZ Shirāz be.PST.3SG

⁴⁸ *xe* here is equivalent to P. *ke*, an emphatic marker. They might be cognate.

⁴⁹ The speaker points to his seven-year-old son.

⁵⁰ *Sepāh-e dāneš* “literary corps” was a massive educational undertaking initiated in 1963 in the framework of Iran’s White Revolution (1963–79). See: <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/literacy-corps-1>.

yā esvāhān
or Esvāhān

‘This... my God, I don’t know if he was from Shiraz, or Isfahan.’

yo avoδ-e be čelgerd.
3SG.PROX come.PST.3SG-PRF to Chelgerd
‘He had come to Chelgerd.’

o zamān-o xo = am māšin na-biδ.
that time-DEM that = too car NEG-be.PST.3SG
‘At that time, there were no cars!’

avo rah ham baste bi.
come.PST.3SG way too closed be.PST.3SG
‘He could finally arrive although the roads were closed.’ (lit. He came and the roads were also closed.).

barf = am xe mes-e hālā n-iy-zeyδ.
snow-too well like-EZ now NEG-IPFV-hit.PST.3SG
‘The snowfall was not [insignificant] like nowadays.’

barf = am i-y-avo tā be kunjār⁵¹.
snow-too IPFV-EPEN-come.PST.3SG till to waist
‘It would snow as high as to the waist!’

sahđi kerden ke — āğā⁵² — ya sepāh-dāneš ze
fāniābā iyā do ruz se ruz hon men čelgerd.

A message was sent that – sir – a mem-
ber of literacy corps from⁵³ Fāni Ābād
would come and he had now been (*hon*)
in Chelgerd for two or three days.

Speaker B: biyoyñ barin=es!

Come and take him!

Speaker A: biyoyñ barin=es.

Come and take him.

sepāh-dāneš=am ālborde⁵⁴ ya lav-ve oštori
dāšt.

The literacy corps member had camel-like
lips.

(Continued)

⁵¹ The form *kunjār*, with the component *kun* “buttocks,” is synonymous with *domjār*, literally meaning where the tail grows.

⁵² The vocative interjection *āğā* “sir” is employed habitually as a rhetorical technique to keep the attention of the audience.

⁵³ One expects the corps member to have come to Fāni Ābād, not from Fāni Ābād.

⁵⁴ The compound *āl-borde* literally means “jinn-taken.” It refers to a person who has no value, it would be better to be robbed by a jinn.

(Continued.)

ey xoḏā! navom āšeg-e turuši biḏ yā...

Speaker C: *av ġārč!*⁵⁵

Speaker A: *silov arda!*

Speaker C: *av ġārč!*

Speaker A: *di navm, na, ke xo=s avord bi.*

Speaker C: *hā – bale!*

Speaker A: *kē ere vānā=s, kē ere vānā=s...*

*xoḏā biyāmorze ā teymur=o hami ā nāser
hāzerati eren...⁵⁶ derg⁵⁷ basten raen vānā=s.*

*tā avorden=es-e⁵⁸ be qaleh yonov zi avon
avone be hami sahrā gandava.*

šav gerē=sou.

*handā diye tā avone ičo, zemesou xe hamo
čār=o panj aftav daraḏ.*

handā tāriki ovi.

*xā, qaleh kand=o rahḏ=o avon=o āġā=m
abde ham vā čerāturi avoḏ.*

be hove nešaste biḏen.

*hey pursid ogoḏ, hey sepāh-dāneš! avom
murdī,⁵⁹ avom...*

Speaker C: *hālu sepoyi!*

Speaker A: *hālu sepoyi, ha! hālu sepoyi yo če
dang=e?*

avom bačiyal morden...

avom felān kerden...

xo=s merhum ākelbali jar=sou vufte

Speaker B: *sar-e sepoyi.*

Speaker A: *sar-e sepoyi.*

My God! I don't know if he loved pickles or ...

Mushroom soup!

Date sap and tahini!

Mushroom soup!

I don't know, no, whatever he had brought with him.

I see! Yes!

Who would go to accompany him, who would go to accompany him ...

The late Ā Teymur, God bless him, and Ā Nāser, who was available, they went and wore special footwear to go to accompany him.

As they took him to the settlement (lit. castle), they came early to the field of Gandāb.

The night caught them.

As they arrived here... it was winter, and the sun set at four or five [o'clock].

Right then, it became dark.

Well, the people came out, they went and arrived, and my paternal uncle Abdeh arrived with a lantern, too.

They were sitting at home.

He kept asking and saying "Hey, literacy corps member! – what if you die, what if..."

Maternal uncle literacy corps member!

Maternal uncle literacy corps member, yes, uncle literacy corps member, what the hell have you done?

What if the kids died ...

What if such and such ...

He himself [and] the late Ākalbali started fighting with each other.

Because of the literacy corps member.

Because of the literacy corps member.

(Continued)

⁵⁵ The literal meaning of *av ġārč* is "mushroom water," use single quotes for all glosses, including literal glosses (in sentence just above, too) – a common food in Kuhrang made of wild mushrooms.

⁵⁶ An inaudible uttering that sounds something like a slip of the tongue.

⁵⁷ A kind of ski made of goat horn or wood to avoid sinking into the snow.

⁵⁸ P. *āvardeand-aš*.

⁵⁹ P. *āmādam mordi* or *gereftam mordi* "let's assume you would die."

(Continued.)

harf ez ho harf ez yo gerjom kerdn.

*hālā imā ham čand-e resul hey hamčo ġelopel
ixardim men dass-e-pā=sou, niyeštīm.*

ketāvā teymur=am men-e ya qavloq-ē biđen.

u qeđim iġođen qavloq.

Speaker B: *hā!*

Speaker C: *sar kursi*

Speaker A: *sar-e kursi nāde biđen.*

*xā, hamisako ke āġā=m abde gerjom kerdn si
bāvā=m ākelbeli...*

*bāvā=m ākelbeli ... be qavloq ... be ketava.
panjom=am biđen.*

*vand zeyd men-e sēne āġā=m abde vo
čerāturi kur oviy=o eškas.*

*merhum bišaraf kinēd⁶¹ ke vuy ākelbali be
bard-e sar-e kursi⁶² kor-e ām fātali-ne kušti.*

go, na šarul; be panš-tan-e āle abā, teymur bi.

go, be panš-tan-e āl-e abā, teymur zeym=es.

Speaker B: *y=am xātere jālev-i bil*

That one said something, this one said something else (lit. word from that one, word from this one) and they quarreled.

So, I (lit. we) was the same age as Rasul and I was wriggling around and watching.

Teymur's books were in a hand-made fabric bag.

In the past, they used to call it a *qavloq*.

Yes!

On a *korsi*.⁶⁰

They had placed [them] on the *korsi*.

Well, as my paternal uncle Abdeh was prepared for a fight with Ākalbali ...

My grandfather Ākalbali ... to the *qavloq* ... to the books, they were for the fifth grade.

He threw them and hit the chest of my paternal uncle Abdeh and the lantern went out and broke.

That late Bisharaf⁶³ screamed and said, "Hey, Ākalbali, you've killed the son of my paternal uncle Fath-Ali with the stone on the *korsi*."

He said, "No, Sharaf,⁶⁴ I swear to the Five Holy ones it was Teymur."

He said, "I swear to the Five Holy ones, I hit him with Teymur's possessions."⁶⁵

What an interesting memory!

Chubāzi "stick-play"

Chubāzi "stick-play" was recorded in Fāni Ābād. The speakers are Kurosh Farhādi as the main storyteller, age forty-seven (Speaker A), Bizhan Parvizi, age fifty-six (Speaker B), Nowzar Farhādi, age forty-seven (Speaker C), and Ardeshir Parvizi, age forty-nine (Speaker D). This text is a lively exchange about an incident that took place at a wedding ceremony about twenty years previous.

Chubāzi, literally "stick-play," is a traditional game played by Bakhtiari people at wedding ceremonies. A struggle plays out between two men: an attacker who holds a short stick (*tarke*) and a defender who holds a long, thick stick (*delak*), one-and-a-half meters long. The defender protects his legs and feet using only the long stick. Before any attack, the players

⁶⁰ *Korsi* is a wooden frame with a brazier underneath and a huge quilt tossed over it. On each of the four sides of the *korsi*, one or two people crawl under the quilt. *Korsi* used to be the primary means of keeping warm in wintertime.

⁶¹ Apparently *kinēd* "scream."

⁶² *Bard-e sar-e kursi* "the stone on the top of *korsi*" is a heavy stone placed on the blanket over the *korsi* to keep it fixed.

⁶³ Originally, the name *bibi šaraf*, with the respectful epithet *bibi*, which is common before women's names.

⁶⁴ *Šarul* is a diminutive of the male name *šaraf*, which literally means "dignity, honor."

⁶⁵ He means that he hit Abdeh with Teymur's books.

dance to the music of the drum (*dohol*) and trumpet (*karnā*). The game was traditionally a one-hit play, that is, the hitter had the chance to hit the opponent only once, but nowadays the hitter is usually allowed to attack twice in a row.

Speaker A:

āgā, mā = am ye xātere-yi ze bištar ze arusi = yo čubāzi
 sir we = too one memory-INDEF from more from wedding = and stick.play

gođ-in, m = am ye xātere-yi ze čubāzi e-go-m.
 say.PST-2PL I = too one memory-INDEF from stick.play IPFV-say.NPST-1SG
 ‘Allow me to tell a memory about stick-play, as you suggested, more about weddings and stick-play.’

Speaker B:

befarmā.
 command!
 ‘Go ahead!’

Speaker A:

mā = am hayġat donbāl dav čubāzi xeyli ziyāđ biđ-im.
 we = too truth pursuit playfield stick.play very much be.PST-1PL
 ‘We used to spend a lot of time out on the stick-play field.’

ya daste-yi biđ-im dah-bis nafar.
 one group-INDEF be.PST-1PL ten-twenty person
 ‘We were a group of ten or twenty people.’

Speaker C:

albat, mohandes! men-e kalām = et!
 but engineer in-EZ talk = 2SG.PC
 ‘But, engineer! Sorry to interrupt you!’

Speaker B:

jāheli i-kerd-ē!
 youth IPFV-do.PST-2SG
 ‘You were just acting your young age!’

na na na! men-e kalām-e kal kureš,
 No no no in-INDEF talk-EZ Kal Kuresh
 ‘No, no, no! Sorry to stop Kal⁶⁶ Kurosh’s talk,

pay = šiš nafar biδ-im
 five = six person be.PST-1PL
 but we were five or six people.’
ardešēr feğat zērdelak-i⁶⁷ i-zey.
 Ardeshir only under.delak-ADJZR IPFV-hit.PST.3SG
 ‘Ardeshir consistently hit the defender under the longer stick.’

Speaker C:

jān-e Haji⁶⁸ harkē delak = e dēr i-gerēδ
 life-EZ haji anyone delak = OBJ late IPFV-get.PST.3SG
ardešēr = e i-fešnāy-im be dav zērdelaki
 Ardeshir = OBJ IPFV-send.PST-1PL to playfield zirdelaki
do tek = s = e⁶⁹ i-zeyδ.
 two calf = 3SG.PC = OBJ IPFV-hit.PST.3SG
 ‘I swear on Haji’s life, anyone who would seize the *delak* with delays, we would send Ardeshir to the playfield and he would hit his (the opponent’s) two calves from under the *delak*.’
mo feğat sar-e panje i-zeyδ-om
 I only on-EZ toe IPFV-hit.PST-1SG
 ‘As for me, I only would hit on the toes.’

Speaker B: uuuf

Speaker C: *har-ke ze sar-e delak irah, yo*
izeyδ=es čon yo čel-ā=ne ekašēδ.

harčē ke irahδi ağab, dast=e irason be=t.

to-merey!⁷⁰ har kel!

Ouch!

Anyone who would move backwards, this person would hit him because this person could stretch out his hands.

Whatever you moved backwards, he reached the hands to you.

You bet! [He would do that to] anyone!

(Continued)

⁶⁶ Kal is a short form of *karbalāi*, an epithet given to a person who has visited the Mesopotamian city of Karbala on pilgrimage.

⁶⁷ The action known as *zirdeklaki* is a technique in which the attacker hits the defender’s feet from under the longer stick.

⁶⁸ An epithet given to a person who has visited Mecca for pilgrimage.

⁶⁹ When *tarke* hits both of the defender’s calves successfully, it is considered a big achievement for the hitter.

⁷⁰ An endearing expression corresponding to P. to *bemiri*, which means, loosely, “swear to your death.”

⁷¹ Inaudible utterance.

⁷² Inaudible utterance.

⁷³ An old village (called Mahdieh today), which is now part of the city Shahr-e Kord.

(Continued.)

zebiyollā ham ya nāšādi bi ke asan čap-e-rās
hēč das-ā=s nađāšten.

čār=payn nafar=mov hame=s [u]ābā yak.

hālā eđāme xātere=t=e bego!
i jaryān yo biđ ke ...⁷¹ erahđim ābā yak.

Speaker A: arusi dođar-e biyāmorzi ahmađ
be sohrko biđ.

Speaker B: ahmađ āgā aybar.

Speaker C: uuu... bale bale — bālipur

Speaker A: o učo bi tā zohr-ē biđ.

Speaker B: si kē?

Speaker A: si kor ramezov.

Speaker C: dor gap=es.

Speaker B: xo, bale, bale.

Speaker A: dor gap=es.

āgā, mā rađim u arusiyo=ne rađim=o ...⁷²
đav čubāzi tamum voviđ=o ya arusi kor-e
šāhmorād-e alifat ham be zāniyov biđ.

xom=o fēruz=am ze ičo rađim u arusi-yo.

gom, hālā biyov rim zāniyun.
dav učo šuluğ=e;
yo fāe nāre si imā.

berim učo zaniyov.

Speaker B: fēruz āgā hādi

Speaker A: fēruz ā hādi.

učo dav ġorbatun biđ=o baxtiyāriyā.

xeyli ham šuluğ biđ.

bāvar ko, ya meyđuv-ē gerēden bi ke punsađ
nafar dāv-e havr-e gerē bi dāv-e čubāzi.

ġorbatov vo baxtiyāriyā.
āgāl mā ye kamē dēr resiđim.

Zabihollāh was such a cunning [lit. naughty] that he could use his left or right hand with equal dexterity.

We four or five people have been always together.

Now, go ahead and continue the memory.

This was the story – when we went around together.

It was the wedding of the late Ahmad's daughter in Sorkh Kuh.

Ahmad, [the son] of Aqā Akbar.

Oh... yes, yes – Bālipur [by surname].

And it was there – until noon it was.

For whom?

For the son of Ramezān.

[And] Jis [Ahmad Bālipur's] eldest daughter [was the bride].

Okay, yes, yes.

His eldest daughter.

Sir, we went to that wedding and the stick-play games were finished and there was also the wedding ceremony of the son of Shāhmorād [the son] of Ali-Fath in Zāniān.⁷³

Myself and Firuz went from here to that wedding.

I said: "It is time to go to Zāniān together."

The playfield is crowded there.

This one here has no benefit for us [i.e., it is not as exciting as the one in Zāniān].

Let's go there to Zāniān.

Firuz, [the son of] Aqā Hādi.

Firuz, [the son of] Ā Hādi.

That place is the playfield between blacksmiths and the Bakhtiari people.

It was very crowded.

Believe me or not, they organized a circle with 500 people around the stick-play playfield.

The blacksmiths and the Bakhtiari people.

We arrived a little bit late.

(Continued)

⁷⁴ Hat "trap."

⁷⁵ The speaker stopped here and changed the subject.

(Continued.)

zebiyollā=vo zamov=o ya do-se-tā di ez ham
hazerāt xomun raen bi be dav.

āgāl — i ġorbatov avon bi hatt⁷⁴=esun kerdn
bi davr-e yak.

hēč fāde ham be-hāl=sun neδ[āšt].
ye ču ho xard ye ču yo zeyδ=o hič fāde neδāšt.

mā ya⁷⁵ kuče hazerāt di di xe yekami sarvālāy
biδ.

pā beğal biδ.
yonov ze hamo duvov ke imā-ne di den

Speaker B: xošhāli kerdn!

Speaker A: xošhāli kerd!

Speaker B: beškan ezeyden.⁷⁶

Speaker A: zebiyollā=am itovri ke[rd] zitarē
beras.

yani xeyli kotak xarden bi.
āgā — hālā ay jānev-e xoδā ar harēē ke bi,
xoδā xās mā=ne rusefiδ kone.⁷⁷

tā resiδom — hēč nafas=am nazeyδom —

tā resiδom, delak=e esteyδom.

Speaker B: bārikallā! ze kē esteydi?

Speaker A: ze zebiyollā —
ze zebiyollā delak=e esteyδom.

ya nāser ġorbat bi.
avalan sevilā=s tā hamičo.

Speaker B: xo heδ=es alān.

Speaker A: sevilā=s tā hamičo

Speaker B: heδ=es, nāser ġorbat, bini nāser
ġorbat, heδ=es, bale!

Zabihollāh and Zamān and a few others from our own community [Bakhtiari people] had gone to the playfield.

The blacksmiths put them under pressure [lit. had come and encircled them altogether].

There was no solution for them, either.

That one received a stick and this one struck a stick but there was no benefit [for the Bakhtiari side].

You already saw the alley in Zāniān which is a little steep.

The footstep was alongside the alley.

These people who saw us there from the down part [i.e., as they saw us from a long distance while they were desperate in the competition].

They rejoiced.

Rejoiced!

They have been on cloud nine!

Zabihollāh did like this (the speaker gestures), [meaning] come fast!

Meaning, they had been beaten very hard.

I don't know if it was from God or whatever it was, God wanted to make us feel proud.

As soon as I arrived – without a second thought [lit. I didn't breathe at all] –

as soon as I arrived, I grabbed the *delak*.

Bravo! From whom did you take [it]?

From Zabihollāh;

I grabbed the *delak* from Zabihollāh.

There was a certain Nāser the blacksmith.

Firstly, his moustache – up to here!

Yes, he is still around.

His moustache – up to here

He still exists, Nāser the blacksmiths, like [lit. you may see] Nāser the blacksmith, yes, he is around.

(Continued)

⁷⁶ Literally, “they were snapping their fingers,” showing extreme happiness.

⁷⁷ Literally, “God wanted to make us white-faced,” meaning “exonerated, acquitted.”

⁷⁸ The play was traditionally a one-hit play, meaning the hitter had the chance to hit the opponent only once, but nowadays the hitter has the chance to attack twice in a row.

(Continued.)

Speaker A: *āgāl jeḡeliyal=e koš.*

Speaker B: *semsāl=es=am bālā biδ.*

Speaker A: *hā — hav ker[d] si=m ču=s=e gerēm.*

ya-tarkey biδ hālā do-tarkey=s kerdene.⁷⁸

hav kerd ču=s=e gerēm.

*dovāre ču=s der xardom mo ya ču xāstom
jomnom xeyli der=es dādom.*

dast=am niδā ke zanom=es.

Speaker C: *xo čubāz biδ.*

Speaker A: *rahm zēr dast=es hamitovri hav
kerdom diδom ya tarke šamm-i biδ dast=om.*

*hamitovri kerdom hav kerdom be čap zeyyom
zēr zovi=s.*

piyā šelāl ovi men dav.

Speaker B: *paaa'al*

Speaker A: *xoδa sar šāhed=e!*

ču ham ze men-e pā=s hani naderavoδe.

ču gir ker[d]e men-e ravrav-e pā=s.

Speaker C: *nešast!*

vo kešēm=es be ser.

Speaker D: *gire dašt — vaste men šavlār=es*

Speaker A: *na, narm ke biδ.*

āxe zey men-e ravrav=es=e ke zeydom.

*ze ravrav=es ke zeydom, diym hamitovrey
diye ču mand.*

Speaker C: *nešast.*

Speaker A: *nešast.*

Speaker D: *čaft=es jam ovi.*

Speaker A: *nešast sar-e ču.*

ma=m kašim=es be ser men-e hamo hākāho.

He beat [lit. killed] all the guys hard.

He was at an advanced age.

Yeah, he yelled at me to hit me
but I defended successfully [lit. I
seized/grabbed his stick].

It used to be a one-hit play but they now
have changed it into a two-hit play.

He yelled at me to hit me but I defended
successfully.

Again, I turned around and I was looking
for a chance to hit him with the stick, I
made him turn around repeatedly.

He didn't allow me to hit him.

Well, he was an [adept] stick-play player.

I tried hitting him from under his arm, I
yelled at him and saw that a flexible stick
[lit. candle-like] was in my hand.

I did so, yelled at him and hit under his
knee to the left side.

The man fell exhausted on the playfield
[the ground].

Wow!

God is witness!

The stick was still in his leg.

The stick stuck in his ligaments.

It sat!

I pulled him down to the ground.

It had knots, [and the knots] stuck in his
trousers.

No, it [the stick] was soft.

As I hit his ligaments.

As I hit his ligaments, I saw that the stick
was left there – it was stuck.

It sat!

It sat!

His knee-joint was folded.

He sat on the stick.

I dragged him while skidding in the dusts
[dusts right there].

(Continued)

(Continued.)

*āgā haji gāle zeyden⁷⁹ jegeleyal har ġorbat-e
xoḏā miḏov rah be ya volāt.*

xoḏā sar-e šāheḏ=e rah be ya volāt.

*bahḏ, avon be sahrā sar kučehā xāsten mone
zanen.*

*sar kučehā xāsten mone zanen ke — āgā — yo
navās ke nāser=e bezane.⁸⁰*

Speaker B: *oh!*

yo si imā xeyli tamom vovi!

Speaker B: *yo gahp=mov zeyḏe.*

Speaker A: *ya jegeleyi avoḏe nāsere zeyḏe
xeyli si imā tamom vovi.*

zamun rah tey=sou.

go hamo ke nāser=e zeyḏe pesarāmu mo=ne.

*xoḏā-vakili zaniyun konom ya kās-e xin-ē aya
kesi čap be=s beniyare.*

Speaker B: *zamov-e avval⁸¹ na zamov-e
hālā.*

Speaker A: *zamov-e avval!*

*tumerey, di-m ze rās xos=ov har kas rah si ya
volāt.*

Aqā Haji, the guys shouted so that each blacksmith, swear to God, left the field and went away to a place [as they felt embarrassed].

God be the witness; they went away to a place.

Then, they came outside right at the entrance to the alleys to hit me.

They wanted to hit me right at the entrance to the alleys, saying you shouldn't have hit the honorable Nāser!

Oh!

It was a big shame for us! (*barāyemān* [*gerān*] *tamām shod*)

This person has beat our leader!

A young guy has come and beat Nāser, it is a big shame for us!

Zamān went to them.

He said to them the guy who hit Nāser is my cousin.

God as my witness, Zaniān will be in blood if someone gives him a dirty look.

The first Zamān not the one you see now.

The first Zamān!

I tell you; I saw everyone went to his own way to his place [lit. swear to your death, from their own side, I saw everyone went to a village].

Kačal o pāḏešāh “The bald vizier and the king”

Kačal o pāḏešāh “The bald vizier and the king” was recorded in Nasir Ābād. The storyteller is Jahān Afruz Nasiri, age sixty. This text is a fairy tale that the storyteller heard as a child from her parents.⁸² In this text, the storyteller delivers a monologue, so there are no exchanges between speakers.

ya kačal-i bi ya paḏešāh-i ham bi.
one bald-INDEF be.PST.3SG one king-INDEF too be.PST.3SG
‘There was a bald [vizier] and there was a king, too.’

pāḏešā hey be vezir o-go rav
king PROG to vizier IPFV-say.PST.3SG IMPV.go.NPST.2SG

⁷⁹ This is a sign of victory in a competition.

⁸⁰ For P. *ke mabādā nāser-rā bezanad*.

⁸¹ In other words, Zaman was strong at that time, but is not as strong now.

⁸² Sound files for each of the three texts are available at: <https://doi.org/10.5683/SP2/FVLDLZ>.

be šekāl.

to hunting

‘The king kept telling the vizier to go hunting.’

<i>ya</i>	<i>pāzen-ē</i>	<i>be-zen</i>	<i>bi-y-ār</i>
one	ibex-INDEF	IMPV-hit.NPST.2SG	IMPV-EPEN-bring.NPST.2SG

be-δe = mov.

IMPV-give.NPST.2SG = 1PL.PC

‘Hunt an ibex and bring and give [it] to us.’

ammā uā dovar = es rafiġ bi.

but with daughter = 3SG.PC friend be.PST.3SG

‘But, [the vezier] was friends with his [the king’s] daughter.’

xās xo = s.

want.PST.3SG self = 3SG.PC

‘He wanted [her] for himself.’

<i>hey</i>	<i>baδ = es</i>	<i>i-y-avo</i>	<i>del = es</i>	<i>nē-xās</i>
ADV	bad = 3SG.PC	IPFV-EPEN-come.PST.3SG	heart = 3SG.PC	NEG-want.PST.3SG

ke vezir dovar = es = e xo.

COMP vizier daughter = 3SG.PC = OBJ want.NPST.3SG

‘[The king] was feeling badly and he didn’t want the vizier to love his daughter.’

<i>go</i>	<i>mo</i>	<i>pāδešā = m</i>	<i>pa</i>	<i>vezir</i>	<i>i-y-ā</i>
say.PST.3SG	I	king = COP.1SG	then	vizier	IPFV-EPEN-come.NPST.3SG

<i>dovar</i>	<i>mo = ne</i>	<i>xo</i>
daughter	me = OBJ	want.NPST.3SG

‘He said: I am king, why the vizier should love my daughter!’

<i>ya</i>	<i>nafar</i>	<i>fešnā</i>	<i>go</i>	<i>raυ</i>	<i>be</i>
one	person	send.PST.3SG	say.PST.3SG	go.NPST-2SG	to

<i>vezir</i>	<i>be-go</i>	<i>bi-y-av</i>	<i>kār = es</i>
vizier	IMPV-say.NPST	IMPV-EPEN-come.NPST-2SG	task = 3SG.PC

dār-om.

have.NPST-1SG

‘He sent someone and told him to tell the vizier that I have a task for him to do.’

isa ke avo go ho če = t = e.
 then COMP come.PST.3SG say.PST.3SG INTJ what = 2SG.PC = COP.3SG
 ‘Then as he arrived, [the vizier] said: So what do you want?’

go rav šir-e šēr be pust-e
 say.PST.3SG go.NPST-2SG milk-EZ lion to skin-EZ

šēr be kaδ-e šēr bi-y-ār
 lion to shoulder-EZ lion IMPV-EPEN-bring.NPST-2SG

be-δ = om.

IMPV-give.NPST-2SG = 1SG.PC

‘[The king] said: Go and fetch me lion milk inside lion skin on lion shoulder.’

go, hey xoδā, mo r-om ze kōje
 say.PST.3SG ADV god I go.NPST-1SG from where

šir-e = vo šēr-e = vo pust-e šēr be-jur-om
 milk-EPEN = and lion-EPEN = and skin-EZ lion SBJV-find.NPST-1SG

bi-y-ār-om.

SBJV-EPEN-bring.NPST-1SG

‘[The vezier] said: “O God, from where can I go, find and bring milk, a lion and the skin of a lion?”

rah rah beyn-e rah ke rah ya
 go.PST.3SG go.PST.3SG middle-EZ way COMP go.PST.3SG one

malek-e xeyr-i ya ensān-i var-bi men ri = s.
 angel-EZ good-INDEF one human-INDEF PRV-was in face = 3SG.PC
 ‘He went and went and, on the way, as he was going away a good angel [in shape of] a human being came toward him suddenly.’

go hey javān xeyf = om ze javāni = t
 say.PST.3SG ADV youth pity = 1SG.PC from youth = 2SG.PC

xo-y r-i kučono?
 want.NPST-2SG go.SBJV.NPST-2SG where

‘[The angel] said: Hey you the great young guy, where are you going?’

*go, valā pādešā be=m go, rav šir-e šēr be
pust-e šēr be kaδ-e šēr biyār beδ=om.*

*go, yo haf sāl=e šā šērov ya hār-e sēste⁸³-y
rahδe be pā=s bāδ-e bu kerde.*

*ar rehδi hār=es=e kašiδi, beδuv=et bu⁸⁴ ke
ya kār-i si=t kone.*

rah sar sēste ke rasi ya maqāš-i ham dā=s.

go, ri hār=es=e keši, hēč netersi.

hār=e kaši, rah sar-e sēste.

*hālā ke rah sar-e sēste, gale=vo nare=vo dare
vahs vā rah ze var hēn=o čerk=o čalav.*

xo=ne loftelēs ker[d], vorostā.

*go, hm bu yā.
bu ādomzād iyā,
jend-e parizād iyā.
ar goy, goy,⁸⁶ ani [i]xorom=et.*

go, na dard=et zey men jov=om, mon=om.

*go, biyav be lam.
hālā ke avo be lam, go če xāsti dāri? če dard-i
dāri?*

*go, volā pāešā be=m go, šir-e šēr be kaδ-e
šēr be pust-e šēr iyāri dim; ani navordi ham
sar=t=e borom.*

He said: "Well, the king told me: 'Fetch me the milk of lions inside the skin of a lion and on the shoulder of a lion.'"

[The angel] said: "It is seven years that the king of lions has a thorn of hawthorn in his foot which is infected.

If you go and pull his thorn, you will make sure that he [the lion] will be helpful to you."

[The vizier] went and arrived at the hawthorn tree, the angel gave him tongs, too.

[The angel] said: "You go and pull his thorn and don't feel scared at all."

He [the vizier] pulled the thorn and climbed up the hawthorn [the vizier was scared].

As he climbed up the hawthorn, pus and blood and many other things ran out of the injury and spread over the whole surrounding area.⁸⁵

He [the lion] made himself ready and stood up.

He [the lion] said: "Hmm, it smells.

The smell of human is coming

– [of] jinn and fairies are coming.

If you [the vizier] tell, that will be fine; if not, I will eat you!"

He [the vizier] said: "No – I beg you⁸⁷ – it's me."

He [the lion] said: "Come down!"

As he came down, [the lion] said: "What is your request, what is your problem [pain]?"

He [the vizier] said: "the truth is that the king told me to fetch him the milk of lions inside the skin of a lion and on the shoulder of a lion, otherwise, I would cut off your head."

(Continued)

⁸³ *Sēste* "hawthorn" corresponds to P. *kevij, zālzālak*.

⁸⁴ P. *dāneste bāš!*

⁸⁵ The words *gale=vo nare=vo dare* mean "the high lands and low lands and valleys" (in a rhythmic fashion). In fact, this is an exaggeration to show the amount of "pus and blood."

⁸⁶ The word *goy* "that you say" is repeated here with different intonation. The first *goy* ends with a rising and the second one ends with a falling intonation. Cf. P. *agar gofti gofti* "if you say [it], that's fine."

⁸⁷ Literally, "your pain in my soul."

(Continued.)

*go, ri sar-e hamo deraxto zani vā mazg ke šāh
šērov mord.*

go, ey bov=m=ey⁸⁸ ke šāh šērov mord.

go, harki=sun fis kerd si=m igoy.

harki=sun zey vāmazg=am, si=m igoy.

go xeyli xo.

rah zey vāmazg, ke šāh šērov mord.

ya čārtā=sun dindā hey ġavz ikerd.

hey ġavz kerd.

avo be lam si=s.

sar yeki ze hamenun buri pust=es=am kand.

hamonun ke fis ikerden.

pāy hame=ne doδ.⁸⁹

hame=ne doδ, por pust-e šēr kerd, dā be vezir.

baδ rah go si pādešā.

*kaδ-e yek=sun go, hami sako eri dovo hove
pāšā bennāl si=s ke betarsi.*

yam ze hamčo ke resi nāli si pādešā.

*go, riyen be felān-i — kor dālu — bogoy
šēr=e vel kon.*

go, na, hēz iyāri si=s, bal xov tarse.

rah xig-e širi=ne toyni⁹⁰ piš=es.

He [the lion] said: “You will climb up that very tree and grieve [lit. would hit on the brain hard] that the king of lions has died.”

He [the vizier] said: “O my lord, the king of lions has died.”

He [the lion] said: “Just tell me anyone of them who was jubilant.

Tell me also about any one of them who grieves.”

He [the vizier] said: “Fine!”

He went and grieved [lit. hit on the brain] that the king of lions died.

A few [lit. four] of them [lions] became happy at the end.

He [i.e., they – the lions] became happy.

He [the vizier] came down to go toward him.

He beheaded one of them and skinned him, too.

Those very who were rejoicing.

He milked them all.

He milked all of them and filled in the skin with the milk fully and gave it to the vizier.

Then, he went and said “[it is] for the king.”

He [the king of lions] told to one of them: “As soon as you go down to the house of the king, roar in such a way that he [the king] gets scared.”

This one [the lion], as he arrived, he started roaring for the king.

He [the king] said: “Go and tell that person – the son of the old woman – to free the lion.”

He [the vizier] said: “No, you [the lion] should pretend to attack him until he gets scared much.”

He went and tossed the lion’s skin before him [the king].

(Continued)

⁸⁸ Literally, “Oh my father.” This expression is used in funeral ceremonies when someone grieves for the loss of his father.

⁸⁹ Cf. P. *pāk hame-rā dušid*.

(Continued.)

šēr=am guši, rah.

rah be šekāl, rah be šekāl...

*bāz zenutare ogo, mo ar ferg-e kor dālu=ne
nakerdom bu, ene jā mā.*

*poy košen=mov.*⁹¹

*avo čel=es=e bor; rah ya pāzen-ē ham zey;
čel=es=am bor, rah dā=s.*

go, ho če=t=e?

*go, dā=m=o bevo=m=o yonov=o
hafpošt=om čāndi sāl ke morden vā ri ya
nam-i ze=sou yāri dim.*

*hey xoḏā vort kerd! pa yon xoḏā dove kay
morden!*

mo ze koje rom nāme...

*rah ya verd xond, ya nam-i čān nafar jam
kerd, ya čāntā nāme neveš, avord dāḏ=es.*

avord dāḏ=es.

isa ke dāḏ=es, pāešā ham šav setke kerd mord.

*korr=o dovar nešasten be morāḏā, hove-
zendeý kerdén si xo=sou. pāešā ham mord;
rah tey bou=s — mord rah tey bou=s!*

*matal=om rās — por dov=om mās!*⁹³

He freed the lion, [and the lion] went away.

He [the king] went hunting – went hunting...

Again, he [the king] said: “If I did not act against the son of the old woman, he would dethrone me [lit. would replace us].

They would kill us all.

He [the king] took the shoulder part.⁹² He went and hunted an ibex; then took its shoulder to him [the vizier].

[The vizier] said: “What do you want?”

He [the king] said: “You should bring me letters from all those who have died [in our family] – my mother, father, grandparents, seven ancestors, etc.”

Oh God, only God knows when these people died (with anxiety and nervousness)!

How can I go and letters... (incomplete sentence)

He [the vizier] went and recited an incantation and collected letters [from] a few persons and wrote a few [himself] and brought and gave [them] to him [the king]

–

brought and gave him.

As he [the vizier] gave them to him [the king], the king had a heart failure, and died that night.

The boy and the girl sat in prosperity and lived together [lit. did home-living]. The king died – went before his father [in heaven], he kicked the bucket!

My story [was] true – my mouth full of yogurt!

Conclusion

This paper presents the linguistic description of the Bavadi dialect of Bakhtiari spoken by the Bavadi clan in the Kuhrang district, located in the heart of the Bakhtiari homeland in Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari Province, Iran. The analysis provided here is based mainly on three texts: one from the controlled and formulaic genre of folktales and two from free conversations among groups of speakers. By examining its phonological, morphological,

⁹⁰ Probably from *toynidan*, comparable to P. *torāndan* “to roll” or *tābāndan* “to twist.”

⁹¹ Cf. P. *mikošand=emān*.

⁹² This sentence is said too early. It belongs after the hunting is performed.

⁹³ This is an unusual phrase to end a story with.

and syntactic characteristics, this study highlights the unique features of Bavadi Bakhtiari and its significance within the broader context of Iranian linguistics.

Our analysis reveals several key findings: Bavadi Bakhtiari is distinguished by its seven vowels and twenty-two consonants. Phonologically, the dialect retains the long mid vowel *ē* as a distinct phoneme, while its back vowel counterpart has merged with other phonemic categories. The glottal stop does not function as a separate phoneme, but the uvular consonants, including the voiced plosive *ġ* and the voiceless plosive *q*, are distinct phonemes. The consonant [ǝ] is treated as an allophone of *d*, which we have transcribed as *δ* or “Zagros *d*” to reflect its unique role compared to Persian. In terms of morphosyntax, we analyzed the nominal and verbal constructions within this dialect. In particular, Bavadi exhibits an optative form (*be-* + past stem + endings). Also, the negative morpheme precedes the pre-verbal element, contrasting with Persian, as illustrated in examples such as *na-der-avod-e*. Furthermore, definiteness, indefiniteness, object marking, and some other aspects of verbal constructions exhibit distinctive features that set Bavadi apart from Persian and other Southwestern Iranian languages.

These findings advance our understanding of Bavadi and enrich our knowledge of the linguistic diversity within the Iranian language family. We bear in mind that Bavadi has countless linguistic patterns and features that require further exploration from both theoretical and applied perspectives. Future research could benefit from both synchronic and diachronic studies of Bavadi and other dialects within the Lori continuum, employing experimental methods and comparative analyses with related dialects. Exploring the impact of language contact and sociolinguistic factors will further illuminate the complexities of Bakhtiari and its role within the Iranian linguistic arena. Preserving such languages and dialects is crucial to maintaining linguistic diversity and cultural identity, as they embody unique historical knowledge and social practices. The loss of these dialects would mean not only the disappearance of distinctive linguistic features but also the erosion of the cultural heritage and traditions they carry.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the importance of in-depth dialectal research to understanding the rich linguistic status of Iran and contributes to ongoing efforts to document and analyze the region’s diverse dialects.

Supplementary material. The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.1017/irn.2025.2>.

Acknowledgments. The authors would like to express their gratitude to Dr. Mohammad Hakim-Azar of the Islamic Azad University of Shahrekord for organizing our trip to Kuhrang; the local governorship (*farmāndāri*) of Kuhrang, especially its deputy Mr. Ali Badri; Mashhadi Vali Badri, patriarch of the Badri clan in Chelgerd; Mr. Alizamen Nasiri Galeh, the village head (*deh-yār*) of Nasir Ābād; and Ardeshtir Parvizi and Ali Ansari, who hosted us in Fāni Ābād and Nasir Ābād, respectively. Many thanks also to Bakhtiari speakers Ardeshtir Parvizi, Kurosh Farhadi, Bizhan Parvizi, Nowzar Farhadi, and Ms. Jahan Afruz Nasiri, who provided us with the Bakhtiari texts. We are also grateful to Amir Amani-Babadi, Mohammad Faramarzi, Sajjad Amani-Babadi, Maryam Amani-Babadi, and Malektaj Amani-Babadi for their valuable assistance in transcribing and interpreting the texts.

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Appendix

Table A.I. Conjugation of 'see'

	Present	Subj.	Past	Imperfect	Pres. Perf.	Pluperfect	Perf. Subj.	Plup. Subj.
Persian	<i>mibinam</i>	<i>bebinam</i>	<i>didam</i>	<i>mididam</i>	<i>dideam</i>	<i>dide budam</i>	<i>dide bāšam</i>	–
sg. I	<i>e-bin-om</i>	<i>bi-ūin-om</i>	<i>diδ-om</i>	<i>e-diδ-om</i>	<i>diδ-om-e</i>	<i>diδ-om bi</i>	<i>diδe buv-om</i>	<i>diδe biδ-om</i>
2	<i>e-bin-i</i>	<i>bi-ūin-i</i>	<i>diδ-i</i>	<i>e-diδ-i</i>	<i>diδ-i-e</i>	<i>diδ-i bi</i>	<i>diδe buv-i</i>	<i>diδe biδ-i</i>
3	<i>e-bin-e</i>	<i>bi-ūin-e</i>	<i>diδ</i>	<i>e-diδ</i>	<i>diδ-e</i>	<i>diδ bi</i>	<i>diδe bu</i>	<i>diδe biδ</i>
pl. I	<i>e-bin-im</i>	<i>bi-ūin-im</i>	<i>diδ-im</i>	<i>e-diδ-im</i>	<i>diδ-im-e</i>	<i>diδ-im bi</i>	<i>diδe buv-im</i>	<i>diδe biδ-im</i>
2	<i>e-bin-in</i>	<i>bi-ūin-in</i>	<i>diδ-in</i>	<i>e-diδ-in</i>	<i>diδ-in-e</i>	<i>diδ-in bi</i>	<i>diδe buv-in</i>	<i>diδe biδ-in</i>
3	<i>e-bin-en</i>	<i>bi-ūin-en</i>	<i>diδ-en</i>	<i>e-diδ-en</i>	<i>diδ-en-e</i>	<i>diδ-en bi</i>	<i>diδe buv-en</i>	<i>diδe biδ-en</i>

Table A2. Conjugation of 'go'

	Present	Subj.	Past	Imperfect	Pres. Perf.	Pluperfect	Perf. Subj.	Plup. Subj.
sg. I	<i>e-r-om</i>	<i>be-rov-om</i>	<i>rahδ-om</i>	<i>e-rahδ-om</i>	<i>rahδ-om-e</i>	<i>rahδ-om bi</i>	<i>rahδe buv-om</i>	<i>rahδe biδ-om</i>
2	<i>e-r-i</i>	<i>be-riuv-i</i>	<i>rahδ-i</i>	<i>e-rahδ-i</i>	<i>rahδ-i-e</i>	<i>rahδ-i bi</i>	<i>rahδe buv-i</i>	<i>rahδe biδ-i</i>
3	<i>e-r-e</i>	<i>be-rev-e</i>	<i>rahδ</i>	<i>e-rahδ</i>	<i>rahδ-e</i>	<i>rahδ bi</i>	<i>rahδe bu</i>	<i>rahδe biδ</i>
pl. I	<i>e-r-im</i>	<i>be-riuv-im</i>	<i>rahδ-im</i>	<i>e-rahδ-im</i>	<i>rahδ-im-e</i>	<i>rahδ-im bi</i>	<i>rahδe buv-im</i>	<i>rahδe biδ-im</i>
2	<i>e-r-in</i>	<i>be-riuv-in</i>	<i>rahδ-in</i>	<i>e-rahδ-in</i>	<i>rahδ-in-e</i>	<i>rahδ-in bi</i>	<i>rahδe buv-in</i>	<i>rahδe biδ-in</i>
3	<i>e-r-en</i>	<i>be-rev-en</i>	<i>rahδ-en</i>	<i>e-rahδ-en</i>	<i>rahδ-en-e</i>	<i>rahδ-en bi</i>	<i>rahδe buv-en</i>	<i>rahδe biδ-en</i>

Table A3. Conjugation of 'come'

	Present	Subj.	Past	Imperfect	Pres. Perf.	Pluperfect	Perf. Subj.	Plup. Subj.
sg. I	<i>i-y-ā-m</i>	<i>bi-y-ā-m</i>	<i>avod-om</i>	<i>i-y-avod-m</i>	<i>avod-om-e</i>	<i>avod-om bi</i>	<i>avodē buv-om</i>	<i>avodē biδ-om</i>
2	<i>i-y-ā-yi</i>	<i>bi-y-ā-y</i>	<i>avod-i</i>	<i>i-y-avod-i</i>	<i>avod-i-e</i>	<i>avod-i bi</i>	<i>avodē buv-i</i>	<i>avodē biδ-i</i>
3	<i>i-y-ā</i>	<i>bi-y-ā</i>	<i>avod</i>	<i>i-y-avod</i>	<i>avod-e</i>	<i>avod bi</i>	<i>avodē bu</i>	<i>avodē biδ</i>
pl. I	<i>i-y-ā-ym</i>	<i>bi-y-ā-ym</i>	<i>avod-im</i>	<i>i-y-avod-im</i>	<i>avod-im-e</i>	<i>avod-im bi</i>	<i>avodē buv-im</i>	<i>avodē biδ-im</i>
2	<i>i-y-ā-yn</i>	<i>bi-y-ā-yn</i>	<i>avod-in</i>	<i>i-y-avod-in</i>	<i>avod-in-e</i>	<i>avod-in bi</i>	<i>avodē buv-in</i>	<i>avodē biδ-in</i>
3	<i>i-y-ā-en</i>	<i>bi-y-ā-en</i>	<i>avod-en</i>	<i>i-y-avod-en</i>	<i>avod-en-e</i>	<i>avod-en bi</i>	<i>avodē buv-en</i>	<i>avodē biδ-en</i>

Table A4. Conjugation of 'hit'

	Present	Subj.	Optative	Past	Imperfect	Pres. Perf.	Pluperfect	Perf. Subj.	Plup. Subj.
sg. I	<i>e-zan-om</i>	<i>be-zan-om</i>	<i>be-zeyδ-om</i>	<i>zeyδ-om</i>	<i>e-zeyδ-om</i>	<i>zeyδ-om-e</i>	<i>zeyδ-om bi</i>	<i>zeyδe buv-om</i>	<i>zeyδe biδ-om</i>
2	<i>e-zan-i</i>	<i>be-zan-i</i>	<i>be-zeyδ-i</i>	<i>zeyδ-i</i>	<i>e-zeyδ-i</i>	<i>zeyδ-i-e</i>	<i>zeyδ-i bi</i>	<i>zeyδe buv-i</i>	<i>zeyδe biδ-i</i>
3	<i>e-zan-e</i>	<i>be-zan-e</i>	<i>be-zeyδ</i>	<i>zeyδ</i>	<i>e-zeyδ</i>	<i>zeyδ-e</i>	<i>zeyδ bi</i>	<i>zeyδe bu</i>	<i>zeyδe biδ</i>
pl. I	<i>e-zan-im</i>	<i>be-zan-im</i>	<i>be-zeyδ-im</i>	<i>zeyδ-im</i>	<i>e-zeyδ-im</i>	<i>zeyδ-im-e</i>	<i>zeyδ-im bi</i>	<i>zeyδe buv-im</i>	<i>zeyδe biδ-im</i>

(Continued)

Table A4. (Continued.)

	Present	Subj.	Optative	Past	Imperfect	Pres. Perf.	Pluperfect	Perf. Subj.	Plup. Subj.
2	e-zan-in	be-zan-in	be-zeyδ-in	zeyδ-in	e-zeyδ-in	zeyδ-in-e	zeyδ-in bi	zeyδe buu-in	zeyδe biδ-in
3	e-zan-en	be-zan-en	be-zeyδ-en	zeyδ-en	e-zeyδ-en	zeyδ-en-e	zeyδ-en bi	zeyδe buu-en	zeyδe biδ-en

Table A5. Conjugation of ‘sleep’

	Present	Subj.	Past	Imperfect	Pres. Perf.	Pluperfect	Perf. Subj.	Plup. Subj.
sg. I	e-xaus-om	be-xaus-om	xausiδ-om	e-xaus-om	xausiδ-om-e	xausiδ-om bi	xausiδe buu-om	xausiδe biδ-om
2	e-xaus-i	be-xaus-i	xausiδ-i	e-xaus-i	xausiδ-i-ye	xausiδ-i bi	xausiδe buu-i	xausiδe biδ-i
3	e-xaus-e	be-xaus-e	xausiδ	e-xaus-e	xausiδ-e	xausiδ bi	xausiδe bu	xausiδe biδ
pl. I	e-xaus-im	be-xaus-im	xausiδ-im	e-xaus-im	xausiδ-im-e	xausiδ-im bi	xausiδe buu-im	xausiδe biδ-im
2	e-xaus-in	be-xaus-in	xausiδ-in	e-xaus-in	xausiδ-in-e	xausiδ-in bi	xausiδe buu-in	xausiδe biδ-in
3	e-xaus-en	be-xaus-en	xausiδ-en	e-xaus-en	xausiδ-en-e	xausiδ-en bi	xausiδe buu-en	xausiδe biδ-en