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**Research Paper**

## An Investigation of Facets and Microsenses of Words in Persian

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### Abstract

This paper aims to explore the facets and microsenses of Persian words and examine the impact of cultural and social factors on the emergence of novel meanings. To deeply study these phenomena, a series of words exhibiting facets or microsenses was selected from a diverse range of texts. Subsequently, the Persian Academy Corpus was employed to identify additional examples of each word, thereby facilitating a comprehensive exploration of facets and microsenses associated with each lexical item. A descriptive-analytic methodology was then applied to Analyse the collected data. The findings reveal that the activation of facets within a word is context-dependent, with varying degrees of activation possible. Additionally, the paper demonstrates that facets and their surrounding lexical items mutually influence each other. Finally, the study suggests that novel facets and microsenses, distinct from homonymy and polysemy, can arise as a result of cultural and social influences.

**Keywords:** Facets, Microsenses, Persian, Lexical Interpretation, Cultural Concepts

### 1. Introduction

Content words constitute the semantic core of sentences and phrases. Certain lexical items may exhibit multiple interconnected meanings, often extended metaphorically. Others may possess several *facets* or comprise a range of *microsenses* (Langacker, 1991; Cruse, 2000, 2001).

Croft and Cruse (2004: p. 116) state that “facets are distinguishable components of a global whole, but they are not capable of being subsumed under a hyperonym.” They maintain that although they possess a degree of autonomy, they are not categorized as instances of polysemy. Furthermore, they rarely have separate entries in a dictionary. For example, the word *book* has two distinct facets.

1. Book = [TOME] a red book  
[TEXT] an interesting book

The [TOME] of the book is highlighted in *a red book*, whereas its [TEXT] is profiled in *an interesting book*.

The concept of autonomy is used for specifying facets. Autonomy is defined in the sense that whenever a group of units is interpreted in the same context, one of the units should be able to behave independently of the other units (Croft & Cruse, 2004). Three types of autonomy are mentioned for analysing facets: relational autonomy, compositional autonomy, and attentional autonomy (Cruse, 2001; Croft & Cruse, 2004).

- (i) *Relational autonomy*: Facets exhibit complete autonomy in their semantic relationships, with each facet participating in its own specific relational network irrespective of the other facets (Cruse, 2000; 2001; Croft & Cruse, 2004).

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For instance, [Cruse \(2000, p. 27\)](#) provides the following examples to demonstrate “the hyponyms of *book* form two parallel series; showing within-series incompatibility, but between-series compatibility.” Hence, “*novel and biography* are incompatibles[,] *paperback and hardback* are incompatibles [but] *novel and paperback* are compatibles.”

2. a. a biography is a type of book.
- b. a hardback is a type of book.

In fact, Examples 2a and 2b are normal because the facets of *book* are fully ingrained.

(ii) *Compositional autonomy*: Facets demonstrate compositional autonomy. Each facet can independently be utilised with predicates that are unusual in combination with other facets. A predicate can be used with *book* as long as it is compatible with one of its facets ([Cruse, 2000](#)).

3. a. a blue book; a dusty book
- b. an exciting book; an easy book

[Croft and Cruse \(2004\)](#) show that adjectives in Example 3a merely describe the facet of [TOME]; they only describe the facet of [TEXT] in Example 3b. However, Example 4 demonstrates autonomy very well as they are quite ambiguous between [TOME] and [TEXT].

4. a. two books
- b. two books in one
- c. a new book
- d. a long book

In 4a, *book* is either interpreted as two copies of a single text [TOMES] or two different [TEXTS]. In 4b, it is ambiguous, because it does not specify whether the two [TOMES] are part of one [TEXT] or two [TEXTS] are included in one [TOME]. In 4c, the term *a new book* could refer to a new copy of a very ancient text or a copy of a text that has recently been written. In 4d, the phrase *a long book* may refer to a book that contains many words or one that is long in appearance ([Croft & Cruse, 2004](#)).

(iii) *Attentional autonomy*: Both items in Example 5 can be interpreted naturally, but the phrase *the book itself* has different interpretations.

5. a. I’m not interested in the contents, etc., I’m interested in the book itself.
- b. I’m not interested in the binding, etc., I’m interested in the book itself.

In 5a, the speaker is not interested in the [TEXT] facet and is only interested in the [TOME]. In 5b, the speaker does not show interest in the binding and only expresses interest in its [TEXT] facet ([Cruse, 2000; Croft & Cruse, 2004](#)).

Moreover, [Cruse \(2000: p. 28\)](#) emphasizes that it is possible to have a tomeless text or a textless tome.

6. I’ve got a book to write the minutes of the meeting in.
7. A: How’s your book going?

B: Oh, it’s all in here [pointing to head], but I haven’t written anything down yet.

According to Examples 6 and 7, it is claimed that facets do not have any referential significances.

[Cruse \(2001, p. 40\)](#) defines “microsenses [as] ... variant readings of a word which occur in different contexts, and which stand in a relation of mutual incompatibility at the same hierarchical level.” To illustrate microsenses, [Cruse \(2001, 2011\)](#) provides the distinct interpretations of the term *knife*.

8. a. John called the waiter over to his table and complained that he had not been given a knife and fork.
- b. The attacker threatened the couple with a knife.

In 8a, the *knife* is classified in the Cutlery category, whereas in 8b, it is placed within the Weapon domain. It is important to note that this semantic variation does not constitute polysemy; instead, the interpretation of *knife* is contextually determined.

Microsenses, exemplified by the English word *knife*, are characterized by a set of incompatible hyperonymic interpretations. This inherent incompatibility suggests a degree of semantic autonomy. The selection of a particular interpretation is not predetermined but is contingent upon specific contextual cues ([Cruse, 2011](#)). Table 1 demonstrates the incompatible hyperonyms of the word *knife*:

**Table 1- Microsenses of knife** ([Croft & Cruse, 2004: 128; Cruse, 2001: 42](#))

cutlery:	<b>knife</b> , fork, spoon
weapon:	<b>knife</b> , gun, cosh, grenade
instrument:	<b>knife</b> , scalpel, forceps
(garden) tool:	<b>knife</b> , spade, fork, trowel, rake
(DIY) tool	<b>knife</b> , screwdriver, hammer, plane

It is also mentioned that microsenses are placed in multiple hyperonyms without changing their forms, which originate from a specific meaning of a concept, and this can also affect the translation of words ([Gill-Berrozpe, 2022](#)).

[Langacker \(1991\)](#) attempts to explain these hyperonymic readings of a word through entrenchment. However, [Cruse \(2001\)](#) uses the example of *knife* to claim that entrenchment does not always explain the hyperonymic relations plausibly. He maintains that in entrenchment if a group of related meanings share a hyperonym, then they must all be

fundamentally connected to the same base. In the case of *knife*, however, Cruse claims that the base is not the most prominent feature of individual words. Instead, each word has its own unique and more prominent connection to a different base.

Kambara (2021) also examines facets and microsenses from a corpus-based perspective and demonstrates that facets correlate with verbs and semantic frames, but there is no such correlation in microsenses.

For investigating facets and microsenses in Persian words, the current paper attempts to answer the following questions: a) What are the facets and microsenses of the specified words in Persian? b) What are the influences of cultural and social factors in facets and microsenses of words? c) What factors are important in introducing novel facets and microsenses?

## 2. Homonymy, polysemy, facets, and microsenses

Several studies have examined polysemy and homonymy in Persian (Changizi & Abdolkarimi, 2016; Sabzevari, 2018; Azimi et al., 2022; Razmdideh & Hassanshahi Raviz, 2024). However, a significant gap remains in the exploration of facets and microsenses within the Persian language. While Cruse (2000, 2001, 2011) and Croft and Cruse (2004) emphasize that facets and microsenses are distinct from polysemy and homonymy, L'homme (2024) offers a more nuanced categorization of polysemy, including traditional polysemy, alternations, and microsenses.

In this study, we demonstrate that facets and microsenses are distinct from polysemy and homonymy. In fact, polysemy is traditionally defined as the form of ambiguity in which two or more senses are related to the same word (Gries, 2015). For instance, Falkum and Vicente (2015: p. 1) mention that the word *line* can have several related senses:

9. a. draw a *line*
- b. read a *line*
- c. a *line* around eyes
- d. wait in a *line*
- e. a *line* of bad decisions

As observed, the semantic denotation of the word *line* exhibits significant variation across the examples. In 9a, *line* refers to a physical, tangible entity, such as a mark on a surface. In 9b, the concept of *line* shifts to a sequence of written words, emphasizing its linear arrangement. A further transformation occurs in 9c, where *line* denotes a curved or circular form, potentially a wrinkle on skin. In 9d, the meaning of *line* extends to a group of individuals arranged in a linear formation. Finally, in 9e, *line* takes on an abstract sense, representing a chronological sequence of choices or actions.

In contrast to Example 9, the referent meaning of *book* remains relatively stable across different contexts. Regardless of whether the salient feature is the physical object ([TOME]) or the textual content ([TEXT]), the word *book* inherently encompasses both aspects.

One test for distinguishing polysemy from facets involves translation test. Polysemous words often exhibit variation in translation across languages, while facet-based meanings tend to remain relatively consistent. As an illustration, *line* in 9c is translated as *hæljæ*; in 9d, as *sæf*; and 9e, as *ye seri*. Although, 9a and 9b are translated as *xæt* in Persian, in German the former is translated as *Linie*, and the latter as *Zeile*. In Russian too, the former is translated as *линия* (*liniya*) and the latter as *строчка* (*strojka*).

Furthermore, Paradis (2004: p. 260) provides Example 10 to show that metonymy and facets are different from each other.

10. a. My *red shirt* is over there.
- b. You may need a *cool shirt* because today is very hot.
- c. The *red shirts* won the match.

In Example 10a, the phrase *the red shirt* primarily emphasizes the [TEXTILE] facet of the shirt. In contrast, in Example 10b, the phrase *a cool shirt* highlights its [FUNCTION]. In both cases, these facets are integral components of the overall concept of a shirt. However, in Example 10c, the phrase *red shirts* refers to the players themselves, using *the shirts* as a metonymic reference. In this context, the word *shirts* signifies the players rather than the garments themselves. In contrast, Geeraerts and Peirsman (2011) argue that facets of *book* are instances of metonymy, where a concept for a whole thing is used for representing its subparts.

The same form may be categorized under different hyperonyms. For instance, *fane* may be used in different homonymic categories as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2- Homonymy of the word *fane* in Persian**

hyperonyms	Co-hyponyms
Beauty supplies	<b>fane (comb)</b> , sefowar (hairdryer),
Body part	<b>fane (shoulder)</b> , dæst (hand), pa (foot)
Household goods	<b>fane (egg carton)</b> , sæbæd (basket)
Road	<b>fane (shoulder of the road)</b> , asfalt (asphalt)

However, the different senses of *fane* do not constitute microsenses, as the core meaning of the word changes. In each case, the fundamental nature of *fane* undergoes a shift. In contrast, the essence of *knife* remains constant as a tool with a blade and handle, regardless of its specific function as a utensil, weapon, or instrument. Microsenses, on the other hand, involve subtle variations within a core meaning.

### 3. Methodology

This paper seeks to examine the impact of facets and microsenses on the overall lexical interpretation and to determine whether cultural, social, and religious factors influence creation of facets and microsenses or not. To achieve this objective, several Persian texts were selected and analysed for potential words exhibiting facets and microsenses. The words that represented facets the best included *book*, *human*, *food* and *car* and the words that demonstrated microsenses consisted of words such as *knife*, *gold*, *light*, and *alcohol*. For examining the influence of cultural and social factors on facets and microsenses, additional examples were sourced from the *Persian Academy of Language Corpus*. Should examples from the corpus reveal incompatibility with previous findings, the facets and microsenses were to be reanalysed.

### 4. Data Analysis

In this section, we will examine multiple interpretations of several facets and microsenses, and we will demonstrate how these words acquire distinct meanings when placed alongside other words.

#### 4.1. Facets

The word *ketab* (book) in Persian consists of several senses; however, most senses are no longer used. The entry for *ketab* in Sokhan Dictionary is as follows:

- ketab ...** 1. A collection of writings and pictures on thin papers, in manuscripts or printed, that has a cover. ...  
2. (old use) Koran ... 3. (old use) written ... 4. (old use) letter ... 5. (old use) (religious) letters of bad and good activities collected by angels.

The word *ketab* is currently used with a single, unified meaning, classifying it as a monosemic term according to the Sokhan Dictionary.

11. a. *ketabe hesab* (math book)
- b. *ketabe dʒæzab* (interesting book)
- c. *ketabe qermez* (red book)
- d. *ketabe bozorg* (big book)
- e. *ketabe mærzbanname* (the book entitled Marzbannameh)
- f. *pændʒ ketab* (five books)

Similar to English, the Persian word *ketab* shows two primary facets: [TOME] and [TEXT]. Depending on the context, the speaker may emphasize either the physical form or appearance of the book. Examples 11c and 11d illustrate how the color and size of [TOME] are highlighted. In contrast, Example 11a indicates that the [TEXT] is about mathematics, and Example 11b emphasizes that the textual content contained within pages is interesting. Examples 11e and 11f, however, signify [Global] interpretations since a book under a title or a number of books should have both [TOME] and [TEXT].

The word *roman* (novel) appears to have only [TEXT] facet. For instance, *roman-e dust-daftæni* (lovely novel) concentrates on [TEXT], and [TOME] remains out of perspective. However, Example 12 shows some cases that make the [TOME] reading possible.

12. a. *in do roman* (these two novels)
- b. *roman ra qarz gereft* (he/she borrowed the novel)
- c. *roman-e qermez* (red novel)

Examples 12 may indicate a [TOME] reading as borrowing a novel is about transferring the tome of a novel in 12b, or we can only count the tomes of novel books in 12c.

The condition for *ketabe elektroniki* (electronic book or E-book) is different as e-books are tomeless texts. A *ketabe sowti* (audio books), however, has neither [TOME] nor [TEXT]. In fact, text has turned into spoken form and is no longer observable as written forms on a piece of paper. These cases indicate that the concept of a book composed of traditional [TOME] and [TEXT] facets can modify over time. A novel can be both textless and tomeless.

13. Tærhe roman bozorg-i ra dær zehn amade dar-æm.  
Plot novel big-a OM in mind ready have.PRT-1SG  
I have a novel plot ready in my head.

In Example 13, the novel is still in the author's head as a plot ready to be written, but it still has neither [TEXT] nor [TOME].

The facets of a word can significantly influence the interpretation of related words. For example, in the phrase *ketabe qermez* (red book), the [TOME] facet determines the application of the color attribute. Conversely, *ketabi be xæte qermez* (a book written with red [colour]), the [TEXT] facet of the book governs the use of the color. In *ketabe elektroniki*, the [TEXT] facet foregrounds the digital nature of the text, rather than the [TOME].

If we look up a Persian dictionary to check the word *ensan* (human), we will come across the following entry:



**ensan** ... 1. (Animal) A mammal distinguished from other mammals due to the development of the brain, the ability to speak and think, and having ten functional fingers on their hands; bæʃær (mankind), adæm (man). 2. ... Adhering to moral principles ... 3. Person, individual ... 4. The seventy-sixth chapter of Quran, containing thirty-one verses, *Al-Insan*. 5. ... pupil of the eye. ... (Farhang-e Bozorg-e Sokhan).

The word *ensan* is observed to possess five distinct senses, yet Example 14 reveals facets not reflected in dictionaries.

14. a. *ensane* besiyar ziba (very beautiful human)
- b. *ensane* qævi heykæl væ qodrætmænd (a muscular and strong human)
- c. *ensane* qævi (a strong human)
- d. *ensane* enzeva-tælæb (a person who seeks isolation)
- e. *ensane* xof-ru (a friendly human)
- f. *ensane* xof-tʃehre (a good-looking human)

According to the dictionary entries for *ensan*, all instances in Example 14 pertain to the third definition: *person, man, individual*. Nevertheless, this definition includes two distinct facets: [APPEARANCE] and [PERSONALITY]. Examples 14a, 14b, and 14c primarily focus on the [APPEARANCE], while Examples 14d and 14e concentrate on the [PERSONALITY]. However, Example 14c exhibits ambiguity, as both interpretations are plausible. Therefore, a person may be considered "strong" in terms of their physical [APPEARANCE] or their psychological [PERSONALITY] resilience. Additionally, a [Global] interpretation may be inferred, suggesting that both facets are simultaneously implied.

If we substitute human with *boy* and *girl* in Example 14, then *a strong girl* implies [PERSONALITY], whereas *a strong boy* implies [APPEARANCE]. Culturally, *muscular girls* are unexpected, while *muscular boys* are not particularly surprising. The differences arise from the expectations associated with masculinity and femininity, which is neutral in the words *man* and *human*.

Religious beliefs can sometimes introduce additional facets to a word. For instance, in the case of *ensan*, Abrahamic religions have added the facet of [SOUL]. However, the specific characteristics of this facet may vary across religions. As an illustration, the human soul does not undergo transmigration in Islam, whereas it does in Hinduism.

- |        |                                    |                   |         |          |                 |             |              |
|--------|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------|----------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| 15. a. | Ruh-e                              | <i>ensan</i>      | bed-in  | qaleb    | tæʔæloq         | gereft      |              |
|        | Soul-of                            | human             | to-this | form     | belong          | get.PST.3SG |              |
|        | Human's soul belonged to this form |                   |         |          |                 |             |              |
|        | b. ruhe                            | <i>ensan</i> bæʔd | æz      | mordæn   | be              | dʒæsæd-e    | <i>ensan</i> |
|        | Soul-of                            | human             | after   | from     | to              | corpse-EZ   | human        |
|        | ya                                 | heyvane           | digær   | holul    | mi-kon-æd       |             |              |
|        | or                                 | animal-EZ         | other   | transfer | PROG-do.PRT-3SG |             |              |

After death, human's soul tranmigrate to other human or animal's corpse. (Iran Newspaper, Vol. 3)

Example 15a illustrates the Islamic perspective on the concept of *ensan*, while Example 15b presents the Hindu viewpoint.

Another word with multiple facets is *qæza* (food), defined in the following entries:

**qæza** ... 1. What is eaten and contributes to the growth and development of animals; food ... 2. What is consumed as the main meal at one or more times around the clock ... (Farhang-e Bozorg-e Sokhan).

As observed, the word *qæza* has two main facets: [INGREDIENT] and [MEAL]. For this word, the dictionary has distinguished the two facets from each other.

16. a. *qæza-ye rezimi* (Dietary food), *qæza-ye por kaleri* (high-calorie food), *qæza ba bademdʒan* (food with eggplant), *qæza-ye ʃur* (salty food)
- b. *qæza-ye fori* (fast food), *qæza-ye xofmæze* (delicious food), *qæza-ye bimæze* (tasteless food), *qæza bæraye nahar* (food for lunch)

In fact, Example 16a primarily emphasizes the [INGREDIENT], while Example 16b highlights the [MEAL]. Therefore, *dietary food* is a food, the ingredients of which lack calorie or sugar. Similarly, *eggplant dish* is a dish that includes eggplant as one of its main ingredients. *Salty food* is classified as a food item that contains an excessive amount of a particular ingredient: salt.

Additionally, in Example 16b, *fast food* is primarily associated with the [MEAL], referring to a meal prepared rapidly, without a strong emphasis on the specific ingredients. *Tasty food* refers to a meal that has a good flavour, while *tasteless food* denotes a meal that does not have a good taste.

The term *qæza* is an exceptional case where the distinct senses, as recognized by Croft and Cruse (2004), are infrequently listed separately in dictionaries. This word exhibits relational autonomy within its specific context.

- |        |   |         |            |            |     |
|--------|---|---------|------------|------------|-----|
| 17. a. | bærxi   | qæza-ha | giahi      | hæst-ænd   | væ  |
|        | some  | food-PL | vegetarian | be.PRT-3SG | and |
|        | bærxi   | digær   | gushti.    |            |     |
|        | Some  | other   | meat-based |            |     |
|        | Some foods are vegetarian, and others are meat-based. |         |            |            |     |



- b.        bærxi    qæza-ha sonæti                hæst-ænd                væ        bærxi  
 Some food-PL    traditional                be.PRT-3SG                and        some  
 digær    fastfood.  
 other    fæst-fud

Some foods are traditional, and others are fast-food.

Examples 17a and 17b show that the word food has relational autonomy in its context. Regarding compositional autonomy, it is possible to find cases in which the [Global] reading is better applied than each of the facets.

18. a. do qæza (two dishes of food)  
 b. qæza-ye dzædid (new food)  
 c. qæza-ye mæxsus (special food).

Example 18a is ambiguous whether they are two dishes with different [INGREDIENTS] or are two [MEALS] with the same [INGREDIENTS]. Moreover, in Example 18b, it is not clear whether [INGREDIENTS] are new or regardless of ingredients a new [MEAL] is being introduced. In all cases, the [Global] reading is quite appropriate.

19. a.        mæn    be        mohtæviat        kari    nædaræm,                xode  
           I        to        ingredients        work    have.PRT-1SG                self  
           qæza    bæra-m                mohem-e.  
           Food    for-me                important-be.PRT.3SG  
           I don't care about the ingredients; the food itself is important.
- b.        mæn                                be        tæʔm-eʃ                kari    nædaræm,                xode  
           I                                to        taste-its work        have.PRT-1SG        self  
           qæza    bæra-m                mohem-e.  
           food    for-me                important-be.PRT.3SG  
           I don't care about its taste; the food itself is important.

Regarding attentional autonomy, Example 19a demonstrates that focus is towards [MEAL] rather than [INGREDIENTS], whereas in Example 19b concentration moves towards the [INGREDIENTS] as some people prefer their food to include healthy ingredients rather than unhealthy delicious ones.

In certain extended contexts, the facet of a word may influence the interpretation of other words.

20. roqæn-ha-ye        moqavem                bæra-ye        sorx-kærdæn-e                qæza    væ  
 oil-PL-EZ        resistant                for-EZ                frying-EZ                food    and  
 roqæn-dʒuʃ-kærdæn ... monaseb-tær-ænd,                tʃun-ke                roqæn-e    qeyr  
 deep-frying                suitable-more-be.PRT.3SG                because-that                oil-EZ        not  
 moqavem                xod                hæmrahe                qæza    sorx-mi-ʃæv-æd.  
 resistant                (them)self                accompanying        food    fry-PROG-become.PRT-3SG

Heat-resistant oils are better for frying and deep-frying because non-resistant oils burn along with the food (Mostatab Ashpazi, p. 207).

Example 20 demonstrates how the [INGREDIENT] facet of *qæza* (food) interacts with the concept of heat-resistant oil. When *qæza* is fried with heat-resistant oil, the second type of oil, *roqæn qeyr moqavem* (non-resistant oil), is interpreted as an additional ingredient to the dish, as it is being fried alongside the other ingredients. This suggests that heat-resistant oil serves as a medium for frying the food ingredients, while non-resistant oil becomes an integral component of the dish itself.

Substituting the neutral term *qæza* with the name of the dish significantly reduces collocational possibilities. However, to some extent, both facets can be observed. For example, the phrase *qorme sæbzïe xofmæze* (delicious Ghorme Sabzi) is primarily interpreted from the [MEAL] facet when associated with a specific dish name. Nevertheless, the dish name can occasionally be employed within the [INGREDIENTS] facet, as exemplified by *qorme sæbzïe fur* (salty Ghorme Sabzi), which indicates an excess of one or more ingredients.

Next word is *mafïn* (car), which has many different facets. This word is shown in Sokhan Dictionary as follows:

- mafïn** ... 1. (technical) car, vehicle ... 2. (Technical) mechanical or mechanical-electrical device ... 3. (Mechanics) A device for increasing or decreasing force, changing its direction, or converting energy or motion from one form to another ... 4. (Colloquial) (Figurative) A tool used for haircut and shaving; shaving machine (Farhange Bozorge Sokhan).

In sense 1, *mafïn* has multiple facets including [APPEARANCE], [INTERNAL COMPONENTS], [FUNCTIONALITY], [BRAND], and [MANUFACTURING COUNTRY].

21. a. *mafïn-e qermez* (red car), *mafïn-e hatʃbæk* (hatchback car), *mafïn-e sændoq-dar* (sedan car)  
 b. *mafïn-e særiʔ væ por qodræt* (fast and powerful car), *mafïn-e bærqï* (electric car), *mafïn-e dænde-ʔï* (manual car), *mafïn-e karberatori* (carbureted car)  
 c. *mafïn-e polis* (police car), *mafïn-e edari* (fleet car), *mafïn-e mosabeqe* (race car), *mafïn-e atæʃ-neʃani* (fire engine), *mafïn-e sævari* (automobile)  
 d. *mafïn-e lamari* (Lamari), *mafïn-e tesla* (Tesla), *mafïn-e toyota* (Toyota)  
 e. *mafïn-e tʃïni* (Chinese car), *mafïn-e zaponi* (Japanese car), *mafïn-e amrika-ʔï* (American car)  
 f. *mafïn-e sefr* (brand new car), *mafïn-e karkærde* (used car), *mafïn-e dæste dovom* (second-hand car)

In Example 21a, the focus is on the [APPEARANCE] facet such as being red, hatchback, or sedan. In contrast, Example 21b emphasizes the [INTERNAL COMPONENT] facets of the vehicle, including the engine type (e.g., gasoline, electric) and transmission system (e.g., manual, automatic). For instance, *a fast car* typically possesses a powerful engine, while *an electric car* relies on electric motors and batteries. Additionally, *a car with a carburetor* is generally older than one equipped with a more modern fuel injection system.

Example 21c illustrates the functional diversity of cars, highlighting their use in various contexts, such as police, companies, firefighters, etc. Example 21d concentrates on the car brands such as Lamari, Tesla, etc. Similarly, Example 21e emphasizes the geographic origin of cars, referring to their country of manufacture. Finally, Example 21f considers the temporal dimension of cars, including their year of production and whether they are new or used.

Example 21 demonstrates that the widespread use of cars in different areas of life and the diversity of the services and parts linked to cars may be the origin of car development. For instance, traditional internal combustion engine vehicles, often equipped with carburetors, have become increasingly rare, giving way to electric vehicles driven by environmental concerns. Similarly, manual transmissions are being replaced by automatic transmissions. This illustrates the dynamic nature of word meanings, as facets can evolve over time.

Furthermore, combining different facets can create entirely new concepts. A case in point is *mafin-e fasi-bolænd* (a Sport Utility Vehicle) which demonstrates this by integrating enhancements into [INTERNAL COMPONENTS], specifically a taller, longer chassis, with a distinctive, elevated [APPEARANCE]. In contrast, the term *mafin-e xærab* (broken car) is ambiguous as it does not explicitly specify whether the issue lies with the internal components, the external appearance, or both.

The words *otomobil* (automobile) and *xodro* (car) are more formal words, and they can substitute the less formal word *mafin*. Some collocations were not found in a search through the Internet and the Persian Academy Corpus. For instance, *mafin-e karkærde* and *xodro-ye karkærde* were observed but *otomobil-e karkærde* was not observed. Also, *otomobil* collocated with *police* and *firefighter*.

#### 4.2. Microsenses

The word *tfaqu* (knife) has several microsenses. While knife has traditionally been used as a tool in kitchen for cutting meat and vegetables, it may appear in other hyponymic relations.

**Table 3- Microsenses of the word *tfaqu***

hyperonyms	Co-hyponyms
Cutlery	<b>tfaqu</b> , tʃæŋgal (fork), qaʃoq (spoon)
Weapon	<b>tfaqu</b> , tofæŋg (gun), narendʒæk (grenade)
Instrument	<b>tfaqu</b> , tʃaʒu-ye dʒærahi (scalpel), pæns (forceps)
(Garden) tool	<b>tfaqu</b> , bi:l (spade), tʃæŋgal, bi:ltʃe (trowel)
(DIY) tool	<b>tfaqu</b> , pitʃ-guʃti (screwdriver), tʃækof (hammer)

Table 3 demonstrates the most common microsenses of the word *tfaqu*; however, it is possible to observe *tfaqu* in other less common contexts. For example, as a writing utensil, a knife may be used for carving words on walls, stones, and trees. Furthermore, Persian culture incorporates cultural practices involving knives. One such practice is the *ræqse tfaqu* (knife dance), where the bride's sister dances with a knife, often receiving monetary gifts for her performance. Another distinctive practice is known as *be fæрте tfaqu* (under the condition of testing by knife), which involves testing the ripeness of a watermelon with a knife before sale.

The Persian word *tæla* (gold) includes a variety of microsenses. While gold has historically been utilized in jewelry-making, this represents only one microsense of its broader cultural and economic significance. Table 4 provides a comprehensive overview of these additional microsenses.

**Table 4- Microsenses of the word *tæla***

hyperonyms	Co-hyponyms
Jewelry	<b>tæla</b> (gold), ælmas (diamond), noqre (silver), pelatin (platinum)
Trade	<b>tæla</b> , pul (money), seke (coin), ælmas
Conductor	<b>tæla</b> , mes (copper), noqre, alminiyom (aluminum)
Rust Proof	<b>tæla</b> , alminiyom, fulad (steel)
Container	<b>tæla</b> , mes, alminiyom, ruy (Zinc)
Medals	<b>tæla</b> , noqre, boronz (bronze)

Table 4 presents six distinct microsenses of the word *tæla* (gold), each associated with specific hyperonyms. In the Jewelry category, gold is a primary material for crafting various adornments, including bracelets, necklaces, and rings. In the Trade category, gold serves as an asset, alongside currencies and precious stones like diamonds. It is used as a store of wealth and a medium of exchange. In the Conductor category, gold is recognised as an excellent electrical conductor, albeit less efficient than silver and copper. Its unique combination of conductivity and resistance to corrosion makes it suitable for specific applications in electronic devices, where reliability and durability are paramount. Finally,

in the Dentistry, gold was historically used in dental restorations. However, this practice has largely been superseded by more modern materials.

The concept of gold as a symbol can intertwine with its material properties. For example, a golden crown not only serves as a piece of jewelry but also signifies royal authority. Similarly, medals composed of precious metals, such as gold, are awarded to athletic champions, symbolising achievement and honor.

The word *tferaq* (lamp) denotes a device designed to produce light. Throughout history, the primary energy source for lamps has transitioned from oil to electricity. This evolution is reflected in the multiple semantic microsenses associated with the term.

**Table 5- Microsenses of the word *tferaq***

hyperonyms	Co-hyponyms
Lighting	<b>tferaq</b> , lamp (lamp), mæhtabi (Fluorescent lamp), fæm? (candle)
Traffic	<b>tferaq</b> , tablo-?e rahnæma (traffic sign), mæxrute terafiki (traffic cone)
Decoration	<b>tferaq</b> , ruban (ribbon), fæm?, abaʒor (lampshade)

The primary function of a *tferaq* (lamp) is to provide illumination. The evolution of lighting technologies, from traditional candles and oil lamps to modern incandescent and fluorescent lights, has expanded the range of lighting possibilities. In the realm of transportation, traffic lights utilise a color-coded system (red, yellow, and green) to regulate vehicular movement. Additionally, vehicles are equipped with various lights, including headlights for road illumination and signal lights (brake lights and turn signals) for communication with other road users. Beyond their functional applications, lights are also employed in decorative contexts. They are often integrated with ribbons, candles, and other ornaments to enhance celebrations and festivities or to simply beautify homes and public spaces.

While microsenses mentioned in Table 5 are common in Persian, some other microsenses are culture specific in Iran. For instance, there is a religious concept called *næzr* in which a person commits oneself to do a predetermined action if his requests from spiritual figures, such as God or people pertained to God, are fulfilled. In that case, turning on a light or a specific number of lights is a common activity.

22. mæn dævazdæh tferaq be næzre dævazdæh emam  
I twelve light to vow twelve Imam

mi-tælæb-æm ...

PROG-want.PRT-1SG

I request twelve lamps as an offering to the twelve Imams (Tehrane Ghadim: 180)

Religious people believe that *Imams* are miraculous figures that God would fulfil requests because of them. Then they try to offer some tributes to these Imams so that God would fulfil their requests. In this case, lighting twelve lamps each as a vow to each of Imams adds this specific cultural microsense to the list of *tferaq* in Persian. More extensively, in Khorasan province, there is a custom called *tferaqe bærat*, in which people turn on a light for a dead person on specific dates.

The Persian word *ælkol* (alcohol) exhibits many different microsenses. This liquid, which exists in two main types, ethanol and methanol, has many different functions:

**Table 6- Microsenses of the word *ælkol***

hyperonyms	Co-hyponyms
Beverages	<b>ælkol</b> , nuʃabe (cola), færbæt (syrup), abdʒo (beer)
Sanitiser	<b>ælkol</b> , sabun (soap), vayteks (bleach)
Solvent	<b>ælkol</b> , ab (water), æseton (acetone)
Combustible material	<b>ælkol</b> , næft (oil), benzin (petrol)
Drugs	<b>ælkol</b> , potasiom sorbat (potassium sorbate)
Preservatives	<b>ælkol</b> , æsid sorbik (sorbic acid), nitrit (nitrite)

Alcohol serves a variety of purposes, ranging from recreational use to industrial applications. In beverages, alcohol is a primary ingredient, similar to non-alcoholic drinks like cola, water, and syrup. It also finds applications in sanitation, where it is used to eliminate microorganisms from the body, akin to soap. However, stronger sanitizers, such as bleach, are employed for surface disinfection. Furthermore, alcohol's solvent properties make it suitable for dissolving both polar and nonpolar substances. This characteristic is exploited in the pharmaceutical industry, where alcohol is used as a solvent for active ingredients in liquid medications and topical solutions. It also serves as a solvent in the cosmetic industry, particularly in lotions, perfumes, and other personal care products. Finally, alcohol is a combustible substance, though it is expensive compared to more affordable options.

The word *ælkol* can be used in another category with a new microsense, i.e. addictive substances such as *ælkol*, *teryak* (opium), etc. Example 23 shows how this word is used with such a microsense:

23. Mæn be ælkol væ æfyun ... motad fode-bud-æm.  
I to alcohol and opium addicted had-become.3SG

I had become addicted to alcohol and opium (gol-ha-ey ke be jahanam miravand, p. 16)



This demonstrates the contextual flexibility of *ælkol* microsenses from Beverage to Addictive. The specific microsense activated in a given context can significantly impact the interpretation of surrounding sentences.

While alcohol possesses distinct microsenses as a sanitiser and a combustible substance, these two microsenses can converge in specific contexts. For instance, the flames produced by burning alcohol can be utilised to sanitise objects or surfaces.

24. Mohæmæd sælmani ... mɒʃin væ qeytʃi ra  
 Mohammad barber hair-clipper and scissors OM  
 Mi-gir-æd ruye ʃole-ye ælkol  
 PROG-get.PRT-3SG on-EZ flame-EZ alcohol

Mohammad, the barber, hold hair clippers and scissors on flames of alcohol (Derakhte Anjir: 404).

The sanitisation function of alcohol in this context arises from its ability to produce a clean flame that can be used to sterilise tools. While other combustible substances could potentially be used for this purpose, they may produce excessive smoke or lack the convenience and efficacy of alcohol.

Another microsense that is less common than other items involve its use as a preservative for dead animals.

25. Mar ra dær ʃiʃe negæh-darænd. bæ  
 Snake OM in glass keep.PRT.3SG with  
 ælkol hefz-konænd.  
 Alcohol preserve.PRT.3SG

They should keep the snake in a glass. Preserve it with alcohol (Khaterate Etemad Ol-Saltaneh: 432).

Individuals interested in preserving animal specimens, often snakes, commonly employ a method involving the submersion of the deceased animal in a large glass container filled with alcohol. This technique is frequently used in laboratory settings and, less commonly, in private homes.

Another case is considering harmful substances as weapons used by colonisers or adversaries to subjugate other nations.

26. Esteʔmargæran be væsile-ye æslæhe væ ælkol  
 Colonisers with means-EZ weapon and alcohol  
 dzæmʔiæte bumi ra riʃekæn-mikærdænd.  
 Population native OM eradicate.PRT.3SG

Colonisers eradicated native people by means of weapons and alcohol (Sarmaye-dari dar gharne bistom: 15).

Example 26 demonstrates how a common liquid like alcohol can be conceptualized as a weapon against colonised communities, regardless of the veracity of such a claim. In this context, alcohol, opium, and similar substances are perceived as weapons, akin to firearms and traditional weaponry. These examples highlight the subjective nature of word meaning, as the specific microsense activated depends on the speaker's conceptualization and intended meaning.

Scientific discourse can reveal unexpected and unconventional applications of common substances. For instance, Durant (1929) assert that the biologist Jacques Loeb successfully fertilised the infertile eggs of marine organisms like sea urchins and starfish using substances such as alcohol and ether. While modern science has since refuted this claim, it underscores the potential for scientific exploration to uncover novel and unconventional uses for familiar substances. This example demonstrates how scientific inquiry can expand the semantic range of words and expressions, leading to the emergence of unexpected microsenses.

Lastly, the word *saʔæt* (clock, watch) is primarily associated with the concept of time measurement microsense. However, it can also serve as a status symbol, particularly when worn as a wristwatch, indicating wealth and social standing.

**Table 7- Microsenses of *saʔæt***

hyperonyms	Co-hyponyms
Time	<b>saʔæt</b> , saʔæt-e divari (clock), saʔæt-e motʃi (watch), xorʃid (sun)
Jewelry	<b>saʔæt</b> , dæst-bænd (bracelet), gærdæn-bænd (necklace)
Alarm	<b>saʔæt</b> , guʃi (mobile phone)
Gift	<b>saʔæt</b> , dæst-bænd (bracelet), odkolon (perfume)

In the realm of timekeeping, various types of *saʔæt* (clocks and watches) are employed to determine precise time. These devices can be either mechanical or digital, but their fundamental purpose remains consistent. In the realm of Jewelry, *saʔæt* can be viewed as a personal adornment, often worn on the wrist alongside other valuable items. Additionally, *saʔæt* can function as an alarm device, alerting individuals to specific times. This function is not exclusive to dedicated clocks and watches, as mobile phones also serve this purpose.

Technological advancements have introduced novel microsenses to the concept of *saʔæt*. Modern smartwatches, for example, offer a multitude of functionalities beyond timekeeping, including phone calls, text messaging, calendar scheduling, fitness tracking, heart rate monitoring, barometric pressure measurement, and temperature sensing. Each of these features represents a distinct microsense, demonstrating how technology can expand the capabilities and semantic range of traditional devices.

**5. Discussion and conclusion**

This study sought to examine the facets and microsenses of Persian words and to explore the influence of cultural conceptualizations on the emergence of non-universal facets and microsenses. Cruse (2000, 2001, 2011) and Croft and Cruse (2004) primarily investigated these phenomena in English words like *book* and *knife*, this research aimed to



extend these concepts to the Persian language. Additionally, the study analysed the factors that may contribute to the development of novel facets and microsenses in Persian.

Facets are distinct semantic dimensions of a lexical item, each of which can become the primary focus in different collocational contexts. While Croft and Cruse (2004) primarily focus on the role of facets in enabling listeners/readers to isolate a specific dimension of a word within a given context, facets can also exert influence on the interpretation of surrounding words. Even though a specific co-text activates a particular facet, the activated facet can, in turn, shape the semantic and pragmatic interpretation of adjacent lexical items.

Cruse (2001) demonstrates that the English word *book* exhibits a wide range of interpretive possibilities, encompassing [TOME], [TEXT], both facets simultaneously, or neither. In contrast, *novel* is primarily interpreted as [TEXT], with [TOME] readings being less common. In Persian, the word *ketab* displays a full spectrum of interpretive potential, aligning with all observed patterns. Technological advancements have significantly diversified the forms of texts, expanding beyond traditional printed texts to include electronic and audio formats.

Similarly, the diverse functions of a concept correspond to distinct microsenses of the associated word. In case of *knife*, Cruse (2001) and Croft and Cruse (2004) identify five microsenses. All of these microsenses are also observed in Persian. However, the Persian cultural practices such as *ræqse tfaqu* (*dance knife*) and *be fæрте tfaqu* (*test by knife*) are introduced that are completely unknown to other cultures. This demonstrates that microsenses are not universally fixed and can vary across languages and cultures.

The number of microsenses associated with a word is not static, as new functions and applications may emerge over time. Therefore, any enumeration of microsenses should be considered an approximation. Furthermore, technological advancements, particularly the advent of smart devices, continue to introduce novel microsenses and modify existing ones. For instance, smartwatches, while traditionally used for timekeeping, now offer a range of additional functionalities, such as heart rate monitoring, step counting, and phone calling. These developments underscore the dynamic nature of language and the ongoing evolution of word meanings.

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