

OBLIGATORY, OPTIONAL AND CONTRASTIVE OCCURRENCES OF *KE* IN MODERN PERSIAN

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ABSTRACT

The function of particles like ke in modern Persian varies according to context. As a morphosyntactic element with a range of roles, it functions as a subordinator, an adverbial conjunction, a focus marker and an interrogative word. Ke is most frequent in subordinate clauses, and the majority of Persian grammars discuss it in the context of complex sentences. Though almost every Persian grammar deals with ke, obligatory, optional and contrastive occurrences of this particle remain to be investigated. Predicting such occurrences is the goal of this article.

*With relative clauses ke is optional provided the head NP is followed by pronouns like *ânče* 'that, which'; otherwise it is obligatory. With content clauses the head NP is obligatorily followed by ke, whereas the head NP is optionally followed by it. As a temporal element ke is always obligatory; as a focus marker and a temporal element it is always contrastive. Besides the above roles, some residual cases are discussed: as a complementizer of minor clauses ke is obligatory; in response to a statement of warning ke is optionally used.*

1. INTRODUCTION

This article aims at predicting obligatory, optional and contrastive occurrences of *ke* in Modern Persian. *Ke* is obligatory when its omission would lead to unacceptability. It is optional when its omission would result neither in unacceptability nor a change in meaning. And finally it is contrastive when its omission would change the meaning of the sentence.

The uses of *ke* in combination with other elements such as *zirâ* 'because', *hamin* 'this very', *hamân* 'that very', *har* 'each', *agar* 'if', etc., are so diverse as to be beyond the scope of a single article. I limit myself here, therefore, to those cases where *ke* stands alone as a single-morpheme word.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The vast majority of Persian grammars discuss *ke* in the context of subordinate clauses. However, there are further significant uses for this element in Persian.

Recognizing that there is no simple relative pronoun in Persian, Lazard notes that among markers of subordination, including conjunctions, conjunctive phrases, pronouns and pronominal phrases, the particle *ke* is the most common subordinating linkword (See Lazard 1992: 123, 218). As a subordinating linkword, *ke* is used in introducing relative clauses, noun clauses, and the apodosis of conditional constructions. He further goes into details of subordinate clauses—final, consecutive, causal, temporal—all of which are introduced by *ke*. Interestingly, Lazard quotes almost all his examples from the best-known contemporary Iranian novelists.

Lazard (1992: 254-257) also points out the 'idiomatic usage of *ke*', which does not have anything to do with a subordination relation between clauses. Rather, *ke* immediately follows different elements of a clause, including subject and object, to emphasize that element. He notes that this usage is basically confined to colloquial language.

In the context of discussing relative clauses in English and other languages, Fabb (1994: 3522), referring to Comrie (1981), claims that there is a morphological matching between the external head of the relative clause and the NPREL.¹ However, he overlooks the significant role of *ke* in relative clauses.

Soheili-Isfahani (1976: 48-78) argues that 'as a general complementizer', *ke* introduces all types of complement clauses in Persian. He also argues (1976: 50) in favor of the view that complementizers are neither 'semantically empty' nor 'syntactically trivial particles', as some earlier studies suggested.

Shafai (1984: 307-8) notes that *ke* is referred to as *mowsul* 'relative' in both traditional and contemporary grammars. He says that in Modern Persian *ke* is a common linkword which is used in the majority of subordinate clauses. He adds that this linker is a main part of most compound linkers in today's Persian: *vaqti-ke* / *zamâni-ke* 'the time when', *hamin-ke* 'as soon as', etc.

In the context of his overview of relative clauses, Windfuhr (1979: 67) notes that 'most types of relative clauses are obligatorily introduced by *ke*' but he does not mention any such clauses. He says (1976: 69):

¹ Keenan & Comrie (1977) note that the fronted *wh*-phrase *whose books* in a form like *the man whose books I read* can be called the relative phrase. NPREL is a name they suggest for an element like *whose* which is coreferential with the head NP (*the man* in the above). See Keenan & Comrie (1977) and Comrie (1981) for further elaboration on the issue example.

The apparent multitude of the functions of *ke* is quite easily explained by the observation that *ke* in contemporary Persian is a 'dummy' which is inserted in the surface string in case of subordinate clause embedding. The rules for its obligatory occurrence or omission have yet to be specified (cf. Rubincik 1959a; Windfuhr 1971).

Referring to Amuzegar-Yagane (1967), Windfuhr (1976: 70-71) also notes that the 'emphatic' use of *ke* is not new. He adds that '*ke* appears to be able to emphasize any noun-phrase or the entire clause'.

Bateni (1969: 63) regards *ke* as an important member of the closed class of linkers which introduce bound (i.e., subordinate) clauses in complex sentences. Among these linkwords are *tâ* 'till/to/in order to', *zirâ/ ĉun* 'because', etc. He adds that *ke* is an exception in that it is sometimes optional. However, he does not give any rule for its optional use with bound clauses.

3. KE IN MODERN PERSIAN

Three major uses can be assigned to *ke* in Modern Persian: *ke* as a subordinator (3.1), *ke* as an adverbial conjunction (3.2), and *ke* as a focus marker (3.3). We take each in turn.

3.1. *ke* and subordinate clauses in Persian

Following Huddleston's (1988: 152-62) analysis of English we distinguish three major classes of subordinate clause in Persian: comparative, relative and content.^{2, 3}

² 'Content clause' is Jespersen's term (cf. Jespersen 1969: 62); it corresponds approximately to the traditional category of noun clause and generative grammar's complement clause.]

³ Symbols and notational conventions. The first line of each example represents the transcribed form of the Persian sentence. In the second line (the gloss line), two types of components are represented: lexical items and grammatical items. A hyphen separates two components of a single word. A full stop indicates that they do not correspond to distinct segmental units of the Persian: two items separated by a full stop thus correspond to a single item in the Persian citation. The symbols used to gloss grammatical items are as follows: COMP = complement marker; COMPV = comparative adjective/adverb marker; IMPFV = imperfective marker; INDEF = indefinite marker; LINK = subordinator; NEG = negative marker; NIN = non-indicative marker; NPS = non-past marker; PCTPL = past participle; PL = plural marker; POSS = possessive marker; PREL = pre-relative; PS = past marker; SG = singular.

- (1) sud-e sahâm biš-tar az ân bud-ø ke entezâr dâšt-im
 interest-LINK shares more-COMPV than that be.PS-3SG that expectation
 have.PS-1PL (Comparative)
 'The interest of the stock-shares was more than what we expected.'
- (2) moa?lle-m-i ke to did-i barâdar-e hasan ast-ø
 teacher-REL that you see.PS-2SG brother-link Hasan
 be.NPS-3SG (Relative)
 'The teacher whom you saw is Hasan's brother.'
- (3) qasd dîr-am ke čand ruz-i be moraxxasi be-rav-am
 intention have.NPS-1SG that few day-INDEF to vacation
 NIN-go.NPS-1SG (Content)
 'I intend to go on vacation for a few days.'

3.1.1. Comparative clauses

In Persian, a comparative clause is usually distinguished by the comparative morpheme *tar* in the main clause and *ke* which introduces the subordinate clause

- (4) havâ sard-tar az ân šod-ø ke pišpini kard-im
 weather cold-COMPV than that become.PS-3SG that prediction do.PS-1PL
 'The weather got colder than what we predicted.'

Since the omission of *ke* converts the comparative clause into an unacceptable string, one can say that *ke* in this context is obligatory:

- (5) * havâ sard-tar az ân šod-ø pišpini kard-im

3.1.2. Complement clauses: relative clauses

The investigation of examples leads us to the conclusion that it is the head NP which determines the presence of *ke* within the relative clause:

- A. *Ke* is optional after pronouns containing *če* 'what' such as *ânče* 'that what', *harče* 'everything' which have *če* 'what' as their participating element:

- (6) ânče (ke) xodâ be man mi-baxš-ad kâfi-st-ø
 that-what (that) God to I IMPFV-bestow.NPS-3SG enough-be.NPS-3SG
 'What God bestows on me is enough.'

- B. In all the other cases the relative clause is obligatorily introduced by *ke*. For example, in the following where the modified element is an NP like *ketâb* 'book', *ke* cannot be omitted without loss of acceptability

- (7) a. ketâb-i ke ruy-e miz ast-ø gerânbahâ-st-ø
 book-REL that on-LINK table be.NPS-3SG expensive-be.NPS-3SG
 'The book which is on the table is expensive.'

- b. * ketâb-i ruy-e miz ast- \emptyset gerânbeh-âst- \emptyset
 book-PREL on-LINK table be.NPS-3SG expensive-be.NPS-3SG
 'The book which is on the table is expensive.'

In English the *wh*-relative pronoun or *that* is optional if the item relativised is object rather than subject, but in Persian *ke* is obligatory whatever the function of the relativised element. Thus the contrast seen in (7) above (subject relativisation) is found also in (8) (object relativisation).

- (8) a. ketâb-i ke payâm be iraj dâd- \emptyset jadid ast- \emptyset
 book-PREL that Payam to Iraj give.PS-3SG new be.NPS-3SG
 'The book Payam gave to Iraj is new.'

but not:

- b. * ketâb-i payâm be iraj dâd- \emptyset jadid ast- \emptyset
 book-INDEF Payam to Iraj give.PS-3SG new be.NPS-3SG

The distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses likewise, has no bearing on the status of *ke*: it is obligatory in non-restrictive clauses like (9) as well as in the above restrictive relative clauses:

- (9) ketâb, ke hame ân râ dust dâr-and, hamrâh-e xub-i-st- \emptyset
 book that all it COMP friend have.PS-3PL companion-LINK good-INDEF-
 be.NPS-3SG
 'The book, which all like, is a good companion.'

but not:

- (10) * ketâb, hame ân râ dust dâr-and, hamrâh-e xub-i-st- \emptyset

3.1.3. Complement clauses: content clauses.

We distinguish two types of content clause according as they are governed by a noun or a verb. Compare, for example:

- (11) in aqide ke riyâzidân-ân bâhušan- \emptyset -and dorost ast- \emptyset
 this idea that mathematician-PL intelligent- \emptyset -3PL true be.NPS-3SG
 'This idea that mathematicians are intelligent is true.'

- (12) rezâ mi-dân-ad ke ali xâne n-ist- \emptyset
 Reza IMPFV-know.NPS-3SG that Ali home NEG-be.NPS-3SG
 'Reza knows that Ali is not home.'

In (11) the content clause is a complement of the noun *aqide*, whereas in (12) it is complement of the verb *mi-dân-ad*. The omission of *ke* from the above pair does not have the same effect:

- (13) * in aqide riyâzidân-ân bâhušan- \emptyset -and dorost ast- \emptyset
 this idea mathematician-PL intelligent- \emptyset -3PL true be.NPS-3SG
 'This idea that mathematicians are intelligent is true.'

- (14) rezâ mi-dân-ad ali xâne n-ist-ø
 Reza IMPFV-know.NPS-3SG Ali home NEG-be.NPS-3SG
 'Reza knows Ali is not home.'

The above observation and numerous similar cases indicate that while *ke* is optional in content clauses governed by verbs, it is obligatory in content clauses governed by nouns:

A subclass of content clauses dependent on a verb expresses a purpose:

- (15) mi-xâh-am (ke) hadaf-e ali râ be-dân-am
 IMPFV-want.NPS-1SG (that) aim-LINK Ali COMP NIN-know.NPS-1SG
 'I want to know Ali's aim.'

'Purposive *ke*', as in the above, is interchangeable with *tâ* 'in order':

- (16) mi-xâh-am (tâ) hadaf-e ali râ be-dân-am
 IMPFV-want.NPS-1SG (in order to) aim-LINK Ali COMP NIN-know.NPS-1SG
 'I want to know Ali's aim.'

Although in informal and colloquial language introducing clauses of purpose without *ke* is possible, there are numerous cases where omitting *ke* seems quite strange:

- (17) * ân harf-hâ râ zad-ø bâes-e delsardi-e ânhâ šav-ad
 it word-PL COMP hit.PS-3SG cause-LINK disappointment-LINK they be-
 come.NFS-3SG
 'S/he said those words; this caused them to be disappointed.'

3.2. Temporal *ke*

Temporal *ke* is used as an adverbial conjunction in a context where an event happens while another process is in progress. In this use, it means 'during the time that' which is normally expressed by *when* in English:

- (18) hasan râ me mi-nevešt-ø ke telefon zang zad-ø
 Hasan letter IMPFV-write.PS-3SG that telephone bell strike.PS-3SG
 'Hasan was writing a letter when the telephone rang.'

In joining two perfective verbs like the following, *ke* serves as a conjunction:

- (19) ĵalase tamâm šod-ø ke rezâ vâred šod-ø
 meeting finish become.PS-3SG that Reza arriving become.PS-3SG
 'The meeting was just over when Reza arrived.'

The above would be used in a context where a meeting is just over when Reza arrives. If Reza arrives a fairly long time after the meeting is finished, then the tense of the first clause will be past perfect (i.e., to explain anteriority):

- (20) *ĵalase tamâm ŝod-e bud-ø ke rezâ vâred ŝod-ø*
 meeting finish become.PCTPL become.PS-3SG that Reza arriving be-
 come.PS-3SG
 'The meeting had been over when Reza arrived.'

Neither in (21) nor in (22), can *ke* be used at the beginning of the sentence:

- (21) * *ke ĵalase tamâm ŝod-ø rezâ vâred ŝod-ø*
 that meeting finish become.PS-3SG Reza arriving become.PS-3SG
 'When the meeting was just over Reza arrived.'
- (22) * *ke ĵalase tamâm ŝod-e bud-ø rezâ vâred ŝod-ø*
 that meeting finish become.PCTPL be.PS-3SG Reza arriving become.PS-3SG
 'When the meeting had been over Reza arrived.'

However, both of the above will become acceptable if *ke* is replaced by *zamâni-ke* 'by the time that':

- (23) *zamâni-ke ĵalase tamâm ŝod-ø rezâ vâred ŝod-ø*
 the-time-that meeting finish become.PS-3SG Reza arriving become.PS-3SG
 'By the time the meeting was just over Reza arrived.'
- (24) *zamâni-ke ĵalase tamâm ŝod-e bud-ø rezâ vâred ŝod-ø*
 the-time-that meeting finish become.PCTPL be.PS-3SG Reza arriving be-
 come.PS-3SG
 'By the time the meeting had been over Reza arrived.'

Whereas English *while* can join two clauses expressing two coincident progressive events, as in *I was reading a book while Ali was playing*, *ke* cannot serve as a conjunction in such sentences:

- (25) * *man ketâb mi-xând-am ke ali bâzi mi-kard-ø*
 I book IMPFV-read.PS-1SG that Ali playing IMPFV-do.PS-3SG
 'I was reading a book Ali was playing.'

In order to change the above into an acceptable sentence, we must replace *ke* with *dar hâli-ke* 'while':

- (26) *man ketâb mi-xând-am dar hâli-ke ali bâzi mi-kard-ø*
 I book IMPFV-read.PS-1SG in situation-that Ali playing IMPFV-do.PS-3SG
 'I was reading a book while Ali was playing.'

In the above, the subordinate clause with *dar hâli-ke* 'while' can move to the beginning of the sentence—i.e., it can precede the main clause—without any significant semantic shift. In this case, unlike (26), *dar hâli-ke* is interchangeable with *zamâni-ke*:

- (27) dar hâli-ke/zamâni-ke man ketâb mi-xând-am ali bâzi mi-kard-ø
 in situat on-that I book IMPFV-read.PS-1SG Ali playing IMPFV-do.PS-3SG
 'While I was reading a book, Ali was playing.'

In spite of all the constraints discussed in the above, as far as the spoken language is concerned, temporal *ke* is very flexible in terms of its position in the sentence. It follows any constituent of the first clause:

- (28) ali ke mašq-aš tamâm šod-ø bârân šoru' šod-ø
 Ali that assignment-POSS finish become.PS-3SG rain starting become.PS-3S
 'No sooner had Ali finished his assignment than it started to rain.'
- (29) ali mašq-aš ke tamâm šod-ø bârân šoru' šod-ø
- (30) ali mašq-aš tamâm ke šod-ø bârân šoru' šod-ø
- (31) ali mašq-aš tamâm šod-ø ke bârân šoru' šod-ø

All four sentences express essentially the same semantic content. The forms differ from one another in the degree of emphasis they put on the constituent that *ke* follows. This issue will be taken up in the following section, where the focal use of *ke* is discussed.

3.3. *ke* as a focus marker

The focal use of *ke* is found mainly in the spoken language. Before discussing the role of *ke* as a marker of focality, it is necessary for us to discuss some general points related to focality within the framework proposed by Dik (1989). In the context of 'pragmatic functions' of the clause, Dik (1989: 263-287), citing examples from English, notes that various alternative expressions of a certain structure are not simply optional alternatives. He rightly asserts that 'in certain contexts, one form will be appropriate, while another may be inappropriate.' Dik's claim also holds in Persian. Consider the following examples:⁴

- (32) a. rezâ ke:âb râ xarid-ø
 Reza boc k COMP buy.PS-3SG
 'Reza bot ght the book.'
- b. rezâ ke:â**b** râ xarid-ø
 Reza boc k COMP buy.PS-3SG
 'Reza bot ght the **book**.'
- c. rezâ ke:âb râ xarid-ø
 Reza boc k COMP buy.PS-3SG
 'Reza **bot** ght the book.'

4 The peak of the prosodic contour is bolded in (32a-c).

- (33) a. rezâ ketâb râ az hasan xarid-ø
 Reza book COMP from Hasan buy.PS-3SG
 'Reza bought the book from Hasan.'
- b. ketâb râ rezâ az hasan xarid-ø
 book COMP Reza from Hasanbuy.PS-3SG
 'The book Reza bought from Hasan.'

As far as the propositional content of the clause is concerned, all forms in (32a-c) and (33a-b) are the same. However, they differ from one another in intonation and/or constituent ordering. For example, in responding to a question like (34), you would use (32a) but neither of (32b-c):

- (34) ki ketâb râ xarid-ø
 who book comp buy.ps-3sg
 'Who bought the book?'

Accordingly, one can say that different constituents of the underlying clause structure are used to convey certain pragmatic functions. 'Functions which specify the informational status of the constituents, in relation to the wider communicative setting in which they are used' are referred to by Dik as pragmatic functions. He discusses such functions in the context of making a distinction between 'topicality' and 'focality'.

Noting that a linguistic expression usually contains some *given* information and some *new* information, Dik (1989: 266) says:

Partially corresponding to the 'given'/'new' distinction, we may distinguish the dimensions of *topicality* and *focality*. Topicality characterizes those entities 'about' which information is provided or requested in the discourse. Focality attaches to those pieces of information which are the most important or salient with respect to the modifications which S wishes to effect in P_A (=addressee's pragmatic information [ed.]), and with respect to the further development of the discourse.

Dik (1989: 278) goes on to say:

Cross-linguistically speaking, the Focus function may manifest itself through one or more of the following focalizing devices:

- (i) prosodic prominence: emphatic accent;
- (ii) special constituent order: special positions for Focus constituents in the linear order of the clause;
- (iii) special Focus markers: particles which mark off the Focus constituent from the rest of the clause;
- (iv) special Focus constituents: constructions which intrinsically define a specific constituent as having the Focus function.

What we present in (32-33) are examples in support of Dik's claims in (i-ii); no further explanation seems necessary in relation to (i-ii), as we already elaborated on (32-33).

Ke is a typical example of what Dik suggests in (iii). In the following we try to show how *ke* plays the role of a focus marker when used with a focus constituent. *Ke* can follow the focus constituent to mark it off from the rest of the sentence:

- (35) *man ke bâ šomâ be sinamâ ne-mi-ây-am*
 I that with you to cinema NEG-IMPFV-come.NPS-1SG
 'As for me, I won't come to the cinema with you!'

The above would be used in a context where the topic of the discourse is 'your going to cinema' and I want to inform you that it is I who won't come to the cinema with you. Here, *man 'I'* is the most important part of what I want to convey to the speaker with regard to the topic of the conversation. In this interpretation, no special accent is put on *man 'I'*. In other words, *man 'I'* is not contrasted with any other possible subjects such as *u 's/he', to 'you', etc.* However, it is possible to pronounce *man 'I'* with a special accent in order to contrast it with other possible subjects. In the latter interpretation, (35) is translated into English as *It is not I who will come to cinema with you.* Here, the speaker immediately goes on to say, for example, *It is Mary who will come to cinema with you.*

As for the rest of the constituents of the sentence, *ke* can precede or follow the constituent to be focused. Consider (36) where *ke* follows the constituent *bâ šomâ* 'with you' and precedes *be sinamâ* 'to the cinema':

- (36) *man bâ šomâ ke be sinamâ ne-mi-ây-am*
 I with you that to cinema NEG-IMPFV-come.NPS-1SG
 'It is with you that I won't come to the cinema!'

Depending on the stress pattern, *ke* can be regarded as an immediate constituent of the constituent *šomâ ke*. If *šomâ ke* takes the stress, then *ke* belongs to this constituent. By contrast, *ke* will belong to the constituent *ke be sinamâ* if *ke be sinamâ* is stressed. Accordingly, the above sentence is open to two interpretations. In the first interpretation, where *ke šomâ* is stressed, the sentence would be used to express the idea that it is with you that I won't go to the cinema, typically with the implication that I would go to the cinema with someone else. In the second interpretation, where *ke be sinamâ* is stressed, the sentence would be used in a context where I mean that it is to the cinema that I wouldn't go with you, but not, say, to the park.

The same applies to *be sinamâ* and *ne-mi-ây-am* in (37):

- (37) *man bâ šomâ be sinamâ ke ne-mi-ây-am*
 I with you to cinema that NEG-IMPFV-come.NPS-1SG
 'I definitely won't come to the cinema!'

When *ke* appears at the end of the sentence, it usually functions in the structure of the whole sentence. In the following, the salient interpretation is that I convey to you that I am determined not to go to the cinema with you at all. Such a sentence would be used in a context where you expect me to go to the cinema with you, but I want to announce clearly that I will not:

- (38) man bâ šomâ be sinamâ ne-mi-â-y-am ke
 I with you to cinema NEG-IMPV-come.NPS-1SG that
 'It is with you that I won't come to the cinema!'

Ke never appears between the immediate constituents of a larger constituent:

- (39) a. * man bâ ke šomâ be sinamâ ne-mi-â-y-am
 I with that you to cinema NEG-IMPV-come.NPS-1SG
 b. * man bâ šomâ be ke sinamâ ne-mi-â-y-am
 I with you to that cinema NEG-IMPV-come.NPS-1SG

Ke can also appear at the beginning of the sentence:

- (40) Speaker: man in ketâb râ dust na-dâr-am
 I this book COMP liking NEG-have.NPS-1SG
 'I don't like this book.'
 Addressee: ke to in ketâb râ dust na-dâr-i?
 that you this book COMP liking NEG-have.NPS-2SG
 'You don't like this book, do you?'

The second sentence would be used in a context where you want to show your concern about what you hear by a rhetorical question. The nearest equivalent for such a question seems to be a tag question in English. For Persian speakers, here, as well as similar cases, *ke* is understood as the elliptical form of *to gofti ke* 'you said that'.

3.4. Interrogative marker *ke*

Ke may replace interrogative pronouns such as *ki* 'who(m)' and *če kasi* 'who(m)':

- (41) a. ki âmad-ø?
 who come.PS-3SG
 'Who came?'
 b. čekasi âmad-ø?
 who come.PS-3SG
 'Who came?'
 c. ke âmad-ø?
 who come.PS-3SG
 'Who came?'

However, as an interrogative marker, *ke* has a very limited use. It is hardly used in the spoken language, and even in the written language, the forms, *ki* 'who(m)' and *če kasi* 'who(m)' are generally preferred. It is only in the formal written language that one may find *ke*. While the versions of (41) are quite acceptable, (a) is the most frequent and (c) is the least frequent.

Ke has the same range of functions as *ki* and *če kasi*. In (41), for example, it is a subject, while (42)-(43) show it as object and complement of a preposition:

- (42) to ke rā did-ø?
 you whc COMP see.PS-2SG
 'Whom did you see?'
- (43) to az ke pul qarz kard-i?
 you from who money borrowing did.PS-2SG
 'Whom did you borrow the money from?'

3.5. Residual cases

Besides the cases discussed in the above there are some other uses of *ke*.

- A. To introduce the complement to minor clause.⁵ In this use, *ke* is obligatory:

- (44) xub ke xâne rā be iraj na-feruxt-am!
 good the t house COMP to Iraj NEG-sell.PS.1SG
 'Luckyly / I was lucky, I didn't sell the house to Iraj.'

In the above *xub* 'good' is serving as a minor clause which roughly means 'It is good'. The above would be used in a context, where I am so happy that I did not sell a certain house to Iraj, possibly because of some probable problems I would have faced if I had sold the house to Iraj.

As another example of the case, consider the following:

⁵ According to Fateni (1967:106), a minor clause is the one whose predication slot is empty:

šab be xε ir!
 night to good
 'Good night!'

A corresponding major clause would be as follows:

šab be xε ir ø-bād-ø!
 night to good NIN-be.NPS-3SG
 'Have a good night!'

See Sadock and Zwicky (1985: 162) for further discussion on minor clause types.

- (45) *âfarin ke az u farib na-xord-ø*
 good on you that from him/her fraud NEG.eat.PS-2SG
 'Good for you! you were not deceived by him/her!'

Here, *âfarin* 'good for somebody' is a minor clause. This sentence would be used in a context where I am praising or congratulating you because you did not allow yourself to be deceived.

- B. In response to warning. Sometimes the speaker wants to respond to a warning emotionally. In such cases, *ke* is used as a conjunction between two tokens of the same verb in:

- (46) Speaker: *hasan be mehmâni-ye to ne-mi-ây-ad!*
 Hasan to party-LINK you NEG-IMPV-come.NPS.3SG
 'Hasan won't come to your party!'

Addressee: *ne-mi-ây-ad ke nay-ây-ad!*
 NEG-IMPV-come.NPS.3SG that NEG-come.NPS.3SG
 'I don't care at all!'

The above would be used in a context where the speaker wants to warn the addressee that Hasan, one of his friends, won't participate in the party (probably because Hasan is angry with the addressee). Now the addressee uses the above sentence angrily and emotionally. This structure is an idiom, and is almost always used in the state of anger and emotion though it contains some elements of emphasis.

In the above, as well as all other similar cases, the first verb would be replaced by the appropriate form of the verb *xâstan* 'want':

- (47) *mi-xâh-am ke nay-ây-ad!*
 IMPV-come.NPS-1SG that NEG-come.NPS.3SG
 'I would like him/her not to come! (I don't care at all!)

- C. to convey complete failure. *Ke* is used as a negative verbal intensifier / conjunction between two instances of the same verb to convey a complete failure. The following would be used in a context where I want to indicate we waited for Reza to appear for a long time but he never came. This is another case of obligatory use of *ke*:

- (48) *har çe montazer-e rezâ nešat-im, nay-âmad-ø ke nay-âmad-ø*
 each what waiting-LINK Reza sit.PS-1PL NEG-come.PS-3SG that NEG-
 come.PS-3SG
 'We waited a long time for Reza but he didn't come.'

4. CONCLUSION

It has been argued in this article that *ke* has a variety of uses in Modern Persian. It can introduce different types of embedded clauses, including content clauses, comparative clauses and relative clauses. In addition, it may be used as a question word in interrogative sentences. *Ke* is also used in temporal adjuncts. In this use its meaning is comparable to English phrases like 'during the time that', 'while', 'when', etc. The role of *ke* as focus marker has a special place in the spoken language. Accordingly, one can say that among different morpho-syntactic elements in Modern Persian, *ke* has many functions. However, it should be noted that it is not always obligatory in the uses discussed in the article. The following table outlines different occurrences of *ke* in terms of its obligatory, optional and contrastive uses:

Table 1: Obligatory, optional and contrastive occurrences of *ke*

Occurrences of <i>ke</i>	
Complement clauses	
Relative clauses	The head NP is followed by pronouns like <i>ânče</i> Optional
	All other cases Obligatory
Content clauses	The head NP is followed by <i>ke</i> Obligatory
	The head VP is followed by <i>ke</i> Optional
Temporal <i>ke</i>	Obligatory
Focus marker <i>ke</i>	Contrastive
Question phrase <i>ke</i>	Contrastive
Residual cases	Complementizer to minor clauses Obligatory
	Response to statement of warning Optional
	Conveying complete failure Obligatory

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