



Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Dissertation Completion Fellowship
EOM Institute of Iranian Studies
University of Toronto

August 12, 2022

Dear Member of the Selection Committee,

I have known Sahar Taghipour since she was admitted to the PhD program at the Department of Linguistics, University of Toronto, in 2017. Sahar was the highest ranked admission of that year and was put forth for University of Toronto's prestigious and highly competitive Connaught scholarship. We were thrilled, even though not really surprised, when she received the award.

Sahar is now in her fifth year of doctoral studies. I have been closely engaged with her studies right from the outset. In her first two years, she took a course with me in advanced syntax and completed her first generals paper on double definiteness in Laki (Southern Kurdish) under my supervision. I was truly impressed by her meticulous research skills and work ethics, leading to an excellent research paper, later published in the peer-reviewed Canadian Journal of Linguistics. She was recently invited to give a talk about her research on the Laki noun phrase at an international workshop in Sweden. This shows clearly that experts in Iranian linguistics around the world have already made note of her scholarship.

Sahar then decided to focus on the syntax of Case and Agreement in Laki for her doctoral dissertation. This grew out of our joint work (with Sahar as lead author), which was presented at the highest ranking conferences in our field, WCCFL at UBC and GLOW, held virtually in Berlin. Our joint work has culminated in a manuscript which we are finalizing for submission to a top-notch journal. For her dissertation, Sahar has expanded the research into various aspects/constructions we could not cover in our work. She has already defended her thesis proposal and is now working on writing the various chapters of the thesis. One chapter is almost complete and she has a draft of two more chapters. That leaves her with one main chapter which she recently started drafting. She plans to defend her dissertation in the summer of 2023. When completed, Sahar's dissertation will be a major contribution to the syntax of Iranian languages in particular, and the syntax of Case and Agreement more generally.

Sahar Taghipour is an outstanding graduate student, the kind of student you come across only once every few years. She is not only very smart but also truly hardworking. Often, having one of these traits can lead to significant success, but having both of them at this

level will inevitably pave the way for remarkable achievements for Sahar. My colleagues in the Department of Linguistics often use Sahar as an example of an ideal student. Sahar has all the ingredients for a successful academic career. She is destined to make a mark in the Syntax of Iranian languages. I cannot think of a more deserving individual for the EOM dissertation completion award. The scholarship will help Sahar take on less work and focus on completing her dissertation. This will also allow her to focus on the dissemination of her work, setting her up for a successful job placement in the academia. While the work on the syntax of Iranian languages was centered around Persian for a long time, in recent years, with the addition of a number of graduate students in Europe and North America, the focus has turned to other Iranian languages and dialects. Sahar is among the most promising young scholars in this group I have gotten to know over the past decade. I have the highest possible recommendation for her for the EOM dissertation completion award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Arsalan Kahnemuyipour". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Arsalan Kahnemuyipour
Associate Professor of Linguistics