



Title	ONOMATOPOEIA RELATED TO HUMAN ACTION AND FEELING IN PERSIAN AND JAPANESE
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Citation	大阪外国語大学学報. 1986, 72(1), p. 17-37
Version Type	VoR
URL	https://hdl.handle.net/11094/81107
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ONOMATOPOEIA RELATED TO HUMAN ACTION AND FEELING IN PERSIAN AND JAPANESE

Hashem RAJABZADEH

ABSTRACT

Whether we consider the whole system of language a creation or not, it is evident that in any language there are some words and utterances made up out of natural sound, of which onomatopoeia or mimetics are the main part. A relatively large number of words in Persian and in Japanese owe their origin to attempts to imitate natural sound. Cries of animals are evident examples of this group of words. Even those few mimetic words apparently made up out of unrelated and meaningless elements are expressive of a kind of sensation or situation. The number of mimetic words commonly used in Persian is said to exceed 5000, of which only a limited part is covered by dictionaries. Writers employ mimetic words to decorate their language and the public use them to express themselves more clearly.

Mimetic words usually describe states, conditions or impressions, and in Japanese function mainly as adverbs, whereas in Persian they are typically nouns. The examples of sound symbolism in Japanese, and in Persian as well, enter into different derivation patterns. It is interesting to examine their lexical structure and syntactic features, to which a part of this paper concerns itself with a brief reference made to the literary heritage of the Japanese and Persian languages, both rich in onomatopoeia.

Mimetic words are, by meaning, divided into the three groups of phonomimes, phenomimes and psychomimes. Phonomimes imitate sounds, whereas phenomimes attempt to describe the manner or looks of a situation and psychomimes try to express one's inner feeling. This paper tries to examine the general features of phenomimes and psychomimes in Japanese and Persian as an introduction to the onomatopoeia related to human action and feeling. An appendix of most commonly used mimetic words in Persian with their equivalents in Japanese was added to provide a concise reference for comparison. This paper is a brief introduction to a subject deserving to be fully examined in the future.

INTRODUCTION

Linguists have, for a long time, argued about the origin of language and word formation without reaching a conclusion. Some consider the language a creation and some believe that language naturally develops from man's common sense. The question is a thread of the fundamental debate in philosophy over whether knowledge, wisdom and, as Zen Buddhism put it, enlightenment spring from man's consciousness or are from the outside world.

In what is called "The Chomsky Revolution" in linguistics, N. Chomsky in his book "Syntactic Structures" (1957) expounded his ideas on language and linguistic development: "The systematic structure of a language could be shown to be logically generated in accordance with the rules, the grammar of the language." (N. Chomsky, (1957)). Chomsky's exposition consists of six main statements in which he explains how a child is creative in his linguistic development.⁽¹⁾

Whatever the truth might be about the whole system of language, it is very evident that in any language there exists a group of words and utterances made up out of natural sound. Onomatopoeia or imitatives, as the name suggests, belong to this group.

An evident example of employing natural sound in forming new words is a kind of word play called "Kachijamisen" (oral 'shamisen'). It is a system of linguistic substitutes for musical notation employed by shamisen performers, in which phonemes of the language are put together to form surrogate morphemes (ton, ten, chin, rin, ren, tsun, shan, etc.), which are then associated with the three strings of the instrument and with the various strokings and fingerings to provide a complete mnemonic oral score for 'shamisen' performances, as shown in this table quoted from Miller⁽²⁾.

	Downstroke	Upstroke	Upstroke	Lefthand	Pizzicato
	Open	Fingered	Open	Fingered	Fingered
First string	ton(or)	tsun	ren	ro	Pren
Second string	ton	don	ren	run	Pren
Third string	ten	chin(or)chi	ren	ri	Pren
	Double step:shan				

Popular movies of semi historical "monogatari" in Japan are called "chanbara" that is an imitation of the clanking noise of a sword rattling. "Pachinko" is evidently a mimetic reflection of the clinking noise of many small balls.

"Imitation was once considered so important as to be made the basis for a theory of the origin

of language, he so-called 'bow-wow theory'." (3)

WORD, SOUND AND NATURE

Though borrowing has been the most common source of additions to the vocabulary of Japanese and Persian, new words are acquired or created in several other ways. Those which seem more prolific are derivation, compounding, functional shift, back formation and clipping, proper nouns, imitation, blending and original coinage.(4)

A relatively large number of words in Persian as well as in Japanese apparently owe their origin to attempts to imitate natural sounds. "Qār - qār" 'kā - kā', "mio - mio" 'niā - niā' and "go - gor" 'go - go' are supposed to remind us of the noises made by crows, cats and flowing water. They are not accurate imitations, since they are pronounced with sounds characteristic of the respective language. Both "qūqli - qūqu" (in Persian) and "koké - koko" (in Japanese) are imitatives of a rooster's crow. We must attribute the difference between these words to the differing sound system of the two languages.(5)

Of mimetic words, very few are apparently made up out of unrelated, meaningless elements. Outright coinage - as it is called by linguists - unlike the compound, clipping, derivative and blend, is hard to remember and less probably associated with their source. Nelson⁽⁶⁾ gives words like quiz, pun, slang, and fun as examples of coinage in English. In Persian هَلَهَفْ، هَلَهَفْ "hashalhaf" (hachalhaf) 'incoherent', "hapali - hapu" هَلَى هَبُو 'harum - scarum and قَشَمْ "mirza - qashamsham" are examples of these words. The last item is a compound made of "mirza" 'prince; an abolished common title for literate people' and "qashamsham" which is apparently a coinage. Persian dictionaries give varying interpretation for this word; 1) کسی که دعای میرزا بی و منشیگری کند اما از عهده کار برخیارید⁽⁷⁾; 2) a pretender who is not qualified as a clerk; 3) کسی که خود را لوس و نتر کند و بزرگتر از آنچه هست جلوه دهد⁽⁸⁾; 4) one who ingratitates himself in an insipid manner; 5) آدمی که دست به سیاه و سفید شمیزند و دماغ خود را بالا می گیرد⁽⁹⁾; 6) one who does not bother himself in doing anything and is arrogant (this source gives also another version of this word, قرتی - qerti - qashamsham⁽¹⁰⁾); 7) با جا مه و پیراهن جلف و قیمتی 'wearing a guy and costly clothes. Although its origin is not known, it is almost certain that the word is creation of a single comedian or a humorous person.'

ONOMATOPOEIA IN JAPANESE

Mimetic words usually describe states, conditions or impressions and in Japanese function mainly

as adverbs. By meaning, these words are divided into three groups:

PHONOMIMES (gisei – go) try to imitate sounds; “niā – niā” (cat), “kā – kā” (raven); “cun – cun” ‘chirping’; “būn – bun” ‘whizzing’;…

PHENOMIMES (gitāi – go) attempt to describe the manner or looks of a situation: “būrā – burā (šte iru)” ‘idle’; “šikū – šiku(nāku)” ‘crying quietly’; “bérā – berā” ‘eloquent’; “pocu – pocu” ‘in small drops’; “soyo – soyō” ‘breezy’; “hosō – hosō” ‘sneakingly’ ;…

PSYCHOMIMES (gizyoo – go)⁽¹⁰⁾ try to express one’s inner feeling or, in some cases, one’s physical reaction: “čiku – čiku” (me ga – – suru) ‘feeling pain’ (in one’s eye); “gān – gān” (atama ga – – suru) ‘having headache’; “bātā – bātā” (šinzuga – – suru) ‘beating heart (out of anxiety).

A word may be used with more than one meaning, and it is not always clear which group a given mimetic belongs to.

Phonomimes are more or less a part of the lexical structure of any language, since imitation is the most natural way of word formation. Phenomimes and psychomimes, to which this paper limits itself, are by far more deliberate in form and more sophisticated in significance. Japanese and Persian are rich in these forms of vocabulary.

LEXICAL STRUCTURE

The Japanese fondness for decorative language, as Miller puts it, “finds its most striking demonstration in the extremely rich repertory of forms incorporating various kinds of impressionistic sound symbolism. These are of many types. Some are simple onomatopoeia and appear to imitate certain sounds of nature”⁽¹¹⁾.

These examples of sound symbolism in Japanese enter into different derivation patterns. Typically they are nouns appearing before the particle “to” ‘in such a way as…’, or with the verb “su ru” ‘do’; often they are used as adverbs and often they are reduplicated.⁽¹²⁾

It is interesting that mimetics used with the particle “to” are considered nouns, since onomatopoeia in Persian typically have this feature.

The introduction given above about sound symbolism in Japanese holds true in Persian too, which incorporates a rich repertory of onomatopoeia amply used in literature.

A relatively large number of birds’ name apparently owe their origin to attempts to imitate the cries of the birds. In Japanese several of these combine an onomatopoetic morpheme with “su.” Old Japanese has both “ugu fisu” and “uku fisu” for the modern “uguisu” ‘warbler’. The Persian name of this bird, “čakāvak,” and the one for swallow, “čelčelé”, suggest a similar

origin. The cuckoo's name is melodious, as in this poem:

Uchishimeri The irises,
 Ayame zo koaru Their petals damp, are fragrant.
Hototogisu Listen ! The cuckoos
 Naku ya satsuki no Are calling now, this rainy
 Ame no yugure Evening in May

Fujiwara no Yoshitsune(1169 – 1206)

The cricket's mimetic name decorates this “senryū” (short verse);

Osaereba susuki when I pass it – a pampas grass;
 hanaseba kirigirisu when I let go – go a cricket (13)

In Japanese different kinds of crickets have their special names and cries; “matsu – mushi” (the pine cricket) that cries “chinchironin”, “suzu – mushi” (riinrin), “korogi” (ri ri ri ri); and a very noisy one, “kutsuma mushi” (gachagacha). In Heian sources an especially loud noised insect is called “kutsukutsu boshi,” the one that cries kutsukutsu.

It is interesting that the suffix “**ک**” , ak – ak in Pahlavi, middle Iranian language and “**ه**” – é in modern Persian, as “boshi” in Japanese can make a noun from a natural sound. سوت سوتک “sutsutak” ‘whistle’, بَدَدَك (بَدَدَه) “bad – badak” (bad – badé) ‘quail’, فَسْفَشَك (فَسْفَشَه) “fesfeshak” (fesfese)’ (sky) rocket’ and دُورُوك “dorowak” ‘go – cart’ are a few of many referents of this form.

Reflection of the sound of nature in the Japanese language could also be found among a number of adverbs with special shapes (many reduplicated) that refer for the most part to emotional effect; and hence are called Affective Adverbs;

(1) Reduplicated dissyllables such as niko – niko: nikkorī ‘smiling’; haki – haki: hakkiri ‘brisk’; meki – meki: mekkiri ‘remarkably’; yuku – yuku: yukkuri ‘slowly’; nobi – nobi: nobiri ‘carefree’; ūkā – ūkā: ukkari ‘inattentively’; biku – biku: bikkuri ‘startled’; and boyā – boyā: bon yari vague’.

(2) Similar morphemes that occur only in the reduplicated form: dosi – dosi ‘rapidly, constantly’; sékā – sekā ‘fidgety, restless’; zokú – zoku ‘feeling chilled’, and two more monosyllables: gun – gun ‘steadily’ (progressing), vigorously’; don – don ‘rapidly, steadily’.

(3) Disparate dissyllables: teki – pāki ‘briskly’; tirā – hora ‘sporadically’.⁽¹⁴⁾

Examples of mimetic words in similar shapes are also ample in Persian as shown in the Appendix.

SYNTACTIC FEATURES

Whereas mimetics in Persian are originally nouns, these words in Japanese are mainly adverbs simply intensifying a verb and are best understood in context with particular verbs: “te o hirā – hirā sāeru (demonstrating the falling cherry petals by weaving hand); “amé ga zā – zā furu” raining as a shower”; “ro sān wa hana o bürā – burā saseru” ‘the elephant’s trunk is pendulous’ . As explained by Suzuki Takao⁽¹⁵⁾ (in Japanese) not only are verbs and adjectives easier to define than nouns, but they can also be defined with more universality.

Of mimetics, some are types of lexical formation of subjective adjectival nouns;

- (1) Reduplicated monosyllables and dissyllables from classical Chinese, such as; “yuu – yuu” ‘deliberate’; “kéi – kei” ‘penetrating’; “ai – ai” ‘harmonious’.
- (2) Words of Japanese origin. These words can occur also as adverbs. Sometimes a subjective adjectival noun is directly followed by another one to form a new phrase. Thus “kuukuu” ‘vacant (– minded)’ followed by “zyakú – zyāku” ‘silent’ form “kuukuu zyākú – zyāku” ‘absent minded’. Some words appear to be used only in such formations, like “seisei doodoo” ‘fair and square’⁽¹⁶⁾.

Among mimetic adverbs, there are adjectival nouns which are defective in that they occur only with the subjective essive “to” (and not with the subjective couple “tari / taru”): ‘kit – to’ ‘surely; sternly’; “tyot – to” ‘a bit’. Other subjective adjectival nouns that are similarly defective seem to belong at the same time to other classes: “zokú – zoku” ‘repeatedly; successively’ is a predicate adverb but very occasionally used with the subjective essive “to” .⁽¹⁷⁾

Mimetic words in Persian have varying functions in the context:

- 1) Genitive; like جیر جیر گنجشک ها مرا بیدار کرد “jir – jir – é gonjeskhā marā bidār kard” ‘sparrows’ chirping woke me up’.
- 2) Adverbial; like ان پسر در را تحقیق کوبید “ān pesar dar rā taq – taq kūbid” the boy knocked repeatedly at the door.

Sometimes a mimetic noun (usually not a reduplicated one) is made an adverb by using the adverbial prefix “ی” ‘i’ in which case the last letter of the original word is pronounced hard; like; او هری به ریش ما خندید ‘u herri be rish – e ma xandid” ‘he laughed at me loudly’; ماشین غیزی راه افتاد “mašin qizi rāh oftād” ‘the car drove away with a whiz’

Not in a few cases کنان “konan” ‘in(such a) way’ is added to a mimetic noun, usually a reduplicated one, to transform it to a new class of word; like لکلک کنان “leklek konan” in this poem;

لَكَلَكْ بِيَادِ بَأْ يَدَكْ ، بَرْ قَسْرِ عَالِيٍّ جُونْ فَلَكْ
لَكَلَكْ كُنَانَكَ"الْمُلْكُ لَكْ، يَا مُسْتَعَانَ يَا مُسْتَعَانَ" Laklak biyāyad bā yadak, bar qasre āli čon falak
lek - īek konān k "al - molko lak yā mostaān
ya mostaān!"

3) Adjectival. Adding ي "i" or و "u" is the most usual way to change a mimetic noun into an adjective, like بجه زقزو/زقذقي "zeq - zeqi/zeq - zequ" 'grizzling baby', غُرْغُرُهُ/غُرْغُرِي "qhor - qhori/qhor - qhoru" 'muttering (old man)'.

4) Verbal. Compound (compositum) verbs are made with prefixed mimetic nouns, like هَاجَ وَ وَاجَ مَانَدَنَ "kerr - o - ker kardan" 'to titter', چَدْجَهْ زَدَنَ "čah - čah zadan" 'to twitter', هَاجَ وَ وَاجَ مَانَدَنَ "hāj - o - vāj māndan" 'to be flabbergasted'.

It is interesting that Mawlavi (1230 - 1273), the great Iranian mystic poet, has transformed the mimetic noun مِنْگ "ming" 'muttering' into a verb system مَنْگِیدَن "mangidan" 'to mutter', thereby modifying it with tenses;

اَيْنِ بِمَنْگِيدَنْ دَرْ زِبَانِ in bémangidand dar zir - ē zabān,
اَنِ اسِيرَانْ بَا هَمْ اَنْدَرْ بَحْثَ آنِ ān asirān bā ham andar bahs - ē ān.

Debating on the matter, the captives muttered among themselves...

پَسْ هَمِيْ مَنْگِيدَ بَا خُودْ زِيرْ لَبْ pas hamī mangid bā xod zir - ē lab,
دَرْ جَوَابْ حِيرَتَمْ آنِ بُوا لَعْجَبْ dar javāb - ē heiratam ān bolajab.

In reply to my reflection, the buffoon muttered...

Mimetics are employed to make verbs in Japanese also, like; "zāwā - meku" 'is rustling' (from "zāwā - zāwā" 'rustling'); "hata - meku" 'flutters' (from "hata - hata" 'fluttering'); "kirā - meku" 'glitters' (from "hirā - hirā" 'glittering')⁽¹⁸⁾.

ONOMATOPOEIA AND PHONETICS

As pointed out earlier, the varying forms of mimetics in different languages are to be attributed to their different phonetic systems. In giving examples of some mimetic quotations found missing in dictionaries, Martin⁽¹⁹⁾ explains that these words form a set with special phonetic characteristics. Some are very old and widely used; others are ephemeral creations. The phonetic system utilizes syllables and moras in ways that facilitate the creation of new variants from established forms. Phonetic symbolism helps make connotational variants that differ only in vowels or in choice of initial consonants by taking advantage of series like this;⁽²⁰⁾

(1) s sy t ty z zy d

(2) p py h hy b by

(3) k ky g gy

In Japanese a considerable proportion of mimetic words begin with “p –”, probably followed in frequency by forms in “k –”, “g –”, “h –” and “b” ;⁽²¹⁾ whereas in Persian “h –”, “d –” and “q –” are frequent.⁽²²⁾

The phenomenon related to imitation is sound symbolism; the habit of associating a certain type or class of meanings with a certain sound or cluster of sounds. There seems to be in Persian an association between the initial sound combination spelled “da – (ta)” with a sudden loud sound, as in “daq – daq” ‘percussion’, or “dang – dang” ‘equipoised’. Persian speakers associate the initial “go –” and final “z” with a rapid, turbulent, or destructive motion, as in “gorop – gorop” ‘beating noise’ “gor – gor” ‘crackling noise of fire’, “qiz” ‘whiz’, and “viz – viz” . In Japanese “z –” sounds imperative in this way, like “zā – zā” (amé ga – –) ‘shower rain’, and “zāwā – zāwā” ‘noise/fuss’.

As explained by Martin⁽²³⁾, one group of words is built upon single syllables by applying various expansions, with and/or without reduplications, as in the following set, all meaning (in Japanese) something like ‘puffing’ (together with extended senses, e.g. ‘suddenly’;

CV	paa	CVq – CV	pap – pa = paq – pa
CV	q paap	CV – CVq	pa – paq
CVn	pan	CVq – CVq	pap – paq = paq – paq

Of reduplicated mimetic words, a large group of dissyllables enter into variant formations of the following types;⁽²⁴⁾

CV ₁ CV ₂ – CV ₁ CV ₂	hata – hata, pata – pata, bata – bata ‘flap, slap hastily’
CV ₁ n/qCV ₂ ri	– – , pattari battari ‘with a bang; suddenly’
CV CV n	– – , patan, batan with a thud; suddenly’

In Persian, monosyllabic words are phonetically subject to the CV(C(C)) form, and dissyllables all follow the CV(C) – CV(C(C)) formula.⁽²⁵⁾

ONOMATOPOEIA IN PERSIAN AND JAPANESE LITERATURE

There are many imitatives of very delicate and imaginary nature in Japanese, and in Persian as well, each with a deep sensation and meaning. The Japanese describe a butterfly’s moving from flower to flower as “hira – hira”, and the (imaginary) sound of snowfall, most probably not heard of in any other language, is “šin – šin” . Rain can fall “zā – zā” ‘as a shower’, “pocori – pocori”, “pocu – pocu”, “párá – pára”, or “šito – šito” “drop by drop”. Many mimetic words are used to express feelings of pain.

An acquaintance or a friend living far away is sometimes remembered by a Persian speaker

Saying كوشم صدا کرد "gūšam sedā kard" or كوشش صدا کند "gūšas sedā konad" my/his ears are burning (in Persian, ringing'), which is also an expression of sensation.

Although extensively used by common people in daily conversation, hence in dictionaries mostly referred to as vulgar or colloquial, these words are well established in literature and appreciated by the classics of both cultures. Great poets and writers of Persian and Japanese masterpieces have applied these imitatives to decorate their languages and express themselves in the most impressive way. Examples of these masterly quotations are ample in Japanese and Persian classics to which a few references are made here;

In one passage of his work, Chikamatsu Monzaemon(1653 – 1735), the greatest of Japanese dramatists, maintains close parallelism in two pairs of lines of seven and five syllables, matching step by step an onomatopoetic word, a verb, and two nouns:

*kuru – kuru tagurt / kaze no yo wa /
 seki – seki mawaru / hi yōjin /*

"[the night patrolman] coughing and coughing as (he hurries) on his rounds with a cold on this (windy) night, as he cautions 'be careful of fire!' Here *kuru* is both *ku – ru* "come" and an onomatopoetic representation of the sound of coughing; *kaze* is both "a cold" and "wind," and *seki* both "hurrying" and "coughing." There is also assonance in the opening line, since the opening *kuru* is repeated, with initial voicing, in *taguru*.⁽²⁶⁾

An excellent example of how decorative language can illuminate a memorable prose is a passage describing the retired Emporor Kenreimon-in's hut, from the "Ohara goko" chapter of the Heike Monogatari (a Japanese war tale written around 1220):

ushiro wa yama, mae wa no – be, isasa ozasa ni kaze sawagi, yo Behind was the mountain and in front was the
 ni tatanu mi no narai to te, uki fushi shigeki takebashira, miyako moor, and the bamboo grasses rustled loudly in
 no kata no kotozute wa, madō ni yueru masegaki ya, wazuka the wind. As is the way with those who have no
 ni kototou mono to te wa, mine ni kozutau saru no koe, shizu ga friends in the world, she seldom heard any news
 tsumagi no ono no oto, korera ga otozure narade wa, masaki
 no kazura aotsuzura, kuru hito mare na – ru tokoro nari. from the capital, but instead the cries of the
 monkeys as they sprang from tree to tree and
 the sound of the woodcutter's axe...⁽²⁷⁾

As Miller⁽²⁸⁾ explains: "Here the phrase 'isāsa ozāsa' begins the employment of "notable" language in the passage; 'ozasa' is 'small bamboo, bamboo grass', and 'isasa' is a sound – symbolic form used both to imitate the sound of the wind as it rustles in the vegetation and to duplicate the rhythm and sound of the following word 'ozasa'. Apart from this, 'isasa' has, as the Japanese dictionaries put it, 'no meaning'."

Around the time of the compilation of the Heike Monogatari, Mawlavi(Rūmī; d.1230), the most celebrated Iranian mystic and poet, employed many onomatopoeic words in his poems;

از جمادی عالم جانها روید

Az jamādi ālamé janhā ravid,

غلغل اجزایر عالم بشنوید

qolqol – é ajzāy – e ālam bešnavid

Ascend from materiality into the world of spirits, hearken to the loud voice of the universe; ⁽²⁹⁾

گفتا تو چنگ مای، واندر ترکگ ما بای

Goftā to čang – é māii, vandar tarang – é māii

پس چیست زاری تو چون در کنار ما بای

pas čist zāri – e to, con dar kénar – e māii.

He said: "You are my harp, bearing and hearing the melody; now that you are with me, what is your lamentation for?

The word "čang" in this passage could also be interpreted as grip; and "tarang", a mimetic word, as the sound of bow – string when drawn, meaning accordingly you are caught and in my arrow – reach.

Mawlavi has also used the mimetic words "kāq – kāq" 'čaw – čaw', "ček – ček" 'drop by drop', "taq – taq" 'knocking noise', "hāy – hū" 'uproar', and "ti – ti" 'toddling' to decorate his verses;

کاغ کاغ و نعره زاغ سیاه

Kāq – kāq o nare – ié zāq – é siyah,

دائم باشد بدن را عمر کاه

dāēman bāsad badan ra omr kāh

Croaking and cawing of the black raven is always tormenting.

آب نور او چو بر آتش جهاد

Āb – e nūr – e ū čo bar ātaš jehad,

چکچک از آتش براند خوش جهاد

ček – ček az ātaš berānad xoš jehad.

His (Almighty's) light emitted on fire,

makes the splendid sound of "ček – ček", as if water drops on fire.

بر سر تختی شنید آن نیکنام

Bar sar – é taxti šanid ān niknām,

طبقی و هایه‌وی شب ز بام

taq – taqi o hāy – hūyi šab ze bām

On a bedstead at night, the good man noticed

a knocking noise and an uproar from the roof.

بهر ظلی نو بدر تی کند

Bahr – e tefli now pedar ti – ti konad

گرچه عقلش هندسه گیتی کند

garče aqlas hendese – i gitī konad.

The father exercises a new born baby to toddle

though himself a celebrated geometrician.

Before Mawlavi, Khāqani (d.1198) used, among the others, the mimetic word "tana – tananana" in his verses;

انگشت ارغونین روزی به رخمه بر

Angošt – e arqanun zan – é rumi be zaxmē – bar,

تب لرزه "تانا تانا" برآف کند

tablarze – ie "tanā – tanānā" barafkanad.

The Roman organist's finger(s) when playing,

makes the melody of "tanā – tanānā".

Hafez(d. 1389), The great Iranian poet, decorates his verse with “hu – hu” ‘bird’s cry’, and “hei – hei” ‘Ah!; alas!’

چو کل نقاب برا فکند و مرغ زد هُوُهُ Čo gol neqāb barafkand o morq zad “hu – hu” ,
منه ز دست پیاله چه می کنی هی هی maneh ze dast piyāleh če mikoni “hei – hei” ?

Now that the flower uncovered its beauty

and the bird is singing “hu – hu” , what is your lamentation for?

The following verse is also from Hafez, employing “han” and “hey” ‘hey!';

هشیار شو که مرغ چمن مست گشت هان! Hošyār šo ke morq – e čaman mast gast hān!

بیدار شو که خواب عدم در بی است هی! Bidār šo ke xāb – é adam dar pei ast hey!

Beware! Come to your senses now that the nightingale is intoxicated (of joy)

Hey! wake up now that the eternal sleep (death) will follow.

Abolfazl – e Beihaqi (d. 1077), a great writer and historian of the 11th century Iran, in his book of history, “Tarix – e Beihaqi” , describes the horror of the “Saraxs battle” by the chinking noise of swords;

و کُرکاترک بخاسته گفتی هزاره زار پُستک می کوئند، و شعا
سنانها و شمشیرها در میان گرد می دیدم . (30) Va tarkātark bexāst, gofti hezār – hezār potk
mikuband, va šoāe šanānha va šamšīrhā dar
miyān – é gard mididam.

‘The chinking noise of sword rattling resounded, as if thousands of smith’s hammer are being beaten; and I could see the reflection of spears and swords in the dust.’

The noise of sword rattling tingles differently in the ears of Nizami(d. 1217), the great lyric poet, who records it “tarangātarang” in these versés of his book, “Sharafnāmeh” ;

ترنگاترنگ در خشته تیغ Tarangātarang – é daraxsandé tiq,
ز مه تا به ماهی برآورده میغ ze mah tā be māhi barāvardé miq.

The clanking noise of the shining swords raised a cloud – like dust

ترنگاترنگی که زد ساز او Tarangātarang – i ke zad sāz – é ū,
به از زند زردش و آواز او beh az zand – e zardošt o āvāz – é ū.

The clanking noise of his sword(or, the melody of his instrument played,)

Sounds better than “Zand” (versed book) of Zoroaster and its melodious recital.

In contemporary Persian literature mimetic words are also commonly employed by distinguished poets and writers. The words “dang – dang” ‘dingle’, and “xeš – xeš” ‘rustle’ in the following verses from Fereydūn Tavallali(d. 1985) are evident examples;

سگاه خیره کزدمی از گوشة مناک، Nāgāh xiré každomi az guše – ié moqāk, az dang – dan
از دنگ دنگ تیشه هراسن و خشنناک g – é tiše harāsān o xašmnāk; sar mikāšad ze jomjomeii
سرمی کشد ز جُمجمه ای شومودلگرای šūm o delgazāi, mitāzadaš be masti o miduzadaš be jāi
میتا زدش بمستی و میدوزدش بجای

A badstrong scorpion, alarmed and provoked by the gingle of chip – axe, suddenly appears from the corner of the pit. . .

گاه در خشخش پرهمهه، مرگ درخت
رہنی میجهد از گوشه، دیوار بزیر
مادری میپرد از گریه، طفلی از خواب
کودکی میمکد آهسته ز پستانی شیر.
(31)

Once in a while, in the aproaring rustle of the death of tree, a thief jumps down a wall. . .

In a passage of the novel “Mādarbozorg Xāb nabud” (the Grandmother was not Asleep) by F.Tonekaboni, the mimetic words کرگری “kor – kori” ‘nonsense’, هولهولکی “hol – holaky” ‘hurry – scurry’, and

تاتاپ “tāp – tāp” ‘rattling’ are expressive;
او را که بی خبر ایستاده بود و کرگری می خواند، دو سه متر آنطرف تر
پرتاب کرد. هولهولکی خودش را تو انداخته بود و حتی فرا موش کرده بود
سلام هم بکند. صدای تاتاپ با بجهها را از توی تاریکی می شنید.
(32)

U ra kē bixabar istāde bud o korkori mixānd do sé metr āntaraftar partāb kard.

Holholaki xodaš ra tú andāxte va hattā farāmūš karde būd salām ham bekonad.
Sédāi – e tāp – tāp – é pāy – é baččehā rā az tūy – é tārīki mišanid.

(The boy) pushed the woman who was standing on his way and speaking nonsense.
He had rushed in hurry – scurry and had even forgotten to great. He could hear the rattling of the childeren's foot – fall in the dark.

APPENDIX

The following list of Persian and Japanese mimetic words (Phenomimes and Psychomimes, and mainly reduplicated ones) is extensive but not exhaustive. The items, arranged in Persian alphabetic order, were to display similar sets in a rough sort of way.

Japanese equivalents were in most part compiled by consulting a group of native speakers of different social strata.

Persian		Japanese
Āax,	خ	“ouch.
āax – o – ux,	خ و او خ	To moan with pain”
āax – o – vāax,	خ و وا خ	
āah,	ه	
āah – o – vāh,	ه و وا ه	
vāah,	وا ه	
ox	و خ	
Āx,	خ	“hauking”
ax – ax	خ خ	
Āy	ي	“oh! alas!”
āy – āy	ي ت ي	
Ey šegeft	ای شگفت	“oh!”
hey	هی	Wā! héé
Bām	با م	“thump on the head” Pokā – pokā
bāmb	با م ب	
bāmb – bāmb	با م ب با م ب	
Boč – boč,	بُچ بُچ	“chatter”
peč – peč,	پچ پچ	
pič – pič	پچ پچ	
Bah!	ه	“oh! wow!
vah! vah – vah!	وه	O that!”
bah – bah!	به به	
pah! په pah – pah!	په په	
zéh!	زه	
Pok پك pok – pok	پك پك	“puf”
Pet – pet	پت پت	
Tāp – tāp	تا ب تا ب	“to go pit – a – pat; beating”
Čelik – Čelik	چليک چليک	
Jerang – jerang	جرنگ چرنگ	“jingle”
jering – jering,	چرينگ چرينگ	
jiring – jiring,	چيرينگ چيرينگ	
jelang – jelang,	جلنگ جلنگ	
jīng – jīng,	چينگ چينگ	
darang – darang,	درنگ درنگ	
dring – dring,	درينگ درينگ	
dang – dang,	دنت دنت	
dang – o – ding	دنت و دينگ	
Jéz – jez	جز جز	“sizzling, frizz”
jezz – o – jez	چجز و جز	
jezz – o – vez,	جز و وز	Merā – merā, hiri – hiri(itai)

jelezz – o – velez	جِلْز وَ وِلْز		
Jéq – jéq, jéqq – o – jeq	جِقْ وَ جِقْ	“rattling noise”	Kaṭa – kaṭa, pon – pon
Jír – jír jír – o – jír jír – o – vir	جِيرْ جِيرْ جِيرْ وَ جِيرْ جِيرْ وَ وِيرْ	“chrip, chirr, peep”	Gámi – gámi
Jik – jik	جِيكْ جِيكْ	“chrip, peep”	Gámi – gámi
Čap – čáp, čap – čap, čalap – čalap Šalap – o – šalap, máč – o – muč	جِبْجاَبْ جِبْجَبْ جِلْبْ جِلْبْ شِلْبْ وَ شِلْبْ ماَجْ وَ موَجْ	“smooching”	Chu – chu – buju – buj u
Čak – čak	جِكْ جِكْ	“dripping”	Potá – potá
Ček – ček	چِكْ چِكْ	“drop by drop”	Počuri – počuri, para – para, poču – poču, seto – seto
Čah – čah	چِهَّ چِهَّ	“twittering”	
Mur – mur	مُورْ مُورْ	“creeping sensation, shivers”	
Xār – xār	خَاّر	“palpitation of the heart”	Hārā – hārā
Xar – xar xor – xor	خُرْ خُرْ خُرْ خُرْ	“snore, ruckle, death – rattle”	Go – go –
tap – tap, tālāp – tālāp	تَبْ تَبْ تَلَابْ تَلَابْ		
Tap – tap, tālāp – tālāp, tap – o – tup, gorom – gorom, gorop – gorop	كَبْ تَبْ تَلَابْ تَلَابْ تَابْ وَ تَابْ گُرْمَبْ گُرْمَبْ گُرْبْ گُرْبْ	“ralpitation”	Dokí – doki, dokín – dokin,
Topoq	تُبْق	“stammering”	
Tarang, tarangā – tarang, tarkātark	كَرَنْگ كَرَنْگَا كَرَنْگ تَرْكَاتَرْك	“sword rattling; clank(ing noise)”	Čanbara
čākačák čakačák čakāčák čaqačaq	چَاكَا چَاك چَاكَا چَاك چَاكَا چَاك چَاقا چِقْ		
Tarang	تَرَنْك	“noise of bow – string”	

Tarang	ترنگ	“noise of string instrument”	
Taraq – o – turuq, šaraq – o – šúruq	ترق و شروق شراق و شرۇق	“crackling (noise)”	Gisi – gisi, gata – gata
Taq – taq taq – o – túq	تغىخىقىقىقى تىق و توق	“knocking, rattling noise”	Ze ton – ton
Ték – ték, tik – ták, tik – tik, tik – o – tik	تىك تىك تىك تاك تىك تىك تىك و تىك	“click, tick” “beating of pulse”	Čikuta – čikuta, koč – koč
Tik – tik	تىك تىك	“feeling chilled, thrilled”	Hata – bata, hara – hara
Tété – pété	تىتە پېتە	“stammering”	
Talān – talān	تلان تلادن	“in a stately manner, to sail”	
Talaq – talaq, xerr – o – xer, čélek – čélek,	تلقىلاق تلاغ خېر و خېر چىلک چىلک	“jolting, rattling, rumbling”	Karan – koron (for geta only)
Sok(zadan)	سۇك (زىن)	“goad, prod”	Gāri – gāri
Sok – sok, gom – gom = kom – kom	سۇك سۇك گەم گەم، گەم گەم	“foot – fall”	Téku – téku
Süt(zadan)	سۇت (زىن)	“whistle”	Booo – booo
Sú – sú	سۇ	“flicker, glimmer”	Hirā – hirā
Šát – o – šút, qārt – o – qūrt, hārt – o – pūrt	شات و شوت قارت و قورت هارت و بورت	“bragging, bluffing”	
Šáláp – o – šulup	شا لاب و شولوب	“flopping”	Bācha – bācha, Jābu – jābu
Šer – šer	شۇر	“murmuring (noise)”	
Šor – šor	سۇر سۇر	“(noise of) falling water”	Zā – zā (furu)
Qār – o – qūr	قار و قور غار و غور	“rumbling noise”	Qūrū – qūrū, qū – qū
Qér – qér	غۇر غۇر	“cracking noise, gurgling”	Gara – gara
Qor – qor, qor – o – lond, lond – lond	غۇر غۇر غۇر و لۇند لۇند لۇند	“grumbling, murmuring, muttering”	Bú – bú, buču – buču, gāmi – gāmi
Qarang	غۇرنگ	“clamour,	

Qariiv qolqol	غَرِيبٌ غَلْغَلٌ	exclamation”	
Qež, غَزْ qíž,	غَزْ	“ping;whiz”	Suu – – ;hiün;hiu
Qiž – qíž, viž – viž	غَيْزٌ غَيْزٌ وَيْزٌ وَيْزٌ	“creacking noise”	
Qéž – qéž, gom – gom, kom – kom	غَزْ غَزْ گَمْ گَمْ کَمْ کَمْ	“crackling noise”	Kiukk – kiu
Qaš – qaš, qāh – qāh, قَاهْ qah – qah, qahqaha, kér – kér, kerr – o – ker kex – kex her – her hérre – kérre hér – o – hér herri	غَشْ غَشْ قَاهْ قَاهْ قَهْقَهَه كَرْ كَرْ كَرْ وَ كَرْ كَخْ كَخْ هَرْ هَرْ هَرْهَهْ هَرْ وَ هَرْ هَرْيِ	“fit of laughter, boisterous laugh, titter”	Kusu – kusu, nia – nia, nita – nita, kérā – kérā lak – ak wāhá – há hé hé hé hé
Xer – xer, Xerr – o – xer,	خَرْ خَرْ خَرْ وَ خَرْ	“ruckle”	Gi – gi
Xeš – xeš	خَسْ خَسْ	“rale;rattle”	
Xeš – xeš xešš – o – xeš	خَشْ خَشْ خَشْنَ وَ خَشْنَ	“rustle, frow – frow”	Kāsā – kāsā, gāsā – gāsā
Dār – dār	دَارْ دَارْ		Giyā – giyā, gā – gā
Dālāmb – dālāmb	دَالَامْبَ دَالَامْبَ		Ra – ra ra – ra – ra –
Dālāmb – o – dūlūmb, dālang – o – dlúng, dang – o – fang	دَالَامْبَ وَ دَوْلُومْبَ دَالَانْكَ وَ دَلْنُونْكَ دَنْكَ وَ دَنْكُونْكَ	“pomp and circumstance”	
Daraq(o)daraq	دَرْقَ (وَ) دَرْقَ	“crucking(noise)”	Gāta – gāta
Daq – daq, daq – o – daq	دَقْ كَدْقَ دَقْ وَ دَقْ	“percussion”	Kon – kon, ton – ton, don – don – don – don
Dang – dang, dangādang	دَنْكَ دَنْكَ دَنْكَانْكَ	“ding – dong, equipoised”	Gan – gan
Dō – dō	دَوْ دَوْ	“(sensation in painful eye)”	Čira – čira, čiko – čiko
Zéq – zeq, zéq – o – zūq, zāq – o – zūq, zāq – o – ziq	ذَقْ ذَقْ = زَغْ زَغْ ذَقْ وَ ذَقْ زَاقْ وَ زَوْقَ زَاقْ وَ زَيْقَ	“clattering, chirping, grizzling”	Ga – ga –

Zoq – zoq	ڏڻ	“having a sharp pain”	Zuki – zuki, zukin – zukin, juki – juki, zi – zi –
Zér – zer, ar – o – ūr	ڙڏ ڙر عر و عور	“gizzling as a baby”	Gāmi – gāmi, ga – ga –
Zol – zol	ڙل ڙل	“dazzling(eye)”	Jiro – jiro
Zamzam	ڙڙم	“humming”	Sārā – sārā, tsuru – tsuru
Sekseké, hakče, hakak, hake	سڪڪے هڪچه هڪڪ هڪه	“hiccup”	Goho – goho, hikú – hikú
Kāv – kāv kal – kal	ڪا و ڪا و ڪل ڪل	“idle talk”	Boču – boču gā – gā; wā – wā –
Gorop – gorop	ڳُرُوب ڳُرُوب	“beating(noise)	Bātā – bātā
Gor – gor, gorr – o – gor	ڳُر ڳُر ڳُر و ڳُر	“(noise of)flowing water”	Go – go(kawa ga – –) dō – dō –
Hōrr – o – hōr	هُر و هُر	“(noise of)falling water”	Zā – – do – do – do – do – do
Gor – gor	ڳُر ڳُر	“cracking noise of fire”	Bō – – bō – – pac – pac
Gor – gor	ڳُر ڳُر	“(sensation of high fever)”	
Géz – géz(kardan)	گز گز	“(to)smart as a wound”	Bíri – bíri piri – piri
Kom – kom, ڪم gom – gom	گم گم	“digging tone”	Don – don
Gij – gij gij – o – vij	گيچ گيچ گيچ و ويج	“giddy, dizzy”	Fūra – fūra
Lop – lop(xordan) holop – holop	لُوب لُوب(خوردن) هُلپ هُلپ	“(to)lap; – gazzle”	Gaču – gaču
Laq – laq	لُخ لُخ ٽٽٽق	“shaking”	Būra – būra(saseru) dota – dota
Lok(negah kardan) zol – zol; ber – ber	لُک(نگاہ کردن) ڙل ڙل بر ٻر	“(to staire)”	Jiro – jiro; ji – to
Lek – lek(kardan)	لُک لُک(کردن)	“scraping along; hanging or logging behind”	Toro – toro noro – noro

Leí – leí(kardan)	لَيْ لَيْ (کردن)	“hopping”	Pyūn – pyūn(tobu)
Lah – lah(zadan)	لَهَّ (زدن)	“panting; yearning”	Hā – hā –
Malač – malač; malač – o – muluč	مَلَّجَ وَ مَلَوْجَ	“ (to, smach one's lips; lick one's lips”)	Guča – guča
Mūs – mus(kardan)	مُؤْسَ مُؤْسَ (کردن)	“flattering”	Peko – peko
Noč – noč(kardan)	نُجُجَ (کردن)	“(as a negative answer)”	Ue – ue
Qelqel(ak)	غِلْغِل (ک)	“tickling”	Kūsūgūtāi
Qol – qol	غُلْغُل	“gurgle”	Qoču – qoču
Qol – qol	غُلْغُل	“bubbling(noise)”	Tok – tok
Qol – qol	غُلْغُل	“bubbling(noise)”	Gūra – gūra
Qang – gqang	غَنْجَ غَنْجَ	“grizzling (noise)”	Tí – ti
Fés – fés més – més	فَسْ فَسْ	“lingering; (to tarry, dally)”	Toro – toro, Gūzū – gūzū
Faš, faš – faš	فَشْ فَشْ	“gushing, squirting”	Híss
Fén – fén, fin – o – fin	فَنْ فَنْ	“snot”	Su – su(hana é – –) jūro – jūro,
Féng(o)féng, mén(o)mén	فِنْگَ (و) فِنْگَ	“muttering”	Buču – buču
Füt – füt	فُوتْ فُوتْ	“whistling”	Fū – fū
Qārt – o – qūrt hart – o – purt	قَارْتَ وَ قُورْتَ	“bragging”	
Qāq	قَاق	“tumbling(noise)”	Qāšan
Qāl – qālé, qāl – o – qil, qāl – maqal	قَالْ قَالَهْ	“noise;fuss”	Zāwa – zāwa
Qerč – qerč, qereč – quruč, qoroč – qorocč	قَرْجَ قَرْجَ	“(crackling noise of teeth)”	Bāri – bāri
Qolop – qolop, qort – qort	فُلْبَ فُلْبَ	“gulp – gulp, sip”	Kogū – kogū, kirā – kirā, gobu – gobu
Qili – vili	قِيلَى وَ بِلَى	“gnawing sensation; turn over”	

Kér – kér کر کر xér – xér	خُر خُر	“ humming”	Gārá – gārá
Korkori(xandan)	گرگری خواندن	“(evade the main question)”	
Keš – o – feš	کش و فش	“ coquetry; amorous gest”	
Néq; néq – néq nék – o – näl	بغ، ببغ پک و نال	“ nagging; complaining”	Buču – buču
Vér – vér	ور ور	“ labbering; muttering”	Zāwa – zāwa; koča – koča; goča – goča.
Vang, vang(o)vang	ونگ ونگ ونگ	“ cony; grizzle or cry”	Ogā – ogā
Veng – veng	ونگ ونگ	“ grizzle”	Wāy – wāy(sawagu)
Vūl – vūl	وُول وُول	“ tossing”	
Vey فی vya vāy وای vir vaveila!	وای ویر واویلا	“ woe! alas!”	Kā
Voy voy!	وُی وُی	“ oh!”	Henā – henā!
Ha'! ها Hín! هین Hó! hān! ها ن hé! ho!	هو هوی	“ oh! behold!”	Hé – – !
Hāj – o – vāj	هاج و واج	“ flabbergasted”	
Hā! ن ها han! hān – o – hín! hā – vo – hān!	ها هان و هین ها و هان	“ beware”	Wā – ! yā!yā!
Hāv و ها hāv – o – hāv	ها و ها و	“ war cry”	Wā – – –
Hāy!	های	“ oh! ah!”	Mā – – !
Hāy – hā(y) hāyā – hāy	(های ها های های های	“ cry of weeping”	Poro – poro; ōy – ōy
		“ to be choked with tears”	Šiku – šiku(nako)
Hāy های Huy hāy – ha(y) hāy(o)hū(y)	هوي های ها (های) های (های هم)	“ tumult; uproar”	Zāwa – zāwa gāya – gāya wāy – wāy
Hāh!hāh!hāh!	هاه هاه هاه	“ hey!”	oy!
Hāy! های hoy! hāy – hay!	هوي های های	“ hey!hurry up! ”	Sā – sā –
Herā	هرا	“ noise of falling debris”	Gašan

Horā	هُرَا	“ alarm;fear”	Wa! ka – !
Horrā	هُرّا	“ dreadful noise”	Ban;don
Horrà! هرا Hūrrā	هُورّا	“ hurrah;cheer”	Banzai!
Hort(hort)	هُرْت + هُرْت (هُرْت)	“ sip”	Suru – suru
Horry	هُرّى	“ (to have a rasping sensation)”	Doki – doki; botari
His! هیس hiš!	هیش	“ hiss”	ši – – –
Heq – heq هق hak – hak	هکهک	“ cry of weeping”	Méso – méso;
héqq – o – heq	هق هق		
Hén – hen	هَن هَن	“ to gasp for breath”	Hā – hā – hā
Ho(y)	هو (ی)	“ false rumor”	
Havār(kašidan)	هَوَار (کشیدن)	“ cry for help, shout”	Waa – ;ka –

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- 16) cf. Martin, id. pp. 755 – 758.
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- 22) For the phoneme "q" see: Windfuhr, L. Cernot; *Persian Grammar, History . . . in "Trends of Linguistic" Series*, Mouton, The Hague, 1979, pp. 138 – 9.
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