Adposition and Its Correlation with Verb/Object Order in Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati Based on Dryer's Typological Approach

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Abstract

This paper is a descriptive-analytic study on the adpositional system in a number of northwestern Iranian languages, namely Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati, based on Dryer's typological approach. To this end, the correlation of verb/object order was examined with the adpositional phrase and the results were compared based on the aforesaid approach. The research question investigated the correlation between adposition and verb/object order in each of these three varieties. First, the data collection was carried out through a semi-structured interview that was devised based on a questionnaire including a compilation of 66 Persian sentences that were translated into Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati during interviews with 10 elderly illiterate and semi-literate speakers, respectively, from Hashtpar, Bandar Anzali, and Rostamabad of the Province of Gilan for each variety. Then, the transcriptions were examined in terms of diversity in adpositions, including two categories of preposition and postposition. The findings of the study indicated a strong correlation between the order of verbs and objects with postpositions. More specifically, in most samples in all the varieties, objects precede verbs and postpositions are predominantly employed.

Keywords: Adposition; Correlation; Dryer's Approach; Gilaki; Taleshi; Tati

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INTRODUCTION

The ancient Iranian languages come in a series of primary Iranian languages, which have remained more or less unchanged in their early morphological structure, despite all the phonetic details (Schmit, 2003). Internal developments in Iran's long middle ancient period co-occurred with the morphological collapse of the ancient Iranian language, which triggered the deviation of the entire primary Indo-European languages. The comparative study of adposition in Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati varieties of the northwestern Iranian languages, which were derived from the same language in the middle age, indicates that in Middle Western Iranian languages, adposition is used as a postposition, preposition, and circumposition synchronically (Rastorgueva, 2012 & Brunner, 1977). The varieties as mentioned above, are from the new Iranian varieties of the northwestern branch (Dabir Moghaddam, 2013).

Despite the ancient features of Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati varieties and the fact that they have the same root, no comprehensive research has been carried out on adposition and its correlation with verb/object order in these three varieties. Since most of the studies have been conducted to describe the linguistic elements of these varieties, the purpose of the present study was to analyze, discuss and compare the adpositional system and its correlation with the order of verb and object based on Dryer's typological approach.

Greenberg (1963) has presented some information about pairs of elements for a sample of 30 languages. He has classified languages based on subject, object, and verb to suggest 45 universals.

Dryer (1992) studied the word order and their correlations based on a sample of 625 languages. He mentioned twenty-four pairs of elements and examined the degree of correlation between those pairs of elements and the order of verb/object. In addition, Dryer prepared a complete list of the correlation pairs, which has never been discussed in the typological literature.

Many language varieties are at risk of being forgotten due to the high migration rate of the young generation to surrounding cities and lack of mother tongue transmission to the next generation. It is hoped that by conducting this study a step could be taken to strengthen the culture of this area.

Dialectology is a branch of language sociology that studies and investigates different language variations based on their geographical distribution and relevant components (Modaresi, 2005). According to Comrie (2001), "language typology is a systemic study of the diversity of languages." (p.25). He also believes that some general principles govern the diversity of languages (cited in Dabir Moghaddam, 2013).

According to Greenberg (1974), we owe the first classification of morphology to Fridrich Von Schlegel. In his work (1808) on German, Schlegel divided the languages into affix and inflection. Agust Von Schlegel extended his

brother's dual classification of languages to a triple one including languages without grammatical structure, affixing languages, and inflectional languages. Later, languages without grammatical structure and inflection were called 'isolating languages' and 'agglutinating languages' (Dabir Moghaddam, 2013).

In 1963, Greenberg presented data for several pairs of elements for a sample of 30 languages and data for a subset of these pairs of a more significant number of languages. He believed that universals are affinity of languages, and typology is the systematic differences among them (Dryer, 1991). He also obtained 45 implicit universals by examining 30 languages. 28 were related to word order among these universals, and the other 17 were related to inflectional categories. The word order of languages refers to the order of any set of elements in sentences or phrases.

Dryer (1991) used the term verb-initial to refer to a language in which both subjects and objects generally follow verbs. He used the term verb-final in an analogous way to refer to languages in which both subjects and objects typically precede verbs. Also, "if a pair of elements X and Y is such that X tends to precede Y significantly more often in VO languages, then <X, Y> is a correlation pair, and X is a verb patterner, and Y is an object patterner concerning this pair" (Dryer, 1992, p. 87). For instance, since OV languages tend to be postpositional and VO languages are prepositional, we can say that the ordered pair <adposition, NP> is a correlation pair. Concerning this pair, adpositions are verb patterners, and NPs combine with object patterners (Dryer, 1992).

In the geographical territory under study, the coast of Caspian Sea, there are a significant number of language varieties. Variety is a neutral coverage term that can be used as a general statement and whenever we want to avoid keeping ourselves under a specific term the word 'variety' can be helpful. Two varieties whose speakers do not have mutual understanding are two different languages. "Dialects are two varieties whose speakers have mutual understanding. But there are phonetic, phonological, lexical, and grammatical differences between two varieties of languages." (Dabir Moghaddam, 2013, p. 23). Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati varieties belong to the northwestern Iranian languages. Taleshi is spoken in Gilan and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the southern border of Caspian Sea with several accents. Some linguists divide Gilaki variety into two groups of 'Biya pas', which is west Gilan, located in the western Sefid Rud in cities such as Rasht, Fuman, Someh Sara, and Bandar Anzali. The second group, 'Biya pish', is the dialect of eastern Gilan located in the east part of Sefid Rud in cities such as Astaneh Ashrafieh, Lahijan, Langarud, and Rudbar. Tati variety, which includes different dialects, spreads over a vast area from the south of Aras River to the north of Saveh and it extends toward some parts of north Khorasan such as Gifan.

One of the orientalists who studied Gilaki variety is Beresien (1852), who wrote a book on Gilaki structure during the three years of his residence in Iran. Cristiansen (1936-1944), a

professor of Juris Prudence at Copenhagen University, is a scholar who wrote a book titled *Gilan Dialect of Rasht*, published by Soroush publication in 1995. Massoud Pourryahi (1974) has chosen Gilaki Dialect of Rasht as his doctoral dissertation at Tehran University. This research has illustrated six vowels that are limited compared to vowels of the Persian language. "The Compendium Linguarum Iranicarum" resulted from several years of efforts by 17 most prominent Iranian linguists published by Professor Rodiger Schmitt in 1989. In this book, 17 scientists and specialists of different nationalities have taken a historical approach to work primarily on Iranian languages and dialects, especially Gilaki, Tati, and Taleshi. This book was translated by Rezaei Baghi Bidi et al. in 2004. In a book titled *Grammar Features and Dictionary of Gilaki,* Sartip Pour (1990) investigated Gilaki variety. He seems to believe that Gilaki, spoken in Rasht is equivalent to Gilaki variety. In addition to its phonology and phonetics, he has also devised morphology and verb aspects.

In his master's thesis titled "Linguistic Classification of Rasht Gilaki Affixes", Abdolahi Gilani (1998) dealt with the linguistic classification of affixes in the morphological derivation and inflection and the manner in which they are placed along with the roots and studied the results of changes. Rezayati's 2007 book *the Description of Central Dialect of Taleshi Variety* examined the outline and central issues around the central Taleshi dialect in terms of phonology, morphology, and syntax.

Hajat Pour (2004) wrote a book named *Taleshi Variety of Khushabar Dialect*, which consists of three chapters dealing with phonological features, morphology, and lexis that was published by Gilakan publication. Amiriyan's 2005 book titled *Taleshi Variety of Anber Ardebil* is based on phonetics, phonology, morphology and syntax. In the articles titled "Verb Prefixes of Taleshi" (2005) and "Prefixes of Verb of Taleshi" (2007), the significant aspects of the Southern Taleshi based on the Alien variety have been examined (from the Fouman area) by Rafiei Jirdehi and the number of each verb Prefix with the table of infinitives and Prefix verbs has been mentioned. In the book, *the Tati Variety, the Descriptive of Tati Dialect in Roudbar*, Sabzalipour (2010) has attempted to present a brief description of the critical issues of language such as phonetics, phonology, morphology and the syntactic issues of Tati. The book *Typology of Iranian Languages* by Dabir Moqaddam (2013) has been a basis for all researchers working on Iranian culture and languages. In this book the languages of Persian, Baluchi, Davani, Larestani, Taleshi, Vafasi, Kordi, Urami, Laki, Delvani, Naeini, Shahmirzadi, and Tati have been studied. He names three varieties of Gilaki, Taleshi, and Tati based on the definition of variety, language, dialect, and accent. He considers the Persian language as the standard.

An article titled "A Typological study of Bia Pas Gilaki based on Dryer's Word Order correlation" Chahar Sooqi Amin (2015) specified the class of Gilaki Bia Pas variety and compared it with Persian. In the article titled

"the Study of Word Order Parameters and their Correlations with Object/Verb Order in Tati Dialect of Gilan, based on Dryer's Typological Approach" Hedayat (2015) studied the dominant word order in Tati dialect spoken in the village of Gilan in Northern Khorasan, which is an object-verb variety. She examined their correlation with object-verb order based on the views of Dryer. In her M.A. thesis, Nasiri Ziba (2016) titled as "A Comparative Historical Approach to the Adposition in the Northwestern Iranian Languages (Tati-Taleshi-Gilaki)" has researched the position of adposition in these three varieties mentioned above. Based on the obtained results, all these varieties had a significant tendency to be postpositional. In an article titled "A Comparative Historical survey of adposition of Tati dialect in the Northwestern Iranian Languages" Nasiri Ziba (2018a) studied the position of adposition in this variety and compared it with adposition in Persian. Also, the results indicated that although the variety is known as postpositional, there are some examples of prepositions. She further examined adpositional system of Taleshi variety of Asalem and Lvandvil of Gilan province in an article titled "A Comparative Historical Survey of Adposition of Taleshi Dialect in the Northwestern Iranian Languages" (Nasiri Ziba, 2018b). In an article titled as "Historical Survey in Adposition of Gilaki Language of the Northwestern Iranian Languages" Hedayat and Nasiri Ziba (2019) studied the adpositional system of Gilaki variety of Bandar Anzali diachronically.

All in all, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, no one has studied and compared the correlation between adposition and verb/object order in these varieties. Since Dryer has investigated 625 languages and reported significant findings, this study aims at carrying out research to obtain outcomes which are comparable with Dryer's.

METHODS

Data gathering was carried out via the field method. The research instruments comprised a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. Although the questions (sentences to be translated) were directly taken from the questionnaire, the participants would deviate from the main purpose of the questions; thus, the researcher implemented some techniques to keep the content of questions and given answers within the framework of the questionnaire. In order to create the corpus of the varieties for the data collection and analyses a descriptive-analytic method was applied. In addition, the researcher employed a comparative method to find out the structural similarities and differences between three varieties of Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati based on Dryer's findings to study the rules of adpositional system and their relationship with V/O order.

Participants

The data for the present study was extracted from the sentences articulated by 30 elderly individuals in the age group of 70 to 90, who lived in Hashtpar, Bandar Anzali, and

Rostamabad in Gilan province and retained their native language. The Persian sentences of the questionnaire, which contained adposition, were retold in Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati by elderly speakers of these varieties who were illiterate or semi-literate. The main reason for asking these participants through a purposive and convenient sampling procedure to contribute to the study was their rich native linguistic background, who had retained their mother tongue especially in these three varieties. Using the translated sentences, adpositions were studied in terms of Dryer's typological approach to find whether there is any relationship between adposition and object/verb order.

The researchers used the following tools to investigate the matter. A questionnaire and an interview were used to gather data from the speakers of the three varieties.

Questionnaire

The first tool for data collection was a questionnaire which was prepared through a compilation of questions adopted from *A guide to collecting dialects* (2011), Yarshater (1969), Dabir Moghaddam (2013), SabsAlipour (2010), Rezayati (2007), Hajatpour (2004), and Hedayat (2010a). It should be noted that the most frequent sentences and those in line with the purpose of the study were collected from the sources as mentioned earlier to reliably determine typological characteristics of adposition in Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati varieties. The questionnaire consisted of 66 Persian sentences which were translated into the target

varieties to be further examined regarding adposition and its correlation with verb/object order. The data was gathered from the corpus of varieties, which were recorded based on the questionnaire.

Interview

The research was based on semi-structured interviews with senior speakers of the dialects in 70 to 90. About the design of the interviews, they comprised two sets of 30 items for adposition and 36 items for OV order in each variety (Taleshi, Gilaki, & Tati). To do the interviews, the researcher and a well-educated speaker of each variety who had enough knowledge of the meanings of words and the structures helped the interviewees to translate samples into and from the varieties. Each interview took around four hours to be conducted and recorded by the researchers for further analysis in terms of the adpositional system and verb-object order based on Dryer's approach.

Data Collection Procedure

In order to collect the data for this study a well-educated speaker of each variety who had enough knowledge of the meanings of words and the structures, in the presence of the researcher, helped the interviewees to translate each sample from Persian into the three varieties and listened to them while they were responding and producing the samples in its original native structure. In addition, all the conversations were recorded, transcribed based

on International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), classified, and translated into English by the researcher.

Design

Since there has been no manipulation of the research variables and were studied the way they were, this study's design is considered descriptive-analytic and comparative.

Data Analysis

The criterion for data analyses is Dryer's table of correlation which shows the order and type of adposition in relation to verb-object order. In the current study, adpositions were explored with respect to its possible correlation with object/verb order. For this purpose, 30 samples of Persian sentences with one adposition in each were used to extract and understand the correlation of adposition with object/verb order. So, this section briefly summarizes similar evidence of these varieties considering Dryer's findings in 1992.

RESULTS

Verb/Object Order in Taleshi Variety

According to the following examples, Taleshi variety has a strong tendency to be in OV order. As it can be seen, all 30 samples illustrated that

objects came before verbs. For example, in sample (2) 'namaš=letter', which was an object, preceded verb.

1**.** Maryam**-I kitiob** men**-**əš **du-a**

 Maryam**-obl[1]** **book-DO[2]**   me-to **give-(V) past**

 'Maryam gave me the book.'

2. postči **nama-š vard-a** postman   **letter-DO**   **bring**-**(V) past**

 'The postman brought the letter.'

3. a **kitob** me-š **du-a**

 He **book-DO**   me-to **give-(V) past-3SG[3]**

 'He gave me the book.'

4.pišigi peni **hard-a**

  Cat cheese**-DO ate-(V) past-3SG**

 'The cat ate the cheese.

5. əšta zua rom **mâšin**   **vigat-e**

  my son   for   **car-DO buy-(V) past-1SG[4]**

 'I bought a car for my son.'

Adposition in Taleshi Variety

Samples produced by the speakers of this variety in Hashtpar revealed that they were mainly postpositional. In the samples provided, only the preposition **'ba=to'**, and postpositions such as **'ko=from', 'sar=up', 'ku=for', 'na= with', 'da=in', 'sariku=on', 'nuriku=front',** and **i=oblique** can be seen. The following examples contain the most frequently used

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[1] An oblique or objective case is a nominal case that is used when a noun phrase is the object of either a verb or a preposition. A noun or a pronoun in the oblique case generally appears in any role except as subject, for which the nominative case is used.

[2] Direct object

[3] Third singular

[4] First singular

postpositions and a few prepostions in Taleshi variety.

6. mə kitob-i maryam-**i** doa

   I book-Obl   Maryam-**to** gave

   'I gave the book **to** Maryam.'

7. az Tehran-**ko** ba Esfahan montaqel   obam

   I Tehran-**from to** Isfahan transferred   was

   'I was transferred **from** Tehran **to** Isfahan.'

8. mə bar-im   kilid-i-**na** okarda

   I door-obl   key-Obl-**with**   open-ed

   'I opened the door **with** the key.'

9. Pul-I **ba** mə bəda

  Money-Obl   **to** me give

' Give me money.'

10. Baq-I ov   bəda

  garden-Obl   water   give

' Water the garden.'

The correlation between the order of verb/ object and adpositions was also examined and the results of Taleshi variety were compared with Dryer's approach.

Table 1

The Correlation between Adposition and Verb/Object Order in Taleshi Variety

O/V Adp$_s$	OV	VO
Po	53 (90%)	0
Pr	6 (10%)	0

*Object/verb   (OV),   Adpositions   (Adps),

*Postposition (Po), Preposition (Pr)

The results presented in Table 1 shows that of the 66 samples, 10 did not fit into the adposition system, and three of them followed both postposition and preposition. In almost all samples (53 or 90%) objects preceded verbs with approximately 10 percent of the prepositional samples. There was no evidence for verb-object, indicating that there was a high correlation between postposition and object-verb order in Taleshi variety.

Verb/Object Order in Gilaki Variety

Gilaki variety has a remarkable tendency for OV order. For example, in the sample (21)

'ketaba=book' which was a direct object, preceded the verb. This order was dominant among 30 samples of the variety, 28 of which were object-verb order, and two were verb-object order.

11. Məryem **ketab-a** məra **fa-da**

   Maryam **book-obl-Do** me **give-past**

   'Maryam gave me the book'

12. postči **nâme-a   bâvər-d**

  postman letter-**obl-Do   bring-past**

  'The postman brought the letter'

13. own   **ketâb-a** me-ra **fa-da**

   He **book-obl-Do** me-to   **give-past**

   'He gave me the book'

14. piča **pənir-a   bow-xowr-d**

cat **cheese-obl-Do past-eat-past**

'The cat ate the cheese'

15. mi pəsər-e-rən **mâšin bi-he-m**

   I son-obl-for **car past-buy-1SG**

 'I bought a car for my son'

Adposition in Gilaki Variety

Samples obtained from the speakers of Gilaki variety in Bandar Anzali, located in Gilan province revealed that it was mainly postpositional. Such prepositions as **'be=to', 'bâ=with'**, and postpositons as **'ja=from', 'sər=on', 'miyan=in', 'a=to', 'ren=for', 'amra=with', 'ro=on', 'a=oblique'** can be seen.

16. mən ketâb-a Meryem-**a** fadam

   I book-obl Maryam-**to** gave

 'I gave the book to Maryam.'

17. mən Tehran

ja be esfahan mowntaql bowbowstem

 I Tehran

from to Isfahan transfered was

  'I was transferred from Tehran to Isfahan.'

18. mən der-a klide **amra** baz bowkowdəm

   I door-obl key **with** opened

   'I opened the door with the key.'

19. a-xânə **tâ** ou-xânə bist metr-ə

  this-hause **to** that-house twenty meters-is

It is twenty meters (from) this house to that house.'

20. bâqče-a âb bədən garden-obl water give

   'Water the garden.'

 The correlation between the order of verb/ object and adpositions was also examined and the results of Gilaki variety were compared with Dryer's approach.

Table 2

The Correlation between Adpositions and Verb/Object Order in Gilaki Variety

O/V Adp$_s$	OV	VO
Po	57 (90.5%)	1 (1%)
Pr	6 (9.5%)	0

As it can be seen in the above table (2), of the total 66 samples, four did not fit into the adpositional system, and two of them followed both postpositional and prepositional patterns. In the majority of samples (57 or 90.5%) objects preceded verbs which proved that Gilaki was postpositional and object-verb dominant variety with only less than 10 percent of the samples falling under prepositional and object-verb category. It is obvious that in almost no sample did the verbs precede objects, nor did they tend to be prepositional. Therefore, there was a strong correlation between postposition and object-verb order.

Object/Verb Order in Tati Variety

Tati variety has a strong tendency for OV order. For example, in sample (21) 'kətab=book' which is a direct object precedes the verb. This order was dominant among 30 samples of the variety. In other words, a majority of them included object-verb order with only one verb-object order. As it can be seen in samples (25a) and (25b), some verbs were divided into two groups of masculine and feminine in this variety.

21. mæryæm-ə   **kətab**

əš   bəda: čəmən

  Maryam-Obl **book-Obl gave (past)** me

  'Maryam gave me the book'

22. postči   **na**:**m-əš   ba**:

  postman letter**-Obl   brought (past)**

 'The postman brought the letter'

23. ja: **kəta**:**b-əš   bəda** čmən

  he   **book-Obl   gave (past)** me

  'He gave me the book'

24. ka:li: **pæni**:**r-əš   bəxa**:

  cat   **cheese-Obl ate (past)**

 'The cat ate the cheese'

25a. čəm zə ræ **mašin-əm   a**:**gæ**

  my son for **car-1SG   bought (past)**

  'I bought a car for my son'

25b. čəm zə ræ-m **mašin a**:**gæ**

  my son for-1SG car **bought(past)**

  'I bought a car for my son'

Adposition in Tati Variety

Tati Variety (Rostamabad dialect) was mainly postpositional. In the samples provided by the author such prepositions as **'a=to', 'bâ, yæ =with'**, and postpositions as **'æz, ja=from', 'sær=on', 'dəlæ=in', 'a=to', 'ræ =for', 'ro=on', 'ə =oblique'** can be seen.

26. mən   ketâ:b-ə-m be-da   Mæryæm-**a**

  I book-Obl-I past-give Maryam-**to**

  'I gave the book to Maryam'

27.čəmən-e

šon **æz** Terɔn   særada   Esfəhɔn

  mine **from** Tehran transferred Isfahan

  'I was transferred from Tehran to Isfahan'

28. mən bær-ə-m kılı-**yæ**   vaz a-kæ

  I door-obl-I   key-**with**   open

  'I open the door with the key'

29. bu:stu:-nə âv   bədi:

  garden-obl water give

  'Water the garden'

30. sæ per kæ məmɔnıy-æ

  Your father house party-is

  'There is a party at your father's house'

    The correlation between the order of verb/ object and adpositions was also examined and the results of Tati variety were compared with Dryer's approach.

Table 3

The Correlation between Adpositions and Verb/Object Order in Tati Variety

O/V Adp$_s$	OV	VO
Po	49 (89.1%)	2 (3.6%)
Pr	4 (7.3%)	0

As indicated in Table 3, roughly one-sixth of total number of samples did not fit into the adpositional system, while the remaining 55 samples showed diversity in using adposition with the overwhelming majority of samples being postpositional and OV. Another key feature to be mentioned is that a noticeable correlation was observed between postpostion and object-verb order. It is obviously evident that a tiny fraction of samples had a tendency to be prepositional with verb-object order.

Table 4

The Correlation between Adposition and Verb/Object Order in Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati Varieties

variety / Adp$_s$	Taleshi	Gilaki	Tati
po&ov	90%	90.5%	89.1%
Pr&ov	10%	9.5%	7.3%

According to Table 4, the three varieties were dominantly postpositional and OV, signifying a clear correlation between postposition and object-verb order. However, in terms of preposition and object-verb, they had similar patterns with only a small percentage of the samples to be prepositional and OV. What is more, in Taleshi variety no proof among the samples was found to justify any Po and VO or Pr and VO, while Gilaki and Tati varieties showed a slight tendency to be only Po and VO with still no sample of Pr and VO type.

The data analysis showed that these three varieties enjoyed a much more diversity in adpositions than Persian language. They both had a strong tendency for OV order, and verbs followed objects. The examples illustrated not only the diversity of adpositions such as preposition and postposition, but also the object preceded the verb and adposition was more often postpositional. These three varieties belong to Iran's northwestern language group. So, object-verb order with postposition was dominant in Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati varieties and their percentages were respectively, 90%, 90.5%, and 89.1%. Therefore, the data showed that they were postpositional.

DISCUSSIONS

According to Dryer (2005), several problems arise with identifying whether a language employs prepositions or postpositions. Prototypical instances of adposition combine with noun phrases that indicate the semantic relationship of that noun phrase to the verb, as exemplified by the English word within *He opened the door with a key.* Perhaps the most significant issue is whether the term should be applied to semantically similar morphemes, which are affixes rather than separate words. In the history of word order typology, such affixes

have often been treated as adposition. Many languages classified as postpositional by Greenberg (1963) and Hawkins (1983) only have postpositions in the sense of having noun suffixes. Some ignore the distinction between affixes as adpositional words because such affixes often derive historically from separate adpositional words. Thus, while the difference may be valid synchronically, it is less critical diachronically. A more common view is that such morphemes should not be considered adposition, since their position is defined in the morphology of language in terms of their position concerning the noun stem rather than in the syntax in terms of their position with respect to the noun phrase. Dryer (2003) believes that Indo-Iranian languages among Indo-European languages have the object-verb order. The dominant word order in affirmative sentences of Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati varieties is subject-object-verb as well, which according to Dryer (1991), belong to verb-final and with object-verb languages.

Among the morphemes attached to the noun, morpheme –i in example (6), morpheme -a in examples (11 & 12), and morpheme -ə in examples (26 & 28) look like a case suffix. Three morphemes –ko, -ja, and -yæ, in examples (7), (17), and (28), meaning *from*, are 'Accusative' that are attached to the noun, but since the noun is always the final element in the noun phrase, it is difficult to distinguish between analyzing the morpheme as a case suffix on the noun or as a postpositional clitic that is always attached to the last element of the noun phrase.

The examples of object-verb order in the present study illustrated that the object preceded the verb, and the type of adposition was more often postpositional (OV& Po). Postpositions were dominant in 66 samples of Taleshi variety, among which 50 were only postpositions including samples (6 & 8) with only 3 that were prepositions such as (9). In addition, three samples had both cases of preposition and postposition as in (7). Also, 10 samples did not have any adpositional relationship which was illustrated in sample (10). This word order involves two types of OV& Po and OV & Pr, but OV & Po was more common. So, the percentages of postposition and preposition were 90% and 10% showing a strong correlation between OV and postposition.

Regarding Gilaki variety, the examples illustrated that the object preceded the verb, and the type of adposition was more often postpositional (OV& Po). Postpositions were dominant in 66 samples, among which 55 were only postpositions with OV order in particular samples (16 & 18), but in one sample postposition coexisted with VO order. Four other samples contained prepositions with OV order as illustrated in sample (19). Notably, two cases were both postposition and preposition for which (17) is a telling example. In addition, the percentages of postposition and preposition were respectively 90.5% and 9.5% representing a close correlation between OV and postposition.

As for Tati variety, in a great number of examples the object preceded the verb, and the type of adposition was more often

postpositional (OV& Po). Postpositions were dominant in 55 samples of Tati variety, among which 49 were only postpositional and OV including samples (26 & 28) with only four prepositions such as (27). In addition, just under 4% of the samples were postpositional and VO. On average, there was a significant correlation between postposition and object-verb order in Tati variety.

The findings of the present study stand in conformity with the results reported by Dryer (1992, 2011). Similarly, Dryer (1992, 2011) in his study worked on 625 languages in 6 regions around the world to classify them in terms of variety in adposition and verb/object order and their correlation. He found that there were more OV and postpositional genera than OV and prepositional genera or more VO and prepositional genera than VO and postpositional genera.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated and compared the diversity and structure of adposition in three varieties of northwestern Iranian languages, namely Taleshi, Gilaki, and Tati while attempting to describe the rules and procedures governing the use of adposition. In addition, the possibility of any correlation between the order of verb/object and adposition in these varieties was discussed and compared based on Dryers' approach (1992, 2011).

According to the comparative trend of these three varieties, there was a strong correlation between object/verb order and adposition. Since these three varieties have the same root,

they have almost kept their original structure. Taleshi, Gilaki and Tati varieties are widely used by people inhabiting the north and northwestern part of Iran along the Caspian Sea.

Since language is regarded as a dynamic system and a dominant means of communication among people, it is recommended that optional courses on rare local dialects in Northern part of Iran be offered at the University of Guilan so that they would draw prospective researchers' attention to further investigation and revival of those varieties in the long run. From a social perspective, a feasible solution is to study linguistic changes occurring in cities and villages. The primary reason to justify this is the estimation of differences between the structures of languages dominant in these two places. Another possible measure to take is to examine the possible correlation among object/verb order with other linguistic components such as subordinate clauses, genitives, adjectives, and so on.

Contribution to New Knowledge

Since such a comparative study has not been conducted at a broad level in the word order and their correlation with verb/object order from the typological aspect in these three forms, the present study attempted to provide an appropriate context for further investigation and research in this field. Furthermore, regarding the dynamic essence of every language in the long term and the risk of being forgotten, their historical study to group

languages into particular types and recognize each as a separate and unique communication tool requires a diachronic body of relevant research done in different eras. In other words, prospective linguists and researchers would build upon the formerly recognized linguistic features, word order patterns, to contribute to the revival of those languages.

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Appendix A

Samples of Taleshi Variety

1.az vəli-na ka šim

  'I went home with a flower'

2.Maryamim xeyaban da vinda

   'I saw Maryam in the street'

3.Ahmad kitob xanda

   'Ahmad read the book'

4.čəma nana čəma dast gata

   'My mother held my hand'

5.Ali šat hard

  'Ali drank milk'

6.sabadim ba əšta zua dua

'I gave my son the basket'

7.əšta zua rom mašin vigate

'I tooǩ myˇson to school'

8.xərdani guldân čokoni

'The child broke the flower pot'

9.Ali sərdi ko vigəni

'Ali fell off the ladder'

10.a čəma dukuni-ko kor karo

'He works at the store for us'

11.aye zamini-ko xətan

'They slept on the floor'

12.ama asbi-na voya šoyamon

'We go to a wedding with a horse'

13.asbi-ko piyada ab

'Get off the horse'

14.čəma dada ko dapors

'Ask my father'

15.ka-ko oya

'He is coming'

16.ešta dastmoli-na ai:m gata

'I got it with my clothes'

17.ama zina ka-ko bitun baršamun

'We went out of the house yesterday'

18.Maryam ka-ko

'Maryam is at home'

19.ami bi dəyad-əna bə-ba-mun

'We should be togethəer'

20. vargun eštan pasun-sariku farišun ada

'The wolves threw themselves on the sheep

Appendix B

Samples of Gilaki variety

21.mən gole amra bə xanə bowšwm

'I went home with a flower'

22.səbəda mi pəsəra fadam

'I gave my son the basket'

23.mi pəsəra bəbrdəm mədrsə

'I took my son to school'

24.Məryema xiyâbâ-na miyan bidem

'I saw Maryam in the street'

25.Ahmad ketâba bəxând

'Ahmad read the book'

26.dostam ra didam

'I saw my friend'

27.Ahmad dârâ-na qətta kowd

'Ahmad cut the trees'

28.mimar mi dəsa bigifd

'My mother held my hand'

29.Ali šira bowxowrd

'Ali drank milk'

30.zay goldâ-na biške-nə

'The child broke the flower'

31.Ali serdi ja bəkft

'Ali fell off the ladder'

32.own forowšga miyan amerən kar kowne

'He works at the store for us'

33.ušan zamine sər bowxouftəd

'They slept on the floor'

34.aman bâuad bâham bebim

'We ahould be to gether'

35.aman asbe amra šim arowsy

'We go to a wedding with a horse'

36.asbe-ja piyada ben

'Get off the horse'

37.Maryam xâne miyan eysan

'Maryam is at home'

38.mi pere-ya vavərs

'Ask my father'

39.xânə ja amandərə

'He is coming'

40.mi destmâle amra ow-na bigiftəm

'I got it with my clothes'

41.dirowz xâne ja birown bowšom

'We went out of the house yesterday'

42.gowrgan xoudešâ-na gousfendâne row tâvadan

'The wolves thrôw themselves on the sheep'

Appendix C

Sample of Tati variety

43.æjɔn sərəšon bɔnd zæmin

'He spread the table on the ground'

44.æz gɔlə jæ bəšəm kæ

'Iwent home with a flower'

45.sæbædəm bəda čəm zə

'I gave my son the basket'

46.Mæryæməm xiaːbɔn dəlæ

'I saw Maryam in the street'

47.čəm zəm bəbæ mædrəsæ

'I took my son to school'

48.Ahmæd kətabəš bɔxɔnd

'Ahmad read the book'

49.Ahmæd daːrɔnəš bærkæ

'Ahmad cut the threes'

50.čəm maːr čəm dæsəš begæ

'My mother held my hand'

51.Ali šrəš bəduːšt

'Ali drank milk'

52.xɔrdə gɔldɔnəš bəškəst

'The child broke the flower pot'

53.Ali suːrdi-nə jæ bəkæt

'Ali fell off the ladder'

54.â: fowrowšga dəlæ čbâ-ræ kar məkærə

'He works at the store for us'

55.â: zæmi-nə sæ bɔxɔtənd

'They slept on the floor'

56.âːmaː məgɔ bâbæm bəbɔn

'We should be together'

57.âːmâː æsbə-jæ məšɔn ærusi

'We go to a wedding with a horse'

58.æsbə-jæ pəâdæ âːbæ

'Get off the horse'

59.Mæryæmæ kæ ɪštâː

'Maryam is at home'

60.ke-ræ myâːyæ

'He is coming'

61.æziːræ ke-ræ bešəm bərin

'We went out of the house yesterday'

62.værgɔn hoštənəšɔn tâvâdâ mâlɔn sæ

'The wolves threw themselves on the sheeps'

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