



## A Comparative Study of Adjective/Standard Order and its Correlation with Verb/Object Order in Taleshi and Gilaki Varieties Based on Dryer's Branching Direction Theory



**Farinaz Nasiri Ziba\***

PhD Candidate in Linguistics, Roudehen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran.

Email: farinaz\_nz@yahoo.com



**Neda Hedayat\*\***

(Corresponding author)

Assistant Professor in Linguistics, Department of English Translation, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Varamin-Pishva Branch, Islamic Azad University, Varamin, Iran.

Email: Neda.Hedayat@iau.ac.ir



**Nassim Golaghaei\*\*\***

Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics, ELT Department, Roudehen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran.

Email: n.golaghaei@riau.ac.ir



**Andisheh Saniei\*\*\*\***

Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics, ELT Department, Roudehen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran.

Email: saniei@riau.ac.ir

### ABSTRACT

The objective of the present study is to report a descriptive-analytic study on the probable correlation between verb/object and adjective/standard orders as well as the dominant word orders of verb/object and adjective/standard in two varieties of northwestern Iranian languages, namely Taleshi and Gilaki, and their correspondence to the Dryer's Branching Direction Theory. To this end, the dominant tendency and correlation of the aforementioned orders were examined and the results were compared on the basis of Dryer's observed patterns. The data collection was carried out through a structured interview, devised based on a questionnaire including a compilation of 60 Persian sentences and phrases that were translated into Taleshi and Gilaki during interviews with 10 elderly illiterate and semi-literate speakers respectively from Hashtpar and Bandar Anzali. Based on the obtained results, Taleshi variety was proved to be an OV&StAj language. This result corresponds well with Dryer's findings confirming an obvious preference for StAdj order among OV languages and conforming to BDT. Concerning Gilaki variety, however, samples fell evenly in two groups of either StAdj or AdjSt with OV order. Therefore, there is no definite claim implying the frequent occurrence of StAdj, which can conform to BDT in this variety. It can be concluded that although both Taleshi and Gilaki belong to verb-final languages, their tendencies towards Adj/St order can be a main source of difference distinguishing these varieties. This study can provide an appropriate context for further investigation of word order in language varieties belonging to the same language families at a broad level.

DOI: 10.22059/JFLR.2021.333670.909

Nasiri Ziba, F., HEDAYAT, N., Golaghaei, N., Saniei, A. (2022). A Comparative Study of Adjective/Standard Order and its Correlation with Verb/Object Order in Taleshi and Gilaki Varieties Based on Dryer's Branching Direction Theory. Foreign Language Research Journal, 12 (2), 60-74.

### ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: November 8, 2021

Accepted: December 31, 2021

Available online:  
Summer 2022

### Keywords:

*Adjective/Standard order, Branching Direction Theory, Correlation, Gilaki, Taleshi*

\* Ms. Farinaz Nasiri Ziba PhD Candidate in Linguistics, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch, has studies on comparative and historical evolution of Northwestern Iranian languages.

\*\* Dr. Neda Hedayat is an Assistant Professor in Linguistics, Lecturer and Faculty Member at Islamic Azad University, Varamin-Pishva Branch.

\*\*\* Dr. Nassim Golaghaei, is an Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics, Lecturer and faculty member at Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch.

\*\*\*\* Dr. Andisheh Saniei is an Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics, Lecturer and faculty member at Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch.



## A Comparative Study of Adjective/Standard Order and its Correlation with Verb/Object Order in Taleshi and Gilaki Varieties Based on Dryer's Branching Direction Theory



**Farinaz Nasiri Ziba\***

PhD Candidate in Linguistics, Roudehen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran.  
Email: farinaz\_nz@yahoo.com



**Neda Hedayat\*\***

(Corresponding author)

Assistant Professor in Linguistics, Department of English Translation, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Varamin-Pishva Branch, Islamic Azad University, Varamin, Iran.  
Email: Neda.Hedayat@iau.ac.ir



**Nassim Golaghaei\*\*\***

Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics, ELT Department, Roudehen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran.  
Email: n.golaghaei@riau.ac.ir



**Andisheh Saniei\*\*\*\***

Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics, ELT Department, Roudehen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran.  
Email: saniei@riau.ac.ir

### ABSTRACT

The objective of the present study is to report a descriptive-analytic study on the probable correlation between verb/object and adjective/standard orders as well as the dominant word orders of verb/object and adjective/standard in two varieties of northwestern Iranian languages, namely Taleshi and Gilaki, and their correspondence to the Dryer's Branching Direction Theory. To this end, the dominant tendency and correlation of the aforementioned orders were examined and the results were compared on the basis of Dryer's observed patterns. The data collection was carried out through a structured interview, devised based on a questionnaire including a compilation of 60 Persian sentences and phrases that were translated into Taleshi and Gilaki during interviews with 10 elderly illiterate and semi-literate speakers respectively from Hashtpar and Bandar Anzali. Based on the obtained results, Taleshi variety was proved to be an OV&StAj language. This result corresponds well with Dryer's findings confirming an obvious preference for StAdj order among OV languages and conforming to BDT. Concerning Gilaki variety, however, samples fell evenly in two groups of either StAdj or AdjSt with OV order. Therefore, there is no definite claim implying the frequent occurrence of StAdj, which can conform to BDT in this variety. It can be concluded that although both Taleshi and Gilaki belong to verb-final languages, their tendencies towards Adj/St order can be a main source of difference distinguishing these varieties. This study can provide an appropriate context for further investigation of word order in language varieties belonging to the same language families at a broad level.

DOI: 10.22059/JFLR.2021.333670.909

### ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: November 8, 2021

Accepted: December 31, 2021

Available online:  
Summer 2022

### Keywords:

*Adjective/Standard order, Branching Direction Theory, Correlation, Gilaki, Taleshi*

Nasiri Ziba, F., HEDAYAT, N., Golaghaei, N., Saniei, A. (2022). A Comparative Study of Adjective/Standard Order and its Correlation with Verb/Object Order in Taleshi and Gilaki Varieties Based on Dryer's Branching Direction Theory. *Foreign Language Research Journal*, 12 (2), 60-74.

- \* Ms. Farinaz Nasiri Ziba PhD Candidate in Linguistics, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch, has studies on comparative and historical evolution of Northwestern Iranian languages.
- \*\* Dr. Neda Hedayat is an Assistant Professor in Linguistics, Lecturer and Faculty Member at Islamic Azad University, Varamin-Pishva Branch.
- \*\*\* Dr. Nassim Golaghaei, is an Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics, Lecturer and faculty member at Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch.
- \*\*\*\* Dr. Andisheh Saniei is an Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics, Lecturer and faculty member at Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch.

## INTRODUCTION

Language is a means for expression of thoughts, concepts, knowledge and information. It makes it possible to find out the complexities and mysteries of languages in addition to the use of languages as a means of communication and achieved a kind of understanding of languages in this regard. The proof of this claim can be language studies done by different people with linguistic and non-linguistic experiences around the world. Linguists have been researching on structural, semantic, morphological and typological studies as well as the relationship between languages and other fields of study. Undoubtedly, these language studies have helped humans to solve language problems (Alborzi, 2016).

As a matter of fact, language typology can be defined as a systematic study of varieties among languages. To clarify more, it is the study of the patterns which are functionally used in languages. These patterns in typological generalizations are part of language universals. For instance, word order is a crucial factor in language typology in which different languages are being studied. Owing to this, linguists classify and compare languages with one another in terms of word order in their research work into language issues (Dabir Moghaddam, 2013).

Sapir's (1921) book entitled *Language* has set two criteria for the classification of languages, one of which has a formal process. This criterion is actually based on the technique of word order in a language. The second type of criterion suggested by Sapir is the relative strength rate of linking between infix constituents and the head-word. In other words, in this criterion, the degree of word order combinability is considered in a language (ibid). According to Sapir, a language may synchronically hold typological features of different types. But, what is important will be the general tendency and dominance of those features that indicate the type of a language (Dabir Moghaddam, 2013).

According to Croft (1990), the linguistic typology emerged in nineteenth century as morphological typology. Since then, the structuralist typology has been very different from the modern concept of typology in two important aspects. First, the morphological typology classifies languages based on just one criterion, namely morphology. This is because various languages consist of different word

formation processes. Second, morphological typology classifies languages as a whole, not integration of language components.

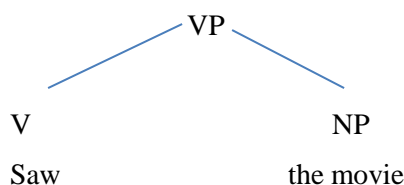
In 1963, Greenberg presented data for a number of pairs of elements for a sample of 30 languages and data for a subset of these pairs of a larger number of languages. He believed that universals are affinity of languages, and the subject of typology is the systematic differences among them (Dryer, 1991). He also obtained 45 implicit universals by examining 30 languages. Among these universals 28 were related to word order, 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 generally 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  $\langle X, Y \rangle$  is a correlation pair, and X is a verb patterner, and Y is an object patterner with respect to 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  $\langle \text{adposition, NP} \rangle$  is a correlation pair, and with respect to this pair adpositions are verb patterners, and NPs that they combine with are object patterners (Dryer, 1992). Dryer (1992) studied the word order and their correlations based on the sample of 625 languages. He mentioned twenty-four pairs of elements and studied the degree of correlation between the order of those pairs of elements and the order of verb/object. He prepared a complete list of the correlation pairs, which has never been discussed in the typological literature. In light of empirical evidence about pairs of elements which are correlation pairs, Dryer (1992) proposed The Branching Direction Theory (BDT) as follows:

The Branching Direction Theory (BDT): Verb patterners are non-phrasal (nonbranching, lexical) categories and object patterners are phrasal (branching) categories. That is, a pair of elements X and Y will employ the order XY significantly more often among VO languages than among OV languages if and only if X is a non-phrasal category and Y is a phrasal category. (p.87)

For example, in the phrase "saw the movie" the first element is a single word and belongs to a

non-phrasal (nonbranching) category and the second element involves a phrasal (branching) category, which is illustrated below.



From among twenty-four pairs of elements, the fourth parameter, i.e. adjective/standard order, is studied in the present paper. The main purpose of the study is to investigate the dominant order of this parameter in two language varieties of Taleshi and Gilaki, and the typological correlation between adjective/standard order and object/verb order by using a comparative view. The results are also analyzed based on Dryer's Branching D Theory. On this basis, three main research questions are answered in this study: 1) What is the dominant order of adjective/standard in Taleshi and Gilaki varieties; 2) What is the dominant order of verb/object in Taleshi and Gilaki varieties; 3) Is there any correlation between adjective/standard order and object/verb order in Taleshi and Gilaki varieties based on Dryer's approach; 4) Is there a one-to-one correspondence between the obtained results and Dryer's typological approach conforming to the Branching Direction Theory?

Considering the research questions, it is hypothesized that there is a correlation between adjective/standard order and object/verb order in Taleshi and Gilaki varieties and the word order patterns of adjective, standard, object, and verb is generalized to those derived from Dryer's typological approach. Moreover, there is a one-to-one correspondence between the obtained results and Dryer's typological approach conforming to the Branching Direction Theory.

Taleshi and Gilaki varieties belong to the group of northwestern Iranian languages, which have the same root and are common through the coasts of the Caspian Sea. 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 the dialect of west Gilan, located in the western Sefid Rud in cities such as Rasht, Fuman, Someh Sara, and Bandar Anzali, and 'Biya pish', which is the dialect of eastern Gilan located in the eastern part of Sefid Rud in cities such as Astaneh Ashrafieh, Lahijan, Langarud, and Rudbar.

## Literature Review

One of the orientalist that has studied Gilaki variety is Berezin (1853), who wrote a book on Gilaki structure during the three years of his residence in Iran. Christensen (1930), a professor of Juris Prudence at Copenhagen University, is a scholar who wrote a book titled *Gilan Dialect of Rasht*, published by Soroush press in 1995. Pour Riahi (1975) has chosen Gilaki Dialect of Rasht as his doctoral dissertation at Tehran University. This research has illustrated the existence of six vowels which are limited compared to the vowels of Persian language. "The Compendium Linguarum Iranicarum" which is the result of several years of efforts by 17 most prominent Iranian linguists was published by Professor Rodiger Schmitt in 1989. In this book, 17 scientists and specialists of different nationalities have taken a historical approach to work mostly on Iranian languages and dialects especially Gilaki, Tati, and Taleshi. In a book titled *Grammar Features and Dictionary of Gilaki*, Sartip pour (1990) investigated Gilaki variety. He seems to believe that Gilaki 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 (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 central Taleshi dialect in terms of phonology, morphology, and syntax.

Hajat Pour (2003) 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. In the articles titled "Verb Prefixes of Taleshi" (2005) and "Prefixes of Verb of Taleshi" (2007), the significant aspects of the Southern Taleshi on the basis of 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 an article titled "A Typological study of Bia Pas Gilaki based on Dryer's Word Order correlation" Chaharsouqhi Amin (2015) specified the class of Gilaki Bia Pas variety and compared it with Persian. She has studied the language type of Gilaki dialect, which, in

comparison with the languages of Asia and the world, belongs to the linguistic group of the strongly verb-final languages, which is in transition to the strongly verb-intermediate languages. Also, her investigation of the Dryer's 24 word order parameters and particularly the order of adjective/ standard of comparison correspond to the results of the present study. In her M.A. thesis, Nasiri Ziba (2016) titled as "A Comparative Historical Approach to the Adposition in the Northwestern Iranian Languages (Tati-Talessi-Gilaki)" has researched the position of adposition in these three varieties. Based on the obtained results, all these varieties had a significant tendency to be postpositional. 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). The obtained results revealed that this variety is mostly postpositional. 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. Gilaki language is historically related to the Parthian language, which is one of the Indo-European languages. Based on the collected data, it should be said that the adposition in Gilaki is of three kinds of preposition, postposition, and circumposition, although postposition has been used more frequently than the other two kinds. Therefore, Gilaki can be called a postpositional language.

Abuei Mehrizi, et al. (2020) in their article examined the compatibility of expressions in language, dialect and accent in Persian and Russian languages and examples of the proximity of Russian language to Persian dialects and accents. In this research, it was tried to study some of the features of the two types of languages and, if possible, classify them and compare them with each other. The main purpose of the present study is to reopen the existing concepts in the form of each of the expressions proposed by linguists in each of the two languages for correct equivalence and then to establish a research plan to study the word order of adjective/standard of comparison in the two language varieties.

All in all, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, no one has studied and compared the correlation between the order of adjective/standard and verb/object order in

Taleshi and Gilaki varieties. Owing to the fact that Dryer has studied 625 languages and reported significant findings, the present study is conducted to obtain outcomes that can be compared with Dryer's.

## METHOD

The first step to conduct this study was data gathering carried out via the field method. The research instruments comprised a questionnaire and a structured interview. Although the questions (sentences or phrases 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. The researcher employed a comparative method to find out the order of adjective/standard in varieties of Taleshi, and Gilaki, based on Dryer's findings to determine the correlation between this order and its relationship with object/verb order.

## Participants

The data for the present study was extracted from the sentences articulated by 20 elderly male and female individuals, in the 70- 90 age range, who lived in Hashtpar and Bandar Anzali in Gilan province and retained their native language. The Participants were non-randomly selected through a convenient and purposive sampling method. The Persian sentences or phrases of the questionnaire, which contained adjective and standard, were retold in Taleshi and Gilaki by elderly speakers of these varieties who were illiterate or semi-literate. The main reason for asking these participants to contribute to the study was their rich native linguistic background that had retained their mother tongue especially in these two varieties. Using the translated sentences and phrases, adjective/standard word order was studied in terms of Dryer's typological approach to find whether there is any relationship between this parameter and object/verb order and whether the results conform to BDT.

## Research Instruments

To collect the data required for this study, an open-ended questionnaire and a structured interview were used.

## 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*, the version of the academy of Persian language and literature (2010), the text published in a book by Yarshater (1969), *Description of dialects* written by Zumrodian (2007), *Classification of Iranian languages* by Dabir Moghaddam (2013), *Tati language* Sabsalipour (2010), *Talysh language (the central dialect description)* Rezayati Kishah Khaleh (2007), Hajatpour (2003) *The Talysh language*, and a questionnaire compiled by Hedayat (2012a). In view of the fact that validity and reliability of a questionnaire focuses on how explicitly it is linked to the purpose for conducting the study, the questionnaire in the present study is specific, concrete, and relevant enough so as to obtain responses that allow the researcher to meet their goal. In other words, the items in the questionnaire include two typological word order parameters of verb/object and adjective/standard of comparison, which directly provoke the interviewees to produce responses containing the same word order parameters in line with the purpose of the study.

It should be noted that the most frequent sentences and those in line with the purpose of the study were collected from the above-mentioned sources to reliably determine typological characteristics of adjective/standard word order in Taleshi and Gilaki varieties. The questionnaire consisted of two parts of sentence and phrases each containing 30 phrases for adjective/standard of comparison order and 30 sentences for verb/object order, which were translated into the target varieties to be further examined regarding the order of adjective/standard 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 also based on structured interviews with senior speakers in the age group of 70 to 90. With regard to the design of the interviews, they comprised two sets of 30 phrases for adjective/standard and 30 sentences for object/verb order in each variety (Taleshi & Gilaki), which turns out to be 60 items in total. For the purpose of doing the interviews, the researcher and a well-educated speaker of each variety who had enough knowledge of the meanings of words and 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 adjective/standard order and object/verb order based on Dryer's approach.

### Data Collection Procedure

For the purpose of data collection, the aforementioned well-educated speakers of the varieties, in the presence of the researcher, helped the interviewees to translate each sample from Persian into the two 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

In a field study the researcher tried to find the possible correlation between word order and object verb order through a mixed method of both qualitative and quantitative types that involved collecting and analyzing non-numerical data, which were transcribed verbal audios gathered through conversational interviews, as well as a quantitative phase in which the percentage and frequency of the Adj/St and O/V orders were examined. Since the participants received no treatment and the researcher was only accompanying them in their place of residence and listening directly to their speech, the design of the study is descriptive which comparatively determines differences and similarities among the obtained corpora for each of the two varieties of Taleshi and Gilaki with respect to standard/adjective and object/verb order.

### Data Analysis

The criterion for data analyses is Dryer's approach on 24 word-order parameters. In the current study, standard/adjective word order was explored with respect to its possible correlation with object/verb order. For this purpose, 60 samples of Persian sentences and phrases containing standard/adjective and object/verb word orders were recorded and transcribed based on IPA in order to extract the corpora of each variety. After that, the dominant word order tendency related to each word order parameter was determined. This was done through doing a word count in order to figure out the number of each dominant word order within the corpora of Taleshi and Gilaki varieties separately. This calculation was done within the sum total of pair of elements from the



corpora for each variety in order to compare the number of frequent word order tendencies to the total number leading to the frequency of their occurrence in percentage terms. For example, take the case of a variety with total corpora of 30 items. From this total, in 27 items, one word order dominantly occurred and therefore turned out to be around 90 % of the corpora. With regard to this expression as a percentage of the total, the two varieties were described, and compared to investigate their consistent word order tendencies and its possible correlation with object/verb order as well as their possible typological similarities and differences. At the end, it was examined whether this correlation was accounted for by Dryer's BDT.

**RESULTS**

**Object/Verb Order in Taleshi Variety**

According to the following examples, Taleshi variety has a strong tendency for OV order. As it can be seen, in all 30 samples, objects come before verbs. For instance, in sample 2 'namaš=letter' the object precedes the verb. This pattern holds true for all other samples in this part.

**Table 1. The Order of Verb/Object in Taleshi Variety**

OV	VO
30 (100%)	0

1. Maryam-I **kitiob** men-əš **du-a**  
 Maryam-obl **book-DO** 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**

'He gave me the book'

4- pišigi **peni** **hard-a**  
 Cat **cheese-DO** **ate-(V) past-3Sg**

'The cat ate cheese'

5. əšta zua rom **māšin** **vigat-e**  
 my son for **car-DO** **buy-**  
**(V) past-1Sg**

'I bought a car for my son'

**Adjective/Standard Order in Taleshi Variety and its Correlation with Object/Verb Order**

Greenberg (1966) explained that one topic concerning the adjective to be considered is that of comparisons, especially that of superiority as expressed, for instance, 'X is larger than Y'. So, there are three elements whose order can be considered, as in English larg(er) than Y. These are called adjective, marker of comparison, and standard of comparison. The two common orders are adjective, marker, standard; or the reverse. Dryer (1992) ignored the position of the marker there, and restricted his attention to the order of adjective and standard. He showed a clear preference for StAdj order among OV languages. He assumed that wherever this situation occurs, a correlation pair can be concluded. The samples of Taleshi variety show a clear preference of StAdj order and OV order, which confirms Dryer's generalization. In fact, the order of StAdj, postpositional system, and OV order are observed in all 30 examples. In examples below the affix 'tar' and 'lo' mean 'er', but there is not such an indication in examples 6, 9, and 10. 'ko' is the marker of standard of comparison.

**Table 2. The Order of Adj/St and Verb/Object Order in Taleshi Variety**

	OV	VO
StAdj	30 (100%)	0
AdjSt	0	0

6. **Mryam** ko **yol**  
**Maryam** than **older**

'older than Maryam'

7. **tə** ko **bəland-tar**  
**you** than **tal-ler**

'taller than you'

8. **ama** ko **kəto-tar**  
**us** than **short-er**

'shorter than us'

9. **mə** ko **čaḡ**  
**me** than **fatter**

'fatter than me'

10. **ama** ko **lar**

us than thinner

'thinner than us'

### Object/Verb Order in Gilaki Variety

Gilaki variety has a strong tendency to be on OV order. For example, in sample 11 'ketaba=book', which is a direct object preceding the verb. This order is dominant among all 30 examples.

**Table 3. The Order of Verb/Object in Gilaki Variety**

OV	VO
30 (100%)	0

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 **pəñir-a** bow-xowr-d  
cat **cheese-obl-Do** past-eat-past

'The cat ate 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'

### Adjective/Standard Order in Gilaki Variety and its Correlation with Object/Verb Order

As mentioned before, Dryer (1992) found a clear preference for StAdj order among OV languages. He assumed that wherever this situation occurs, a correlation pair can be concluded. The samples of Gilaki variety show both StAdj as in example 17 and AdjSt order as in 16 with OV order. In fact, table 2 depicts that samples fall evenly in two groups of either StAdj or AdjSt, while postpositional system and OV order is observed in all 30 examples. It is worth mentioning that in the examples below the affix 'tər' in Gilaki variety means '-er'.

**Table 4. The Order of Adj/St and Verb/Object Order in Gilaki Variety**

	OV	VO
StAdj	15 (50%)	0
AdjSt	15 (50%)	0

16. **pilətər** az **məryem**  
**older** than **Maryam**  
'older than Maryam'

17. **oušan** ja **kouçetər**  
**they** than **younger**  
'younger than they'

18. **šome** ja **boləndtər**  
**you** than **taller**  
'taller than you'

19. **ame** ja **koufâhtər**  
**us** than **shorter**  
'shorter than us'

20. **mi** ja **çqtər**  
**me** than **fatter**  
'fatter than me'

### Comparison between Taleshi and Gilaki Varieties in terms of the Correlation between Adjective/Standard and Object/Verb Order

As it is indicated in the upcoming table (5), StAdj and OV order coexist in two varieties, while it is overwhelmingly greater in Taleshi variety. In all the cases relating to this variety, standard precedes adjectives; however, the samples of Gilaki variety split in two halves showing both AdjSt order and StAdj order.

**Table 5. The Order of Adj/St and Verb/Object Order in Taleshi and Gilaki Varieties**

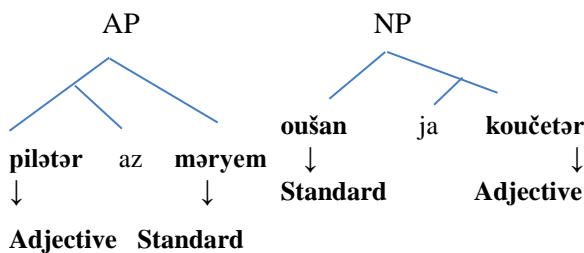


	Taleshi	Gilaki
AdjSt&OV	0	15(50%)
StAdj&OV	30 (100%)	15 (50%)

### The Study of BDT Theory in Taleshi and Gilaki Varieties (StAdj & AdjSt)

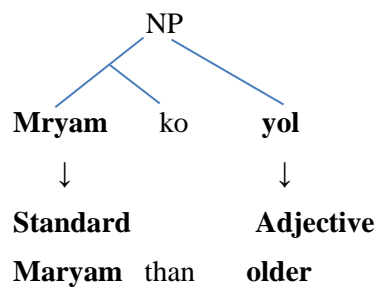
In this theory, "verb" is a non-phrasal category, i.e. nonbranching or non-lexical, and "object" is a phrasal category, i.e. branching. The essence of BDT theory determines that components that are verb patterners are non-phrasal categories, that are nonbranching, and components that are object patterners are phrasal or branching categories. Accordingly, the predominant order of languages with the object-verb order is to bring phrasal components before non-phrasal components, and this tendency is the opposite in languages with verb-object order. According to this theory, languages tend to one of these two states: right-branching languages in which phrasal (branching) categories come after non-phrasal (nonbranching) categories and left-branching languages in which phrasal categories precede non-phrasal categories (Dryer, 1992).

In Gilaki variety both StAdj & AdjSt are observed. According to Dryer (1992), in this pair of elements, adjective is verb patterner (nonphrasal) and standard of comparison is object patterner (phrasal). As for StAdj order, we take the phrase “**oušan** ja **koučētər**” into account. The first element “**oušan**” is belongs to a phrasal (branching) category and the second element “**koučētər**” is a single word involves a nonphrasal (nonbranching) category. On the other hand, AdjSt order is indicated in the phrase “**pilətər** az **məryem**”. The first element “**pilətər**”, which is the adjective, is a single word and belongs to a non-phrasal (nonbranching) category.



In Taleshi Variety the dominant order is StAdj that is obvious in the following phrase: “**Maryam** ko **yol**”, in which “**Maryam**” is the standard and belonging to phrasal

(branching) category and “**yol**” is the adjective belonging to a nonphrasal (nonbranching) category.



### DISCUSSION

In this research, it was tried to study the order of adjective/standard in Taleshi and Gilaki varieties in the context of Dryer’s typological approach. In fact, the researcher sought to answer three questions: 1) What is the dominant order of adjective/standard in Taleshi and Gilaki varieties; 2) What is the dominant order of verb/object in Taleshi and Gilaki varieties; 3) Is there any correlation between adjective/standard order and object/verb order in Taleshi and Gilaki varieties based on Dryer’s approach; 3) Is there a one-to-one correspondence between the obtained results and Dryer’s typological approach conforming to the Branching Direction Theory? It was assumed that the order of adjective/standard which specifies the position the elements occupy in different constituents of a sentence strongly correlates with object/verb order in Taleshi and partly in Gilaki variety comparing with Dryer’s typological generalization.

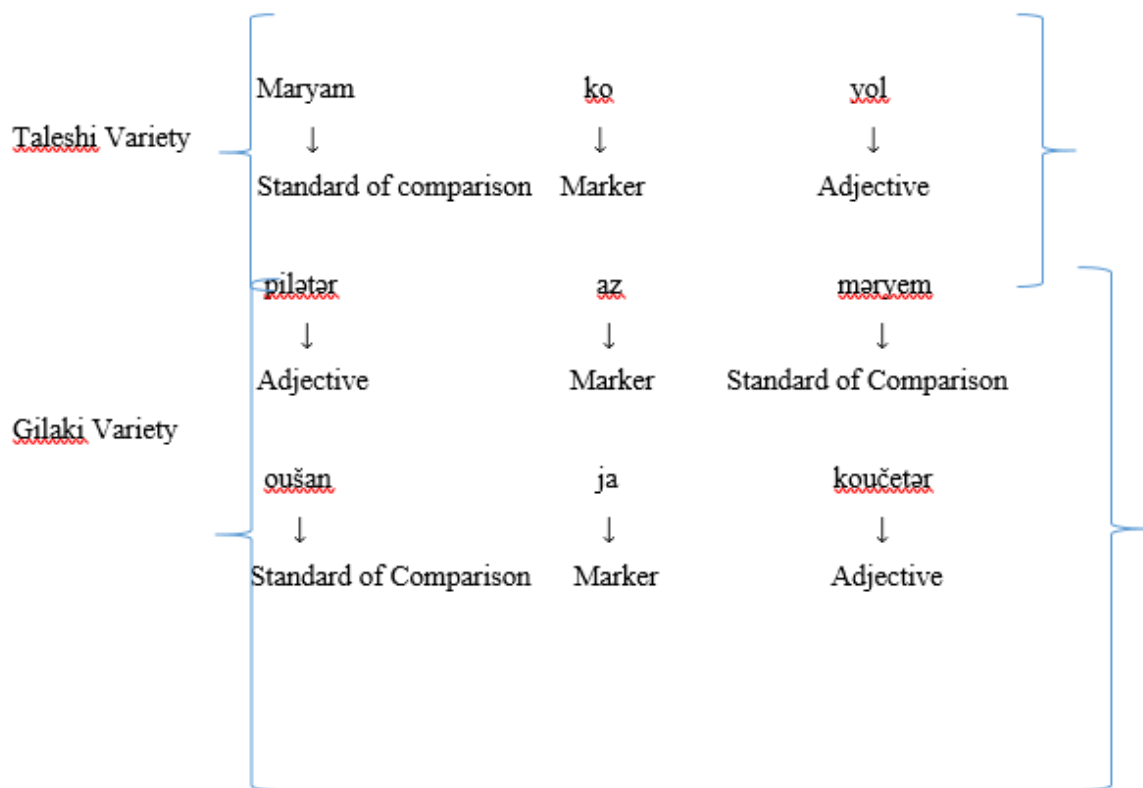
The dominant order of object and verb in all sentences of Taleshi and Gilaki varieties is subject-object-verb and therefore they belong to language families that are verb-final and have object-verb order. This dominant word order was previously determined by Dryer (1992) who believes that Indo-Iranian languages among Indo-European languages have also the object-verb order.

Comparing Taleshi and Gilaki varieties in terms of the order of adjective and standard in a sentence, the order of StAdj and OV order is significant among all samples in Taleshi. This order can be exemplified through the following phrase “**Maryam** ko **yol**”, in which “**Maryam**”, “**ko**”, and “**yol**” are the standard of comparison, , marker and adjective respectively.

This result corresponds well with Dryers’ findings and also a study conducted by Dabir Moghaddam on Taleshi variety showing an obvious preference for StAdj order among OV

languages and especially Taleshi. In relation to Gilaki variety, however, no one can draw such a conclusion since the samples are divided into two groups of StAdj and AdjSt orders both having OV order. An illustration of this feature is present in the following sentences “pīlātər az mǎryem” and “oušan ja koučətər”. The word “pīlātər” in the first phrase functions as an adjective, “az”

the marker, and “mǎryem” the standard of comparison confirming the word order of AdjSt, while the reverse order is observed in the second sentence as the word “koučətər”, which is an adjective preceded by the words “oušan” and “ja”, which are the standard and the marker of comparison, and thus proves the word order of StAdj in this variety. These results are indicated in the following diagrams.



Although there is no definite claim implying the frequent occurrence of StAdj and OV order in Gilaki variety, Chaharsoughi Amin (2015) proved the dominant existence of StAdj word order in Gilaki variety. According to the results of the study done by Dryer, adjective and standard is a correlation pair and in his opinion, OV languages have StAdj order, while VO languages, which are even more common and frequent than OV languages, have AdjSt order. Moreover, the structure of StAdj strongly conforms to Dryer’s Branching Direction Theory in Taleshi, but since two orders of StAdj and AdjSt are equally used in Gilaki, it is hard to decide whether these two structures conform to BDT.

## CONCLUSION

This study examined and compared the order of adjective/standard in two varieties of northwestern Iranian languages, namely Taleshi

and Gilaki while attempting to investigate the correlation between this factor and object/verb order based on Dryer’s typological Branching Direction Theory (1992).

According to the comparative trend of these two varieties, there is a strong tendency for object/verb order. Since these varieties have the same root, they have almost kept their original structure, while showing a marked difference with respect to the order of adjective and standard. Taleshi and Gilaki varieties are widely used by people inhabiting the north and northwestern part of Iran along the Caspian Sea.

Since language is considered as a dynamic system and a practical means of communication among people, it is advisable that discretionary trainings on rare local dialects in Northern part of Iran be offered at the University of Gilan so that they would receive prospective researchers’ attention in order to further investigate and revive those varieties in the long term. From a social standpoint, a feasible solution is to study linguistic changes

occurring in cities and villages. The primary reason to justify this is the estimation of similarities and differences between the structures of languages dominant in these two places. Another possible measure to take is to examine possible correlation among object/verb order with other typological parameters such as noun/relative clause, noun/genitive, and so on.

### Contribution to New Knowledge

Apart from Dryer, who has reached logical conclusions in his studies into typological characteristics of 625 languages in order to prove the existence of language universals, other linguists within the field such as Greenberg and Hawkins have put forward some theoretical frameworks relevant to language universals and typology. Concerning different approaches to the investigation of language types, it is still room for studying language varieties based on different typological approaches for the purpose of a more valid and reliable determination of their type and language family they belong to. In other words, future studies can include a much wider corpus of language varieties within different topological frameworks, which is more representative of the whole language variety.

On account of the fact that such a comparative study has not been carried out at a broad level in the word order and their correlation with verb/object order from the typological aspect, the present study aimed at providing a suitable context for further investigation and research in this field. In fact, by selecting larger language groups and providing broad language corpora, it is possible to examine other typological features of word order within the category of Dryer's 24 parameters to find differences and similarities of languages as well as assigning each of them to a specific language type and language family. 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 be able to build upon the formerly recognized linguistic features, word order patterns, to contribute to the revival of those languages.

### REFERENCES

Abdollahi Gilani, M. (1998). *Linguistic classification of Rasht Gilaki affixes*. (Master's thesis). Iran [in Persian].

Abuei Mehrizi, M., Madayeni Avval, A., & Valipour, A. (2020). Studying matching of language terms, dialect and accent in Persian and Russian languages with each other and examples of the proximity of Russian language to Persian dialects and accents. *Journal of Foreign Language Research*, 10 (3), 470-483 [in Persian].

Academy of Persian language and literature, n. d. (2010). Guide to collecting dialects for the treasury of Iranian dialects. Department of Iranian Languages and Dialects. Retrieved July 10, 2010 from [http://www.persianacademy.ir/UserFiles/File/Go\\_uyesh01.pdf](http://www.persianacademy.ir/UserFiles/File/Go_uyesh01.pdf) [in Persian].

Alborzi, P. (2016). Sentence linguistics: A comprehensive look at language issues. Tehran University [in Persian].

Berezin, J.-N. (1853). *Recherches sur les dialectes persans* [Research on Persian dialects]. Imprimerie de l'université.

Chaharsooghi Amin, T. (2015). A typological study of the Gilaki Bihepsi language based on the twenty-four components of Dryer. *Quarterly Journal of Local Literature and Languages of Iran*, 1(3), 29-56 [in Persian].

Christensen, A. (1930). Contributions à la dialectologie iranienne [Contributions to Iranian dialectology] (Vol. 1): Hovedkommissionær: Andr. Fred. Høst & søn.

Croft, W. (1990). *Typology and universals* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Dabir-Moghaddam, M. (2013). *Typology of Iranian languages*. Tehran: SAMT. [in Persian]

Dryer, M. S. (1991). SVO languages and the OV: VO typology. *Journal of Linguistics*, 27(2), 443-482.

Dryer, M. S. (1992). The Greenbergian word order correlations. *Language*, 68(1), 81-138.

Greenberg, J. H. (1963). Some universals of grammar with particular reference to the order of meaningful elements. *Universals of Language*, 2, 73-113.

Hajat Pour, H. (2003). *The Talysh language: Khushabari dialect*. Rasht, Iran: Gilkan [in Persian].

Hedayat, N. (2012a). Questionnaire prepared by Neda Hedayat based on the examples of Yarshater (1969) [in Persian].

Nasiri Ziba, F. (2016). *A comparative-historical approach to adposition In the northwestern*

*Iranian languages (Tati, Talysh, & Gilaki)*. (Master's thesis). Payame Noor University, Varamin, Iran. (1) [in Persian].

Nasiri Ziba, F. (2018). *A comparative historical survey of adposition of Talysh dialect*. Paper presented at the 5th International Conference on Applied Linguistics Issues (ALI 2018), Istanbul, Turkey.

Nasiri Ziba, F., & Hedayat, N. (2019). *A historical study of adposition in Gilaki from North-West languages*. Paper presented at the First National Conference on Literary Research, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran [in Persian].

Pour Riahi, M. (1975). *A review of the Gilaki dialect of Rasht*. (Doctoral dissertation). Tehran University, Tehran, Iran [in Persian].

Rafiei Jirdehi, A. (2005). Verb prefixes in Taleshi. *Journal of Dialectology*, (4), 65-76. [in Persian]

Rafie Jirdehi, A. (2007). Verb prefixes in the Talysh dialect. *Journal of Dialectology*(4), 65-76 [in Persian].

Rezayati Kishah Khaleh, M. (2003). A few grammatical points in the Talysh dialect. *Journal of Dialectology (Academy Annex)*, 1(1), 41-52 [in Persian].

Rezayati Kishah Khaleh, M. (2007). *Talysh language (the central dialect description)*. Rasht, Iran: Ilia [in Persian].

Sabzalipour, J. (2010). Tati language: Describing Tati Roudbar dialect. Nashre Farhange Ilia [in Persian].

Sapir, E. (1921). *Language*. Hartcourt, Brace, & World.

Sartip pour, J. (Ed.) (1990) *Structural features and Gilaki dictionary*. Rasht, Iran: Gilkan [in Persian].

Schmitt, R. (1989). *Compendium linguarum iranicarum*: Reichert.

Yarshater, E. (1969). *A grammar of southern Tati dialects*. Mouton.

Zomorrodian, R. (2007). *Description of dialects*. Mashhad: The Ferdowsi University of Mashhad [in Persian].