Chapter 14

Khuzestani Arabic

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This chapter describes the basic word order profile of Khuzestani Arabic and discusses possible reasons for deviations from the default word order VX (X representing non-subject arguments). This discussion includes an analysis of where the change from VX to XV may be triggered by language contact or by language internal reasons related to information structure. The description is mainly based on data from the WOWA-corpus (https://multicast.aspra.uni-bamberg.de/resources/wowa/#semitic) and supplemented by the author's own corpus data.

1 Introduction and data

The Arabic variety spoken in the southwestern Iranian region of Khuzestan belongs to the Mesopotamian dialectal area and the subgroup of *gələt* dialects[1]. The grammar of Khuzestani Arabic (KhA) has been described mainly by Bruce Ingham and the author of this chapter (among the most important contributions are Ingham 1973, 1976, 2008, and Leitner 2022b). This chapter presents the first analysis of word order structures in KhA since Ingham (1991) and has the advantage of being based on a comparatively large text corpus.

Arab settlement in southern and western Iran (i.e. Khuzestan and Fars) is already documented for Sasanian times (226–651 AD), and thus precedes the arrival of the Arab Muslim armies (Zarrinkūb 1975: 27). However, the real Arab dispersal into Iran began after the initial Islamic victories when many tribes from the

[1]The term *gələt*, first used by Blanc (1964) to classify the Iraqi Arabic dialects, is based on the 1SG PFV verb for 'to say': *gələt* versus *qəltu*—the latter being the other group of dialects spoken in Iraq and southern Anatolia. *gələt*-dialects are associated with Bedouin and rural Arabic, even though nowadays of course almost no speakers live as nomads any longer and many have moved to cities, cf. Leitner (2021b).

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vicinities of Kufa and Basra entered Iranian soil following the conquest (cf. Leitner 2022b: 6–7 and the references mentioned there). Many of the Arab tribes who immigrated into Khuzestan had originated in Arabia (cf. Savory 1986: 81; cf. Nadjmabadi 2009: 132, Fn. 28–29; Field 1939: 604) and first settled in southern Iraq. Their subsequent immigration to Khuzestan led to an extensive Arabization of the province, parts of which were officially called Arabistan from the 16th/17th century until 1923 (Oppenheim 1967: 3, 10; cf. Ingham 1997: ix). Most Arab tribes, such as the Kaʕab, adopted Shiism after their settlement in Iran, but some remained Sunnis, e.g. the Muntafiq, who migrated to Hoveyzeh in 1812 (Savory 1986: 81).

The Iran-Iraq War (1980–-1988) forced many families to flee their hometowns and thus led to considerable demographic changes. Both the city of Khorramshahr/Muḥammara (and its port) and the city of Abadan (and its refineries) were completely destroyed in the course of the Iran-Iraq War by Iraqi artillery and aerial bombardments.

The region's capital city Ahvaz in turn has witnessed an immense growth in the past decades (according to Nejatian 2015 the number of inhabitants in Ahvaz grew from 334,399 in 1976 to 724,653 in 1991, and to 1,112,021 in 2011).

Persian, being the majority language as well as the only official language and language of education and administration in Iran, plays a crucial role for the people in Khuzestan. The majority of the Khuzestani Arabs are bilingual, but there are still monolingual Arabic speakers, especially among the older generation. KhA is insulated from influence by MSA, but sharing a long geographically open border with Iraq, Khuzestan is not totally isolated from the Arabic-speaking world. The linguistic influence Persian has had on KhA is strongest in lexicon, but it is also evident in some aspects of its phonology and syntax. This paper will focus on possible language contact influences in the domain of syntax with a focus on word order and sentence structure. For this purpose, we will characterize the word order profile of KhA relying primarily on the WOWA corpus data[2]. For a more general evaluation of language contact phenomena in Khuzestani Arabic, cf. Gazsi (2011), Matras & Shabibi (2007); Leitner (2020).

The data for this contribution was gathered in field studies in Khuzestan in 2016 and comprises 6 texts (about 9,600 transcribed words) from 8 different speakers (5 female, 3 male, aged between 30 and 65). Table 1 provides an overview of this data, which contains three narrative interviews, one conversation, one traditional tale, and one procedural description (recipe). Examples taken from the author's data other than that of the WOWA-corpus data will be labelled as "(own data)".

[2]https://multicast.aspra.uni-bamberg.de/resources/wowa/#semitic.

Table 1: Metadata WOWA corpus

	Text name	Genre	Gender	Age
A	Mōze - Past times	Narrative interview	F	65
B	Shepherd	Narrative interview	M	30
C	Hamidiye women	Conversation	F, F	60, 60
D	Ghazawiyya Palm farmer	Narrative interview	M, M	35, 30
E	Umm Saʕad - Ḥamda	Traditional tale	F	45
F	Amine - recipes	Procedural text	F	30

The main body of this chapter contains general information on KhA sentence structure and word order (Section 2). This is followed by a discussion on the factors that may trigger pre-predicate position of constituents in KhA and the likelihood of an explanation of these changes via Persian influence or, otherwise, due to language-internal reasons related to information structure and focus-fronting (Section 3).

2 Word order profile

Out of the dataset's 546 analyzable tokens[3], 479 were found in post-predicate position and only 67 in pre-predicate position, which confirms that Khuzestani Arabic, like most Arabic varieties, is a VO language. This suggests that the influence of the contact language Persian, an OV language, on KhA word order is not very strong. In the following, a brief word order profile of KhA will be given.

2.1 Adjective/noun

Adjectives generally follow nouns in KhA as in most other Arabic varieties (1).

(1) Khuzestani Arabic (own data)
baḷḷa xall nšərrb-a *māy fāyər yiġsil*
DM HORT make_drink.IPFV.1PL-3SG.M water boiling wash.IPFV.3SG.M
ṣadr-a
breast-3SG.M
'Let us make him drink hot [lit. boiling] water that makes him feel good [lit. cleans his breast].'

[3]Tokens are defined as non-subject-constituents with one of the following roles: direct object; Goal; recipient; addressee; location; instrument; comitative; copula complement noun; possessed NP in a possessive expression; and complement of a change-of-state verb.

2.2 Possessor/possessed

Possession is expressed either via synthetic nominal attribution or via the analytic genitive. The basic syntagm for synthetic nominal attribution constructions (Arabic *ʔiḍāfa*) is NOUN (in construct state) + NOUN/DEF-NOUN. The second noun is usually a (definite or indefinite) substantive, as in (2) and (3).

(2) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: D, 0591)
ḥalīb əl-hōš
milk DEF-COW.COLL
'cow's milk'

(3) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: A, 0166)
ṭāsa-t rōba
bowl-CS yoghurt
'a bowl [full] of yoghurt'

The two default types of the analytic genitive syntagm are: NOUN (POSSESSED) + MĀL + NOUN (POSSESSOR) (4) and NOUN + MĀL-PRONOMINAL SUFFIX (5). There are also examples in which the element after *māl* is an adverb. This linker for nominal attribution is usually labeled in Arabic dialectology as a "genitive exponent" or "genitive marker" (see Leitner 2022b: 176–189 and the references mentioned there for a more detailed elaboration of such constructions in KhA).

(4) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: E, 0652)
ġaṣər māl malək
castle GL.SG.M king
'a castle of a king'

(5) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: D, 0537)
əl-xūṣ māl-a
DEF-palm_fronds GL.SG.M-3SG.M
'its [the palm's] fronds'

(6) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: A, 0217)
maṯal ʕad-na xamsīn ḥōliyye ʕad-na sittīn
for_example at-1PL fifty young_female_buffalo at-1PL sixty
ḥōliyye
young_female_buffalo
'We had like fifty [young female] buffaloes or sixty buffaloes.'

For possessive constructions with the preposition *ʕad*, lit. 'at', the default syntagm is *ʕad*-PRO (POSSESSOR) + POSSESSED (6).

While *māl* can be used both predicatively and attributively, *ʕad* can only be used predicatively. In the WOWA corpus, there are 4 out of 32 instances of the possessive construction with *ʕad* that have the POSSESSED in pre-predicate position, i.e. preceding *ʕad*-PRO, as in (7): *ʔamān ma ʕad-na* 'we don't have safety'. This marked pre-predicative word order is often used in combination with negation to stress non-possession of a certain item and often co-occurs with a repetition of an already mentioned noun (here: 'safety'), as illustrated in the following example.

(7) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: B, 0224)
əs-surūḥ w ʕalaf w taʕb w nṭāra w
DEF-grazing and fodder and exhaustion and watching and
b-əl-ʔaham ham ha-l-ayyām masʔala masʔalt əl-ʔamān
in-DEF-most_important also DEM-DEF-days question question DEF-safety
ʔamān ma ʕad-na əl-ḥalāl b-īd-ak w yəmbāg
safety NEG at-1PL DEF-cattle in-hand-2SG.M and be_stolen.IPFV.3SG.M
'The grazing and the fodder, the exhaustion, and the guarding, and the important thing these days is the question of safety, we don't have safety, the cattle that is in your hand might be stolen [any minute].'

kəllšāy 'everything' often precedes a negative possessive-construction *mā ʕad*-PRO, as in the following example (8), to express 'to really have nothing', i.e. for emphasizing the fact that one really does not own anything (and with that implicitly contrasting her with others who have more). This structure might be a calque on Persian *hičči na-dāšt* 'she had nothing', but is also found in Iraqi Arabic (see e.g. Leitner et al. 2021: 172 "*kull wakit ma ʕindi.* 'Ich habe gar keine Zeit.'" and "*kull šī māku.* 'Es gibt gar nichts.'"; cf. Section 3).

(8) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: E, 0614)
w hāy l-əbnayya bass əhəya təsraḥ b-əl-ġanam
and DEM DEF-girl but 3SG.F graze.IPFV.3SG.F with-DEF-sheep
kəllšāy mā ʕad-ha
everything NEG at-3SG.F
'And this girl was always just grazing the sheep, she had nothing [else].'

2.3 Demonstrative/noun

Demonstratives usually come before the noun (9).

(9) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: C, 0502)
hāḍann lə-hədūm
DEM.PL.F DEF-clothes
'these clothes'

Though their position before the noun prevails, demonstratives can also follow the head. In such constructions, however, the noun is often emphasized (10).

(10) Khuzestani Arabic (own data)
əl-walad hāḍa rabbō-(h)
DEF-boy DEM.SG.M raise.PFV.3PL.M-3SG.M
'They raised this boy.'

Also, the noun can be both preceded and followed by a demonstrative (11; such constructions are usually limited to the SG proximal demonstratives M *hāḍ*, F *hāḍi, hāy*).

(11) Khuzestani Arabic (own data)
əḥna hāy əl-ʕarab hāy
1PL DEM DEF-arabs DEM
'we Arabs [COLL]'

2.4 Numeral/noun

Numerals generally precede nouns (12, 13).

(12) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: A, 0217)
sittīn ḥōliyye
sixty young_female_water_buffalo
'sixty [young female] water buffaloes'

(13) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: B, 0226)
sitt əšhur
six month.PL
'six months'

2.5 Adpositions

Prepositional phrases usually follow the verbal predicate, as in (14) and (15). A counterexample is e.g. provided by (18), where *mən zuġur* 'from childhood (on)' precedes the predicate.

(14) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: E, 0654)
gālat ʔāna ʔaḍallan bə-hāḍa ġaṣər māl əl-malək
say.PFV.3SG.F 1SG stay.IPFV.1SG in-DEM.SG.M castle GL.SG.M DEF-king
'She said: "I will stay in this, the king's castle."'

(15) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: F, 0751)
w ənnōb tāli nrawwi əb-ṣīniyye
and then next form_balls.IPFV.1PL on-tablet
'…and then we form balls [of dough for baking bread] on the tablet.'

2.6 Auxiliary/main verb

The default position for auxiliary verbs is before the main verb (16, 17).

(16) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: F, 0785)
gabul ma čānu ystəfādūn ləbləbi
formerly NEG AUX.3PL.M use.IPFV.3PL.M chick_peas
'In former times they didn't use chick peas [for cooking].'

(17) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: A, 0187)
ġarafna l-əl-hōr gəmna ənḥušš
row.PFV.1PL to-DEF-marshland AUX.1PL cut_grass.IPFV.1PL
'We rowed to the marshland [*hōr*], we started to cut grass.'

However, as has been suggested in Leitner (2020, 2022a), there seems to be an ongoing change probably triggered by contact with Persian that yields clause-final position of the auxiliary, cf. also the following example (18). This development is paralleled by the tendency towards postpredicate position of copulas (cf. Section 3 below; Leitner 2022a). Of course, it may never be entirely ruled out that it is rather pragmatic reasons that cause some of the postpositions of the auxiliary (e.g. as a time frame setter, cf. Brustad 2000), but the comparative numbers presented in Leitner (2022a) speak rather for an explanation as a contact feature.

(18) a. Khuzestani Arabic (own data)
hāde ham mən zuġur yəštəġəl čān
DEM.SG.M also from childhood work.IPFV.3SG.M AUX

b. New Persian (own data)
in ham az kudeki kār mi-kard
DEM.SG also from childhood work PROG-do.PST.3SG
'This one has also been working from childhood on.'

2.7 Complement clause/matrix verb

Complement clauses follow the matrix verb and a complementizer *əlli* (19) or *ənnu* 'that' (20). In general, however, the complementizers are often omitted and asyndetic constructions are preferred as in (21).

(19) Khuzestani Arabic (own data)
ətgūl *əlli* *lyōm* *mā* *ətrūḥ* *l-əš-šəǧəl*
say.IPFV.3SG.F that today NEG go.IPFV.3SG.F to-DEF-work
'She says that today she won't go to work.'

(20) Khuzestani Arabic (own data)
w *maʃrūf ənnu məṭəl*
and known that for_example
'And [it is] known that for example…'

(21) Khuzestani Arabic (own data)
gāl *əlyōm māku* *ṭalʃa*
say.PFV.3SG.M today EXIST.NEG going_out
'He said that today there is no going out.'

2.8 Nominal direct object/verb

The default or unmarked word order is VO as in (22). This order appears 274 times out of a total of 317 direct objects in the WOWA-KhA-corpus. 43 tokens are found in pre-predicate position (OV). Of these 43 OV-constructions, 27 show a resumptive pronoun (co-referential with the object) after the verb as in (23) and only 16 had no resumptive pronoun after the verb, e.g. (24). The 27 examples of OV + resumptive pronoun thus are not plain OV constructions, but instead cases of topicalization (as further discussed in Section 3).

(22) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: C, 0434)
šəfət-l-i *maʃǧiza*
see.PFV.1SG-for-1SG miracle
'I saw a miracle.'

(23) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: C, 0392)
əl-ḥaywāna *nəḥlib-ha*
DEF-animal.SG milk.IPFV.1PL-3SG.F
'We milk the cattle.'

(24) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: A, 0100)
ləbasne *əxwīəṣāt-ne* *ləbasne* *əḥžīəlāt-ne* *yaʃni*
wear.PFV.1PL ring.DIM.PL-1PL wear.PFV.1PL bracelet.DIM.PL-1PL DM
šīəla-t *balbūl ləbasne* *yaʃni əṭ-ṭōg* *u-māṣxa*
shawl.DIM-CS balbūl wear.PFV.1PL DM DEF-necklace and-māsxa
ləbasne
wear.PFV.1PL
'… we put on our rings, we put our bracelets, … we wore the *balbūl* shawl[4], [and] the necklace and *māsxa* [kind of jewelry].'

2.9 Pronominal direct object/verb

Pronominal direct objects are generally suffixed to the verb and thus inherently postverbal as in (25) and (26). Only in cases where the speaker wants to express additional emphasis and/or mark it as the topic of an utterance (cf. Brustad 2000: 331, 333 on comparable examples of independent pronouns that are sentence-initial and the topic but not subject of a sentence), an independent pronoun may additionally be mentioned preceding the verb with the suffixed pronoun, see example (27) (and the discussion of such examples in Section 3).

(25) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: C, 0356)
təsmaʃ-ni
hear.IPFV.2SG.M-1SG
'You hear me.'

(26) Khuzestani Arabic (own data)
hāy *ətfəhm-əč* *səʔli-ha* *suʔāl*
DEM understand.IPFV.3SG.F-2SG.F ask.IMP.SG.F-3SG.F question
'She understands you. Ask her a question!'

(27) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: C, 0412)
waḷḷa *āna iyā-ni* *hād* *əl-bīəhdāš*[5] *māl*
by_god 1SG come.PFV.3SG.M-1SG DEM.SG.M DEF-healthcare_center GL.SG.M
salf-i
district-1SG
'And I – He came to me, [from] this healthcare center of my district…'

[4] A thin shawl, lit. "made of (the material) *balbūl*", cf. Steingass (2001: 179) on the Persian term *bulbul čašm* 'a sort of silk'.

[5] < Pers. *behdāšt* 'hygiene, healthcare' (Junker & Alawi 2002: 108).

2.10 Goal/verb

The default position of goals is post-predicate (28).

(28) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: C, 0464)
ham rəḥna ən-naxal rəḥna l-əš-šilib
also go.PFV.1PL DEF-palm_groves go.PFV.1PL to-DEF-rice_fields
'We also went to the palm groves, we went to the rice fields…'

From the 83 goals in the WOWA-corpus only five were in pre-predicate position: three times the adverb *hnā* 'here' as in (29), once *əb-baṭn-a* 'in its belly' (30) and once the 1SG pronoun *āna*, which is however indicated as well by a pronominal affix on the verb and added sentence-initially for emphasis and marking it as a sentence topic (see example (38) below and the discussion on whether it should be considered a pre-predicate token in Section 3).

(29) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: A, 0091)
wa hnā yō ḥaṭṭan warde yō əzmām
and here or put.PFV.3PL.F nose_ring or nose_ring
'And here they put a *warde* or a *zmām* [two types of nose rings].'

(30) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: F, 0739)
nṭēḥ bə-diyāy əb-baṭn-a yḥuṭṭūn šwayyūn təmən
fall.IPFV.1PL with-chicken in-belly-3SG.M put.IPFV.3PL.M some rice
w kəšməš w fəlfəl ʔaswad w l-ḥawār
and raisins and pepper black and DEF-spices
'We take the chicken, in its belly we put some rice and raisins and black pepper and spices.'

2.11 Other obliques/verb

In the WOWA-corpus, of all 25 obliques labelled as "other" (which are mostly adverbs) 6 were found in pre-predicate position as in the following example (31):

(31) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: A, 0095)
waḷḷa dāyman hēč mā nilbas
by_god always like_this NEG dress.IPFV.1PL
'It's not always that we dress like this.'

2.12 Copular and become-constructions

In general, there is no present tense copula in Arabic. Several dialects have, as a consequence of contact with languages that do have obligatory present tense copulas, developed an obligatory copula for the imperfective (cf. e.g. Procházka 2019 on the dialects of Eastern Anatolia), but KhA has not despite its long term contact with Persian.

The WOWA-corpus features one imperfective copular-complement in pre-predicate position (out of 17 copular constructions[6]), (32), and two pre-predicate become-complements (out of 28), one of them is cited here in (33) (*ha-l-gadd-āt-ha ṭṣīr* 'it becomes about this size'). The latter structure again might be due to contact influence or due to information packaging and pragmatic reasons, as it seems to be an echo or a recall of the previous *yṣīr čibīr-e* 'it becomes big'.

Even though in the WOWA-corpus we find only one attestation of pre-predicate copulas, we know from previous studies that they are more often found in sentence-final position than other verbs in KhA (see Leitner 2022a).

(32) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: B, 0278)
hāḏanni ṭəlyān ṭəli yṣīr
DEM.PL.F lamb.PL lamb COP
'These are *ṭəlyān* ["lambs"], *ṭəli* ["lamb"] we call it.'

(33) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: D, 0508)
hāy əl-faḥla yṣīr čibīr-e w hāy ən-naxla la
DEM DEF-male_palm become.IPFV.3SG.M big-F and DEM DEF-palm no
zəġīr-e eh zəġīr-e taġrīban ha-l-gadd-āt-ha ṭṣīr
small-F yes small-F about DEM-DEF-size-PL.F-3SG.F become.IPFV.3SG.F
nəfšəg gadd čaff īd hāy waḥda-t ən-naṭye
split.IPFV.1PL size palm hand DEM thing-CS DEF-female_palm
'This male palm grows big, but this palm not, small, yes small, it becomes about this size, we split – as [big as] a hand – this thing of the female palm.'

3 Areal issues and information structure

As stated in the introduction, KhA is not entirely isolated from the rest of the Arabic-speaking world due to its border with Iraq, although it is spoken in a

[6] Of these 17 copular constructions, 15 copulas were imperfective forms and two were perfective forms; 14 copulas were forms of *ṣār* lit. 'to become' and only three were based on the lexeme *kān* 'to be'.

region in which the sociolinguistically dominant language is not Arabic but Persian. The use of KhA is mostly restricted to conversations within the family and among friends.

To the best of my knowledge, we do not have a detailed survey on word order in (Muslim/*gələt*) Iraqi Arabic, with which KhA is closely related. But since the overall picture of KhA word order shows that most word order features are most likely inherited, as the post-predicate position of objects and other complements is the default position, we can assume that KhA in this regard does not deviate much from its neighbor Iraqi Arabic. Against this background, this Section will focus on those cases of non-default word order trying to propose possible explanations. The following thus is a brief outline of some of the factors that may trigger pre-predicate position in KhA and discusses whether changes in word order and use of marked word order are likely to result from contact with Persian or are rather to be explained as information structural strategies. The latter builds on the theoretical approaches of Brustad (2000: 315–362) and her analysis of information packaging and its influences on word order in spoken Arabic and Ingham (1991) and his analysis of KhA sentence structure. Ingham proposes a basic division of sentence types into i) uninodal, in which new information comes first and which are usually verb-initial unless there is focus fronting (e.g. 36), and ii) binodal, in which the topic precedes new information/the comment. Example (34) illustrates the binodal sentence type (Ingham 1991: 722), where the object is fronted (fronted objects are usually given information and definite nouns[7]) is topical and indexed by a resumptive pronoun marking the original post-verbal position of the object. This example clearly shows how putting an object in pre-predicate position can be used as an information structural tool to indicate the topic of a sentence (cf. Brustad 2000: 348–349). The phrase *hāy əd-dār* 'this house' already appears earlier on in the sentence, but in each instance the speaker clearly refers to another room and the one following the conjunction *bass* 'but' is the one made the topic followed by the new information, vic. that it should not be opened. After the preceding rhythmic enumeration ("You may open this house, and you may open this room, and you may open this room"), the part after *bass* is also accompanied by a differing intonation contour (pitch goes up with *dār*), and a short pause before she goes on saying *lā thəddin-ha* '(this one) don't you open it'. Within the latter phrase, we find the feminine singular object pronoun *-ha* referring back to the object *hāy əd-dār* 'this house', thus the construction resembles that of a normal topicalization structure as found in all varieties of Arabic.

[7]Cf. Brustad (2000: 339) and the examples provided there on the fact that topic in Arabic also includes temporal verbs.

(34) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: E, 0635)
gāl-ha thəddīn hāḏ̣ əl-bīət w thəddīn
tell.PFV.3SG.M-3SG.F open.IPFV.2SG.F DEM DEF-house and open.IPFV.2SG.F
hāy əd-dār w thəddīn hāy əd-dār bass hāy əd-dār
DEM DEF-room and open.IPFV.2SG.F DEM DEF-room but DEM DEF-room
lā thəddīn-ha
NEG open.IPFV.2SG.F-3SG.F
'He said: "You [may] open this house, and you [may] open this room, and you [may] open this room, but don't you open this room."'

Out of the 43 OV instances in the KhA data from the WOWA-corpus, 27 featured a resumptive pronoun on the verb as in the example above or in example (23). As stated above, this structure is not foreign to Arabic and must not be attributed to contact influence. Whether or not such topicalized sentences appear more commonly in Arabic dialects that start shifting towards OV due to contact with an OV language has yet to be determined.

The WOWA-corpus of KhA contains 16 OV phrases that do not feature a resumptive pronoun on the verb such as (24) above cited here again (35) for the sake of the discussion:

(35) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: A, 0100)
ləbasne əxwīəṣāt-ne ləbasne əḥžīəlāt-ne yaʃni
wear.PFV.1PL ring.DIM.PL-1PL wear.PFV.1PL bracelet.DIM.PL-1PL DM
šīəla-t balbūl ləbasne yaʃni əṭ-ṭōg u-māṣxa
shawl.DIM-CS balbūl wear.PFV.1PL DM DEF-necklace and-māsxa
ləbasne
wear.PFV.1PL
'… we put on our rings, we put our bracelets, … we wore the *balbūl* shawl, [and] the necklace and the *māsxa* [kind of jewelry].'

In this example, in which the speaker (rhythmically) lists various items that women used to wear in the past for weddings, she switches from the default VO structure to the marked OV in the middle of the sentence (note that this turn is introduced by the discourse marker *yaʃni*). The shift in word order is paralleled by a shifted stress distribution in the second (OV) part of the sentence where in both cases the speaker puts the main stress on the verb *ləbasne* 'we wore', whereas in the first part the main stress lies on the objects. Information packaging seems to be the most likely cause for such a change towards marked word order. According to Brustad (2000: 343) "objects that are contrastive may occupy

pre-verbal position (OVS)" and later on adds that "objects without resumptive pronouns are highly contrastive" (Brustad 2000: 348). In this example, such a contrast may lie in the shift from the event-oriented first part (with a focus on the habitual event, vic. what they used to wear) towards a topic-oriented second part (with a focus on items that are part of a set of things they used to wear). In Ingham's (1991) terminology, the latter part of this sentence seems to be of the type "uninodal with focus fronting" (Ingham 1991: 721–722) and is thus also not new or undocumented for Arabic dialects. However, against the definition of this sentence type, the nuclear stress in this very example does not fall on the fronted item but on the following verb. It remains unclear, why the speaker once marks a pre-predicate object with the definite article (*əṭ-ṭōg*, albeit the only pre-predicate direct object with definite article in the WOWA corpus) and once without (*māṣxa*), as both seem to have a generic character representing a set of items. In general this example does not seem to support Ingham's (1991) assumption that possibly a "definite 'true' object" cannot appear in KhA in preverbal position without a resumptive pronoun (Ingham 1991: 722, Fn. 5).

Another instance of a pre-predicate object (*kəllšī* 'everything') without resumptive pronoun is the following (36):

(36) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: C, 0363)
ḥəṣadna lammēna təbən lammēna ğanēna
harvest.PFV.1PL gather.PFV.1PL straw gather.PFV.1PL breed.PFV.1PL
ḥaywān kəllšī sawwēna ya ʕazīz galb-i
cattle everything do.PFV.1PL VOC dear heart-1SG
'We harvested, gathered straw, we gathered – we bred cattle, we made everything, my dear.'

This again is a uninodal sentence with focus fronting, in this case also fulfilling the requirement of heavy stress on the fronted object (*kəllšī* 'everything'). The indefinite pronoun *kəllšī* appears three times in the WOWA-corpus and always in pre-predicate position. It may also precede negated verbs as in the following example (37), in which we find additionally a fronted and topicalized object *əl-ʕarūs* (indexed by the resumptive pronoun *-hən* on the verb):

(37) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: A, 0072)
əl-ʕarūs kəllšī mā nsawwī-l-hən
DEF-bride everything NEG make.IPFV.1PL-DAT-3PL.F
'The bride[s], we didn't do anything with them [like putting on henna, etc.].'

As stated above for example (8), where *kəllšāy* 'everything' precedes a negative possessive-construction, these structures may be calques on (Spoken) Persian structures such as *hičči na-kardam* 'we did nothing' and *har kari kardim* 'we did everything'. Their existence in Iraqi Arabic (see Section 2.2 above) might speak against this, as influence of Persian on Iraqi Arabic is mostly restricted to the lexical domain. Taking all this under consideration, it seems most likely to be an inherited structure in KhA, focus fronting of *kəllšāy* ~ *kəllšī* that indicates contrast[8], or, as in (36), some kind of closure of an enumeration (a category or context not mentioned by Brustad or Ingham). Of course, Persian word order might have reinforced the use of this structure and increased the frequency of fronting of *kəllšī*.

The following sentence (38) (already cited above as (27) and repeated here for the sake of convenience) is most likely also of the binodal type with the 1SG pronoun *āna* presenting the sentence topic and being taken up by a referential pronoun on the verb.

(38) Khuzestani Arabic (Leitner 2021a: C, 0412)
waḷḷa āna iyā-ni hād əl-bīəhdāš[9] *māl salf-i*
by_god 1SG come.PFV.3SG.M-1SG DEM.SG.M DEF-healthcare_center GL.SG.M district-1SG
'And I – He came to me, [from] this healthcare center of my district ...'

A feature that can more likely by attributed to contact influence is the sentence-final position of auxiliaries (cf. Section 2.6 for examples), copulas and the verb 'to become' (cf. Section 2.12 for examples). This fits very well into the stages of shift towards XV structures as described by El Zarka & Ziagos (2020) for Southern Iranian Arabic. There, this shift seems to be more advanced than in KhA, but in both varieties it appears to have started with elements such as copulas and auxiliaries (see Leitner 2022a).

We can thus conclude that, overall, the data and its analysis clearly show that the inherited default word order (VX) is retained in Khuzestani Arabic. However, pragmatic factors related primarily to information structure and to a much lesser degree contact with Persian may cause that elements are moved to pre-predicate position, thus yielding XV word order. For future studies on KhA word order and information packaging, it would be interesting to further include a comparison of information structure in Persian and KhA.

[8]In example (37) the speaker was clearly contrasting wedding traditions of the past and the present.

[9]< Pers. *behdāšt* 'hygiene, healthcare' (Junker & Alawi 2002: 108).

Abbreviations

AUX	auxiliary	IPFV	imperfective
COLL	collective (noun)	KhA	Khuzestani Arabic
COP	copula (noun)	M	masculine
CS	construct state	MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
DAT	dative	NEG	negation
DEF	definite (article)	Pers.	Persian
DEM	demonstrative	PFV	perfective
DIM	diminutive	PL	plural
DM	discourse marker	PRO	pronoun
EXIST	existential particle	PROG	progressive marker
F	feminine	PST	past tense
GL	genitive linker	SG	singular
HORT	hortative particle	VOC	vocative particle
IMP	imperative		

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