Equative Constructions in the Laki Language

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	Different linguistic constructions, including comparative, superlative, similative, and equative constructions, are employed to convey the concept of comparison. Equative and similative constructions exhibit the highest semantic and structural resemblance out of all the specified constructions. In such constructions, two entities -referred to as the comparee and the standard- are compared based on a specific characteristic or quality. In equative constructions the comparison is based on a gradable property, where one of the referents has the property to a higher degree, while similative constructions compare the similarity in manner. This study explored the equative constructions in the Laki language by primarily relying on classification put forth by Haspelmath (2017). The data for the present study consists of 123 equative sentences taken from spoken interviews with twelve individuals residing in Noorabad city. The findings indicate that speakers mainly use seven strategies to convey the concept of equality in Laki. Furthermore, the data show that in numerous equative constructions in Laki, there is a preference for omitting the standard marker while retaining the degree marker.

1. Introduction

Various linguistic structures can be used to express situations in which we assess and contrast an individual or object with another based on a specific characteristic. Heine (1997) argues that the cognitive concept of "comparison" has a schematic structure in the mind. This concept can be encoded in various linguistic forms, such as similative comparison, equative comparison, superior comparison, and superlative comparison. Examples (1-3) illustrate three different types of comparison structures that highlight specific aspects of the comparison between two referents.

1. a) Sara is more beautiful than Mary. (Superior comparison)

   b) Sara shines like the moon. (Similative comparison)

   c) Sara is as beautiful as Mary. (Equative comparison)

Example (1a) compares Sara and Mary based on the attribute of "beauty", assigning Sara a higher degree of this attribute. These types of structures are commonly known as "superior constructions". Example (1b) compares the beauty of 'Sara' to that of the moon. These types of structures are referred to as "similative constructions". Example (1c) regards Sara and Mary as equally beautiful, attributing the same level of beauty to both. These types of structures are known as "equative constructions". The focus of the present study is on examining equative constructions in the Laki language. Laki is an Iranian language that belongs to the northwestern group of Iranian languages (Dabir Moghaddam, 2013). The Laki language is spoken across four western provinces of Iran: the southern part of Hamadan Province, the northwestern and western parts of Lorestan Province, the northeastern and eastern parts of Kermanshah Province, and the northern parts of Ilam Province (Aman Allahi Baharvand, 2006, p. 56). The geographical location of the Laki people, situated between the large and ancient Iranian tribes of the Lors and Kurds, has led to significant linguistic similarities and overlaps among these three groups. This is a natural consequence of language contact and borrowing between neighboring languages. As a result, many Laki words share similarities and common roots with Kurdish and Lori (Abdi, 2012, p. 35). However, despite these substantial linguistic affinities, there are also distinctive features that differentiate the Laki language from Kurdish and Lori. For instance, Laki dialect has been noted to have a relationship with Old Persian, and Laki is slightly distinct from Kermanshahi Kurdish dialect, such that someone familiar with one can easily understand the other (Rawlinson, 1981, p. 155). The present study focuses specifically on Laki dialect spoken in Noorabad.

Examples (2–3) illustrate two types of equative constructions in English and French, respectively.

2. Sam is as tall as Sara.

3. Kim est   aussi   grand que Pat.

   Kim is   as   tall   as Pat

   Kim is as tall as Pat.

The elements of the equative constructions (2) and (3) are shown in Table 1.

Table (1). Elements of the equative construction

comparee		standard marker	parameter	degree marker	standard
Sam	**is**	as	tall	as	Sara.
Kim	**est**	aussi	grand	que	Pat.

The comparee, the parameter, and the standard are key components in both similative and

equative constructions. The comparee is the subject of comparison. The parameter is typically an adjective that conveys a specific feature or attribute. The standard is the reference point used to assess the comparee. Equative constructions consist of two additional elements: the degree marker and standard marker. The degree marker is located close to the parameter and indicates the extent of the attribute. The standard marker is positioned close to the standard and connects it to the comparee. The degree marker is closely associated with the parameter, while the standard marker is closely associated with the standard. This positioning of the markers helps to clearly convey the equative relationship between the comparee and the standard.

As stated earlier, the aim of this study is to offer a detailed description and analysis of equative constructions in the Laki language. In doing so, we primarily use the categories of equative constructions proposed by Haspelmath (2017). In order to accomplish this, we gathered data by conducting oral interviews with 12 male Laki speakers over 30 years old from Noorabad County. In these interviews, we collected 123 sentences containing equative constructions. Furthermore, another source of data was the linguistic intuition of one of the authors who lives in Noorabad. Using the data collected, the research sought to address the following research questions:

1. What types of constructions do Noorabad's Laki speakers use to convey the concept of equality?

2. Which elements are predominantly used in equative constructions in the Laki language?

The structure of this paper is as follows: Section 2 discusses previous research related to the topic of this study. Section 3 will introduce the theoretical framework supporting the present study. Section 4 is specifically focused on presenting and discussing research results regarding equative constructions in the Laki language. Section 5 introduces generalizations drawn from the analysis of data. Section 6 offers the conclusion.

2. Literature Review

In this study, the term "equative" does not merely refer to similarity, but rather it is used to talk about situations where two referents are exactly the same in terms of a measurable characteristic. Upon close examination of equative constructions, we observe the strong resemblance they share with similative constructions. Equative and similative constructions are similar in both structure and meaning, utilizing the same linguistic tools to represent their formal and semantic structure. However, when examining these constructions across various languages (specifically European ones), focus has been placed on the unique characteristics of each construction, resulting in distinct structures for each in certain languages. One notable study in this field is by Haspelmath & Bachholz (1998). In their comparison, they outline both similarities and distinctions within these structures. Example (4) showcases an equative construction, while example (5) demonstrates a similative structure.

4. a) Robert is as tall as Maria. ≈ b) Robert is tall to the *same* extent as Maria.

5. a) Robert sings like a nightingale. ≈ b) Robert sings in the *same* way as a nightingale.

Examples (4b), as paraphrases of examples (4a), confirm that equative constructions express equality in **degree** or **extent**. Examples (5b) provide further support for the idea that similative constructions convey a comparison concept based on **manner** or **way** (how something is done.), as shown in examples (5a). Although quantity or extent is a straightforward idea, manner or way is more complex and varied. Therefore, equative constructions are the only ones indicating equality in amount of a feature, while similative constructions demonstrate similarity in the manner of doing or revealing a feature. For

instance, the truth condition of (5b) –contingent on similarity– relies on the resemblance of Robert's singing to that of a nightingale (Haspelmath & Bachholz, 1998, pp. 277-279).

Research on comparative constructions and their types in the Persian language can be divided into two main categories: traditional and modern studies. The initial set of studies concentrated on defining adjectives and their types, along with exploring different ways to express comparison like similative, comparative and superlative constructions. Frequently, Persian grammar books included discussions on the subject of comparative constructions. In contrast, the second set of studies examined different semantic and structural characteristics of comparative constructions and their varieties using new methodologies. This section will begin by discussing the research conducted by the initial category, then we will move on to talk about the newer research.

In a study titled "Adjective and its grammatical role in Modern Persian language", Arzhang (1971) described adjectives and their types in the Persian language (p. 15). In this research, he discussed the concept of a comparative adjective. What Arzhang referred to as "expressing equality in adjectives" seems to be akin to the concept of equativity. He suggested that expressing equality in adjectives is possible with words such as "be ændaze" (as much as), "be qadre" (as much as), "čændan" (so much), and so on; for example, "to čændan qafeli ke mæn" (You are as careless as I am) and "mæn be qædre to bahušæm" (I am as smart as you). Similarly, Shari'at (1989) referred to what he called an "equal adjective," which appeared to be the same as the equative construction discussed in the present study (p. 262). Shari'at considered an equal adjective to be a type of absolute adjective and noted that the distinguishing feature of an equal adjective is the presence of a marker of equality between the two attributes, such as "mesl" (like), "čun" (like), "be qædre" (as much as), "be ændaze" (as much as), etc. Interestingly, he pointed out that equality is sometimes expressed in two separate sentences. For instance, the sentence "Taqi hæman qædr xub æst ke Hasan" (Taghi is as good as Hasan) is actually composed of two equative clauses: " Taqi hæman qædr xub æst ke Hasan xub æst" (Taghi is as good as Hasan is good). In Shari'at's study, the distinction between the concepts of similarity and equality was not entirely clear. Farshidvard (2008), on the other hand, provided a more explicit classification of adjectives, which included a category called "equative adjectives" (pp. 261-262). He defined equative adjectives as those where the degree of the attribute and what it is compared to are equal, e.g., "Yusef be ændaze Ahmad mehræban æst" (Yusef is as kind as Ahmad). Farshidvard (2008) noted that the equality relationship is typically established through the use of words or phrases indicating equality, such as "be ændaze", "be qædre", "chonan", and so on. This could appear in sentences, such as "Hushang manand Ahmad hušyar æst" (Hushang is as smart as Ahmad). In his discussion of various ways of expressing comparison in Persian, Mace (2003) also referred to "equality comparison". He defined this as a structure where the equality is expressed using an abstract noun that indicates an adjective followed by a possessive structure (Ezafe), as in the example "in be tondi-e an æst" (This is as fast as that). Interestingly, a study by Sahaby (2014) that examined the changes in superlative and comparative suffixes from Old Persian to Modern Persian, made no mention of equative constructions. More recently, Najafi and Rahimian (2020) had conducted research specifically focused on equative constructions in Persian. In a recent study, the authors examined different types of equative constructions in Persian, drawing upon the theoretical framework and methodology proposed by Haspelmath (2017). Through their analysis, they identified a total of 7 distinct types of equative constructions in the Persian language. In a separate study, Imani (2021) investigated the typology of superlative structures in Persian, based on the perspectives of Stassen (1985) and Nose (2010). After analyzing the various morpho-syntactic strategies employed in encoding superlative structures in Persian, Imani introduced the dominant strategies. The

identified strategies exhibited a fair amount of diversity, which Imani attributed to the presence of possessive structures and the free word order in Persian. The key findings of Imani's (2021) study could be summarized as follows:

1. Superlative structures in Persian are predominantly of the "locative" type.

2. The classifications proposed by Stassen (1985) and Nose (2010) are not entirely sufficient to account for the Persian data and may require revisions.

More recently, Najafi et al. (2022) had investigated the types of equative constructions in the Turkish (Azerbaijani) language, again based on the theoretical framework and methodology developed by Haspelmath (2017). Their findings confirmed that 5 main strategies could be used to encode equative constructions in the Azerbaijani Turkish language. Using Heine's cognitive approach (1997) as a framework, Imani (2023) carried out a research project. investigating the schemata underlying superlative structures and their morpho-syntactic encoding in Persian. The findings of this research revealed that Persian utilizes 5 main schemata to express the concept of superlative comparison: a) attributive schema, b) possessive schema, c) equality schema, d) partitive schema, and e) lexical schema. In addition, Imani identified 3 sub-schemata and also observed the presence of mixed schemata, which combined two or more of the primary schemata. Her analysis suggested that some of these schemata were specific to Persian and had not been adequately captured by Heine's (1997) previous framework. As a result, Imani (2023) concluded that Heine's proposed schema-based model is not entirely sufficient to account for the Persian data. Regarding the morpho-syntactic components involved in expressing superlative comparison in Persian, Imani made the following observations.

1. The degree marker, standard marker, and even the standard itself are not obligatory elements in Persian.

2. The concept of superlative comparison is encoded through the integration of these components, rather than their explicit presence.

In addition to the research on Persian and Azerbaijani, there were studies examining the expression of equative, similative, and superlative structures in non-Iranian languages. For instance, Vanhove (2017) conducted a study focused on the Beja language. In this research, Vanhove (2017) first introduced the general grammatical features of Beja and then proceeded to analyze and compare the equative, similative, and superlative structures found in this language. Furthermore, Henkelmann (2006) investigated various types of equative constructions across a corpus of 25 languages, primarily from the European language family. In this study, Henkelmann (2006) identified and discussed the primary strategies used to encode equative constructions in these languages.

3. The Primary Types of Equative Constructions
Haspelmath (2017), based on typological studies, introduces six major types of equative constructions. The following sections explain each of the types mentioned.

3.1 Type 1: Only Equative Standard Marker
In this type, the equative construction contains an ordinary predicative property word as the parameter (luu we) plus differentiated comparee ('ŋwə') and standard ('Làmbi'). As demonstrated in example (6) from the Babungo[1] language, there is no degree marker in this type of construction and only standard marker (*yaa)* is available.

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1. It is a language which belongs to bantu language family.

6. ŋwə´ luu we' yaa Làmbi.

   He be strong [like Lambi]

  'He is as strong as Lambi.' (Bantu; Schaub, 1985, p. 116)

3.2 Type 2: Equative Degree Marker and Standard Marker

In such constructions, all key components are included, such as the comparee, the degree marker, the parameter (predicative property word), the standard marker, and the standard. The aforementioned elements appear in the same sequence in examples (7–9) from English, French, and German, respectively.

7. Kim is   as   tall   as Pat.

8. Kim est   aussi   grand que Pat.

9. Kim ist   so   groß   wie Pat. (Haspelmath, 2017, p. 19)

3.3 Type 3: Equative Degree Marker Unified

In this type, the comparee and the standard appear as a unified unit ([Capi and Kryt]), and the degree marker (pipẽn) is also present along with the parameter (cati), as a single conjoined unit ([cati pipẽn]). In addition, the construction lacks a standard marker.

10. capi me kryt [cati pipẽn]

   [Capi and Kryt] [big equal]

  'Capi and Kryt are equally big '.(Je[1]; Popjes & Popjes, 1986, p. 144)

3.4 Type 4: Primary Reach Equative

This construction uses a verb as the primary predicate, typically involving the concepts of 'reaching' or 'equaling,' with the comparee as the subject and the standard as the second argument (usually the object), and with the parameter presented as an oblique constituent ('in height').

11. Kim [reaches/equals Pat] in height. (Haspelmath, 2017, p. 15)

3.5 Type 5: Primary Reach Equative Unified

In this equative construction, a primary predicate verb expressing the concept of 'reaching' or 'equaling' is used, with the comparee and standard presented as a unified entity in the subject position. The parameter is indicated as an oblique constituent ('in height').

12. [Kim and Pat] are equal to (each other) in height. (Haspelmath, 2017, p. 15)

3.6 Type 6: Secondary Reach Equative

This equative construction includes a regular predicate ("is tall") with distinct elements for comparison and a standard, with a secondary verb that takes the standard as its second argument and usually conveys a sense of 'reaching' or 'equaling'.

13. Kim is tall [reaching/ equaling Pat] (Haspelmath, 2017, p. 15)

4. Equative Constructions in Laki Language

Type 1: This equative construction closely resembles a similative construction in both structure and meaning. The essential components of this structure are the comparee, the standard, and the standard marker, with no degree marker. The absence of a degree marker makes this construction resemble similative constructions. As shown in (14) and (15), the parameter functions as the predicate of the sentence.

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1. A family of Amazonian language.

14. Oc   ĵurs.ᴍ   boæ-ys   bahušᴘ-æ.
    3SG   like   father-PS,3SG   intelligent-be.3SG
   Lit: He is as intelligent as his father.

15. ĵurs.ᴍ   wežems   zereŋᴘ- æ.
   Like   RP, 1SG   smart-be.3SG
   Lit: She is as smart as me.

In examples (14) and (15), the comparison between the comparee and the standard is made using the predicative parameters 'intelligence' and 'smartness,' respectively. The evaluation was centered on the level or degree of these factors, as noted in both sources (both demonstrate equal intelligence or cleverness). Additionally, the standard marker appears in a preposed position (before the standard). In the Laki language, the adjective (parameter) has the flexibility to appear before or after the noun. Example (16) clearly demonstrates this.

16. Kaleŋ-ter e   dar/ e dar   kaŋ-ter
    big-er   from   tree
    Bigger than the tree.

In certain constructions, the parameter may not be explicitly visible and is inferred from the surrounding context, as demonstrated by the examples shown in (17).

17. a) Alic čwoys.ᴍ Rezas-i kæ.
       Ali   like   Reza   be.3SG
      Lit: Ali and Reza are alike.
   b) Alic šivas.ᴍ Rezas dir-e.
       Ali   manner   Reza have-P.3SG
      Lit: Ali and Reza have the same manner/ appearance.
   c) Alic kotomets.ᴍ Rezas-æ.
       Ali   similar   Reza-be.3SG
      Lit: Ali is just like Reza.
   d) Alic meris.ᴍ rowas-i   kæ.
       Ali   similar   fox-DFN be.3SG
      Ali resembles a fox (in cunning).

In all examples (17), the similarity between the comparee and the standard may be based on a moral feature or outward appearance, and its exact determination depends on the context. The most important simile particles that serve as standard marker in the Laki language are *čʷoy, čʷi, ĵur,* and *meri*. In addition to the simile particles mentioned earlier, Laki speakers also employ words like *šiva* (17b) and *kotmet* (17c) as simile particles (standard markers).

No degree marker is present in this construction. Type 1 construction is the most commonly used in the current dataset. Although the current study primarily examines copular sentences with a parameter as the predicate, equative constructions can also be presented as compound clauses, which include the standard, comparee, and standard marker elements. In copular clauses, the parameter functions as the predicate, whereas in compound clauses, it may not serve as a predicate or may be presented in the form of a relative clause. It should be noted that the parameter may or may not be evident. In other words, it can be inferred from the context.

18. čiæ   yækic   čwis.ᴍ wežₛ   hwasti-e.
   go.IMP.3SG somebody like   RP, 3SG   want(marry).IMP.3SG
   Lit: He is married to a person who is similar to him

19. oc   wiž   ĵurs.ᴍ   xoaₛ se   ke   hær deruᴘ-æ me.
   3SG likewise similar sister be3SG that just as lie   say.3SG
   Lit: He lies, just as his sister does.

In examples (18) and (19), the standard is accompanied by a parameter that appears in the form of a relative clause. The standard marker in these constructions can be found as a postfix or a prefix (placed before or after the standard). In the Laki language, the standard marker is typically positioned before the standard in equative constructions of Type 1, including both copular and compound constructions.

Type 2. In this type of equative construction, along with the comparee, standard, and parameter, there are also a degree marker and a standard marker, as seen in example (20) from Latin.

20. Claudia**c** tam**D.M** docta**P** est quam**s.m** Julius.
 Claudia   so   learned   is   how   Julius.
 'Claudia is as learned as Julius.' (Haspelmath, 2017, p. 13)

In the Laki language, based on the authors' research, there is no equative construction where both a degree marker and a standard marker are present simultaneously. In standard Persian, particularly in written form, examples such as (21) may be viewed as instances of the second type of equative construction. In these constructions, the preposition *be* can be considered a degree marker and the Ezafe (Ez) can be considered as a standard marker. However, the second analysis involves viewing the preposition (be) and the Ezafe (Ez) as a combined particle, where one part comes before and the other part comes after the parameter, known as the conjoined standard marker.

21. Mina**c** be**s.m** bolændi**P**-e   Zahra**s** æst.
   Mina   as   height-Ez   Zahra   be.3SG.
   Lit: Mina is as tall as Zahra.

Although it is possible to consider Ezafe in Persian as a kind of marker (degree or standard), in the Laki language, there is no Ezafe construction. As Dabir Moghaddam (2013) also states, there is no linker between the noun and the adjective (p. 865). As can be seen in examples (22), there is no Ezafe linker between the nouns (*diwar, žæn*) and adjectives (*beleŋ, ræŋin*):

22. a) diwar beleŋ.
     Wall   high
      The high wall.
   b) žæn ræŋin.
     lady beautiful.
     The beautiful lady. (Dabir Moghaddam, 2013, p. 867)

Type 3. This equative construction involves a parameter serving as the sentence's predicate, accompanied by a degree marker indicating equality. The comparee and the standard are perceived as a unified unit [comparee+standard], with no distinct standard marker in these structures.

23. [Narges-o Parastoo]**c+s** čenæ**D.M** yæk   raŋin**P**-æn.
   Narges-and Parastoo   as much eachother beautiful-be.2PL
   Lit: Narges and Parastoo are equally beautiful.
24. [Paeiz-o zemeson]**c+s** čæ**D.M**   yæk   særd**P**-æn.
   Paeiz-and zemeson   as much eachother cold-be.3PL
   Lit: The weather is equally cold in autumn and winter.

In both examples (23) and (24), the comparee and the standard are presented together as a coordinated structure (Narges-o Parastoo) and (Paeiz-o Zemeso). The degree markers, *čenæ*

and *čæ*, respectively, signify the same level of attainment (literally meaning reaching each other). The parameters of *ræŋini* (beauty) and *særdi* (coldness) function as the predicates of the sentences.

   Type 4. In this type, equality is conveyed through a verb indicating 'equal/reach,' where the comparee serves as the subject and the standard functions as the object. The parameter is represented in different ways, such as using a second object (oblique). In the Laki language, the verbs *resæn* and *berden* are used to express the concept of equality.

25. Mohsen**c** æra   honehoni**ᴘ** e bow-ekałeŋes-i berdi-e.
   Mohsen   in terms of hospitality to grandfather   take afrer.IMP.3SG
   Lit: Mohsen resembles his grandfather in terms of his generosity.
26. Parvin**c** æ   zereŋi**ᴘ**   eræ æ pa berays-e   ne-mæræs-e.
   Parvin in terms of clever being to   foot brother-PS.3SG IMP.NEG.reach.3SG.
   Lit: (Parvin cannot reach his brother cleverness) Parvin is not as clever as his brother.

   In constructions (25-26), the parameter does not serve as a predicate. Instead, both referents (comparee and standard) are contrasted based on their shared characteristic using the verbs *berden* and *marase*.

   Type 5. This type involves the comparee and standard being presented as a unified unit (*Mina-o Narges*) in the subject position, with the main predicate being a verb (yæk-æn, berdenæse) that signifies 'reaching' or 'unifying.', The parameter typically appears as an indirect object.

27. [Mina-o Narges]**c+s** æ saketi**ᴘ**   ræ ǰurs**.ᴍ**   yæk-æn.
   Mina-and Narges   in quietness being same   eachother-be.3PL
   Lit: Mina and Narges are both equally quiet.
28. a) [Ałi-o Reza]**c+s** æ xwoi**ᴘ**-ræ   berdenæse yæk.
     Ali-and Reza   in goodness being take after.IMP.3PL eachother.
     Ali is just as good as Reza.
   or
   b) [Ałi-o Reza]**c+s** æ xwoi**ᴘ** -ræ ǰurs**.ᴍ** yæk-an.
      Ali-and Reza in goodness ? like eachother-be.3PL
      Ali is just as good as Reza.

   Type 6. This type of equative construction includes the [parameter+comparee] as a conjoined unit, with verbs indicating "reaching" or "equaling" serving as the main predicate. Additionally, the sentence includes the "standard" and a "standard marker."

29. [perpešti**ᴘ** muyæł Sara**c**]   berdiæse   days-e.
   thickness/ dense hair Sara   take after.IMP.3PL mother-PS.3SG
   Lit: Sara's hair is as dense as her mother's hair (her luxuriant back hair took after her mom).
30. a) [bełeni**ᴘ** Maryam**c**] æ days-e   ne-meræse.
      Height   Maryam   to mother-PS.3SG NEG-reach
      Lit: Maryam doesn't reach his mother in height (she is not as tall as her mother).
   or
   b) [bełeni**ᴘ** Maryam**c**] čæ**ᴅ.ᴍ**   days-e   ni-a.
      Height Maryam as much mother-PS.F.3SG NEG.BE.3SG
      Lit: Maryam is not as tall as her mother.

   Type 7. In this type of construction, two referents are compared based on possessing two opposite characteristics.

31. æχæ**D.M** ke Ali**s** zereŋ**P.M**-æ   æχenkæ**D.M** bera**c**-y-e   tæmeł**P.N**-æ.
    as much that Ali clever be.3SG as much   brothe-.PS.3SG lazy-be.3SG
    Lit: Although Ali is extremely clever, his brother is equally lazy.

32. æχenkæ**D.M** ke parsał**s** perawi**P.P** bi,   hær ændazæ**D.M**   emsał**c** hwošksaałi**P**-æ.
    As much   that last year rich in water PS.be.3SG, to the same extent this year   draught be.3SG
    Lit: While last year was abundant in water, this year is experiencing a drought.

In the examples (31) and (32), both referents are considered similar because they share the same level of two contrasting attributes. Such equative constructions appear as two copular sentences consisting of two contrasting parameters and use a relative pronoun (*exæ*/as such) as a standard marker. In these constructions, the referent with a positive qualitative value (parameter) is considered the standard, while the referent with a parameter of opposite (negative) value is viewed as the comparee. A desirable trait or quality is considered to have a positive value. In example (31), cleverness is viewed positively, while laziness is seen negatively. Similarly, in example (32), excessive watering is viewed as a benefit, while drought is seen as a disadvantage.

Type 8. In this kind of equative construction, the interrogative particle *čenæ* (meaning "how much"), as an intensifying adverb, appears as a degree marker. As it is evident in the examples (33) and (34), these types of constructions include a comparee, a standard and a degree marker and the sentences lack a standard marker.

33. čenæ**D.M** płæŋi**s** særi**P**-æ.
    as much leopard fast-be.3SG
    Lit: he is as fast as a leopard/ he moves as quickly as a leopard.

34. Amir**c** čenæ**D.M** rwoa**s**-i mækar**P**-æ
    Amir as much   fox-DFN cunning-be3SG
    Lit: Amir is as cunning as a fox.

It should be noted that Haspelmath (2017) introduces six main types of equative constructions. The sixth type of these constructions has a parameter as the first predicate and the verbs, meaning "reaching" or "unifying" as the second predicate simultaneously. This type of construction does not exist in the Laki language as far as the authors have investigated. In fact, it is not possible to use an attribute word (such as an adjective) as the first predicate while also using a verb that expresses the notion of "reaching" or "equaling" as the second predicate simultaneously.

In addition to the listed equative constructions, in some situations, Laki speakers use a construction with an omitted standard marker, as shown in example (35b).

35. a) Kor-e   šaruri**P** kæ.
       Boy-DFN   bad be.3SG
       Lit: he is a bad/ naughty boy.
    b) wežet**s**   kor**c**-i kæ.
       RP.2SG   boy-DFN be.3SG
       He is a boy just like you.

It should be noted that the omission of the standard marker in (35b) is highly context-dependent. As shown, the sentence (35a) contains the parameter *šaruri*, and subsequently, the second speaker expresses construction (35b) based on the sentence of the first speaker (35a). More specifically, the parameter is included in the first sentence (35a) and omitted in the second sentence (35b).

5. Generalizations

   Haspelmath (2017) makes generalizations concerning equative constructions based on typological studies. In this section, we will analyze and contrast the stated generalizations with the outcomes of the recent studies on the Laki language.

   Generalization 1. All equative constructions contain a degree marker and a standard marker, there is no equative sentence that includes only a degree marker without marking the standard. When analyzing the Laki data, it was found that some constructions contain a degree marker, whereas the standard lacks a marker, as shown in examples (36–37). Hence, we could argue that Generalization 1 does not hold true for the Laki language.

36. Čenæ**D.M** gaws-i   hałi**P**   nie.
    as much   cow-DFN understand NEG.be.3SG
    He does not understand as much as a cow/ his understanding is as shallow as a cow's.
37. Imæc+**s** qad**P**-mo   čenæ**D.M** yæk-æ.
    1SG   height-PS.1SG as much eachother-be3SG.
    We are the same height.

   Generalization 2. If the standard is followed by the parameter, it suggests that the target language predominantly follows a dominant object-verb (OV) order. Most data in the Laki language show that the parameter comes after the standard, as demonstrated in (38-39). The Laki language, as stated by Dabir Moghaddam (2013), follows a verb-object sequence where the direct object precedes the verb. Therefore, it can be inferred that Generalization 2 aligns with the findings from the Laki language.

38. o**c** či**s.M** day**s**-e   ræŋin**P**-æ.
    3SG like   mother-PS.3SG beautiful-be.3SG
    Lit: She is as beautiful as her mother.
39. imsałej**c** jur**s.M** sał gozæštæs hær hwošksałi**P**-æ.
    this year like   last year   as droght-be.3SG
    Lit: This year, just as with last year, there is a drought.

   Generalization 3(a). If the standard precedes the parameter, the standard marker generally follows the standard.

40. me**c** či**s.M** to**s**   bædjens**P** ni-æm.
    1SG   like 2SG cruel   NEG-be.1SG
    Lit: I'm not as cruel as you are.
41. homæ**c** mæri**s.M** owen**s** šad**P**   ni-no.
    2PL   like   3PL happy   NEG-be.2PL
    Lit: You are not as happy as they are.

   In equative constructions (in Laki language) with a predicative parameter and the order [parameter+standard], the standard marker is placed before the standard in all cases, contrary to Generalization 3(a).

   Generalization 3(b). If the standard is placed after the parameter, then the standard marker generally appears before the standard. As shown in the examples (42-43), the standard markers *čʷoy* and *jur* always appear before the standard.

42. čʷoy**s.M** bow**s**-ey   meræbon**P**-æ.
    like   father-PS,3SG kind-be.3SG
    Lit: She is as kind as his father.
43. jur**s.M** weže**t**s   xwui**P** kæ.
    Like   RP.2SG good   be.3SG
    Lit: He is just as good of a person as you are.

Examples (42–43) demonstrate that the parameter comes after the standard, and the standard marker is located before the standard. Hence, Generalization 3 holds true in the Laki language. The Table 2 provides a brief overview of all equative constructions found in the Laki language.

Table (2). Equative constructions in the Laki language

Equative construction	Example
Type 1. C + S + S.M + (P)	O čwi bow-ey saket-æ. 3SG father-PS.3SG quiet-be.3SG Lit: He is as quiet as his father.
Type 2. [C+S] + D.M + P (predicative)	Mohesn-o Reza chena yak badakhlaq-en. Mohsen-and Reza as much eachother bad-tempered-be.3PL. Lit: Mohsen and Reza are equally bad-tempered.
Type 3. C + P + S + *berde*/ *ræse*	MohsenC æra honehoniP e bow-ekałeŋeS-i berdi-e. Mohsen in terms of hospitality to grandfather take afrer.IMP.3SG Lit: Mohsen resembles his grandfather in terms of his generosity.
Type 4. [C + S] + P + *yæki*/ *berde*	[Ałi-o Reza]C+S æ xwoiP-ræ berdenæse yæk. Ali-and Reza in goodness being take after.IMP.3PL eachother. Ali is just as good as Reza.
Type 5. [P + C] + *berde*/ *ræse* + S + (D.M/ S.M)	Mehrabani Yasin æ bow-ey berdie Kindness Yasin to father-PS.3G take after.IMP.3SG. Lit: Yasin is as kind as his father.
Type 6. D.M + S + P.P (predicative), D.M + C + P.N (predicative)	æχæD.M ke AliS zereŋP.M-æ æχenkæD.M beraC-y-e tæmełP.N-æ. as much that Ali clever be.3SG as much brothe-.PS.3SG lazy-be.3SG Lit: Although Ali is extremely clever, his brother is equally lazy.
Type 7. C + D.M + S + P (predicative)	O čenæ xwo-æy qešæŋ ni-æ. She as much sister-PS.3SG beautiful NEG.be.3SG Lit: She is not as beautiful as her sister.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Equative constructions convey situations where two entities possess a gradable quality to an equal extent. In the present study, an attempt was made to comprehensively discuss and analyze the equative constructions in the Laki language. To achieve this objective, we primarily employ Haspelmath's (2017) typological categorization of equative constructions. The work in question examines six different equative constructions that have been identified through cross-linguistic research. The findings of the present research confirm that four of the six mentioned cases exist in the Laki language. Types (2) and (6) of the equative constructions introduced by Haspelmath (2017) were not found in the Laki language. In fact, Laki language lacks a construction in which both the degree marker and the standard marker are used simultaneously. Also, the equative construction in which the parameter serves as the first predicate and verbs expressing equality (a transitive verb "equal" or "reach") as a secondary predicate was not found in Laki. Aside from the four categories in Hesplemth's typology, the researchers discovered and included two additional equative constructions in the Laki language. Thus, it can be concluded that the Laki language employs eight different constructions to convey concepts of equality.

Furthermore, in relation to the conclusions drawn in Haspelmath's (2017) research,

Generalizations 1 and 2 hold true for the Laki language, while Generalization 3(a) does not align with the findings of the current study. Another important issue to note is the lack of the degree marker in the majority of the data examined. Haspelmath and Buchholz (1998) also discuss this point, highlighting that the elimination of the degree marker is a common trend that transcends specific languages. In addition, Hespelmeth's (2017) Generalization 1 demonstrates that there is no equative construction where the degree marker is included but the standard marker is not. Exceptions to this rule were observerd in equative constructions (3) and (8) in Laki, where only a degree marker is present and the standard is shown without a marker. This study primarily examined how equality is expressed in copular clauses. However, equality can also be explored in other linguistic construction. Constructions that Haspelmath and Buchholz (1998) refer to as "accord clauses" and "role phrases". According to Dabir Moghaddam (2013), Laki is considered a strong verb-medial language with a relatively free word order similar to Persian, when compared to EurAsia languages and languages of the world. Therefore, no strict criteria exist for the arrangement of elements in equative constructions in the Laki language.

Special abbreviations

C	Compare	PL	Plural
DFN	Define	P.P	Positive Parameter
D.M	Degree Marker	PS	Possessive (clitics)
IMP	Important	PST	Past
Lit	Literary (meaning)	RP	Reflexive
NEG	Negative	S	Standard
N.P	Negative Parameter	SG	Singular
P	Parameter	S.M	Standard Marker

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