

Extended Abstract

A new insight into Persian deverbal compound nouns: An exoskeletal approach

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Introduction

Nominalized words are complex nouns that have their particular derivational structure. These nouns can be derived from different parts of speech. Correspondingly, deverbal compound nouns (DCNs) are compound nouns whose head is derived from a verb using a nominalizing suffix, and whose non-head is usually considered as an object of the base verb. Although deverbal compound nouns, because of their particular position in lexicon and syntax, have been one of the most important issues in many theoretical linguistics studies (Roeper and Siegel, 1978; Selkrik, 1982; Grimshaw, 1990; Ackema and Neeleman, 2004; Harly, 2009; Borer, 2013, among many others). Nevertheless, few researchers have addressed DCNs adapting a syntactic approach in Persian. Ghonchepour (2019) is one of the few Persian studies that investigated verbal compounds using different approaches of Generative Grammar, which are transformational, lexicalist and government and binding theories.

Materials and Methods

The present study is an attempt to provide a descriptive syntactic analysis of Persian DCNs based on the Exoskeletal framework as developed by Borer (2013). This model has been opted as the theoretical framework of the present study due to the following reasons: First, the model in which all word formation takes place in syntax is premier to the models sticking to a supreme lexicon. Second, since this model, all categories are syntactic and functional and the syntactic category of a word is determined by the syntactic context in which it occurs, there is no redundancy between lexical and functional categories.

In the Exoskeletal approach, words do not have any specific lexical category and their exact category is dependent on the syntactic context they occur. Regarding the derivation

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of DCNs Borer argues that they lack any argument structure. Also, all DCNs are of the result type and head-final. In Persian, DCNs are exclusively formed by derivational suffixes. The derivational suffixes in Persian deverbal compound nouns are: /-æk/ in /kæfʃ-duz-æk/ ‘ladybug’; /-æn/ in /avaz-xand-æn/ ‘singing’; /-ænde/ in /ran-ænde/ ‘driver’; /-an/ in /æqd-kona-an/ ‘engaging’; /-eʃ/ in /sær-zæn-eʃ/; ‘blaming’; /-e/ in /del-piʃ-e/ ‘cramping’; /-i/ in /aʃpæz-i/ ‘cooking’ (all data were taken from Tabatabai (2016), Anvari (2015) and Words approved by the Academy of Persian Language and Literature).

Results and Discussion

Research results show that Persian, in addition to head-final result DCNs, is in line with Borer’s (2013) assumptions, has head-initial result DCNs (e.g. /ran-ænde taksi/ ‘taxi driver’) and DCNs with argument structure (e.g. /væmgereft-æn/ ‘taking out loan’) as well. Subsequently, as to Persian data, the authors suggest a new syntactic structure or classification based on the main concepts of Exoskeletal model. In this classification, Persian DCNs have two different structures, namely $[N-V]_V C_N[V]_N$ and $[N_{dev}-N]$. Similarly, Persian DCNs with argument structure are divided into active and passive DCNs.

In this regard, the research data display that the active DCNs with argument structure have two different structures in Persian. In the first group, at first, the non-verbal constituent (i.e. direct object) is merged with the verb stem which is embedded under the extended projection of the Event phrase head (E) and aspect node (quantity (Asp_Q) or non-quantity (FPSHL)) and is assigned a category, then such a compound verb is nominalized by moving to the complement position of the categorial functor $C_N[V]$; that is to say, the compound stem is merged with aspect (Asp_Q or FPSHL) to become quantity or non-quantity, then it re-merges with Event phrase (E) to be interpreted as an event and finally, adjoins to $C_N[V]$ to become an active deverbal compound noun with an argument structure, for instance, /qæzaxord-æn/ ‘eating food’ as an example of quantity active DCNs and /əbxord-æn/ ‘drinking water’ as an example of non-quantity active DCNs. In the second group, the active DCN is made first of all by merging of the indirect object or object of preposition with the verb stem. Then the compound stem moves to Event phrase (E) to be interpreted as an event. At the end, it adjoins to $C_N[V]$ to make an active deverbal compound noun with argument structure. It is noteworthy that this structure is an intransitive and quantity derivation; also, in this structure, the head of the prepositional phrase can be overt or covert (e.g. / (be) donja-amæd-æn/ ‘born’)

The passive DCNs contain two groups as well, that is, quantity and non-quantity DCNs. These DCNs with argument structure are, in fact, derived via the nominalization process of the double object verbs. In the quantity passive DCNs structure, first, the object of preposition is merged with the verb stem; as a result, the compound verb stem is created. In the next step, then this stem moves to the quantity aspect (active) node (Asp_Q) to be assigned range through the existence of a quantity DP in its specifier. Then the compound verb stem moves to merge with an active event (E) for taking the eventive interpretation. After that, the compound verb moves to the Specifier of Passive Voice (Spec-p-vc) and the Specifier of (passive) Event (Spec-E). Finally, the compound verb moves to the Specifier of the Categorial functor (Spec of $C_N[V]$), to merge with. Accordingly, the quantity passive DCN structure is made (e.g. /væmgereft-æn/ ‘take out loan’). Then the passive DCN raises to the Specifier of DP to get its [+definite] feature

(e.g. /vɑmgerɛft-æn/ 'take out loan'). In this structure, the internal argument is assigned Subject-of-Quantity in the specifier of Quantity aspect (Spec-Asp_Q) and re-merges first with passive voice (P-Vc), then moves to the nominal domain where it receives genitive case by *ezafe*. The external argument is placed in the specifier of active ((sub-) event (Spec, e)) and receives the originator role.

The derivation of non-quantity passive DCNs is also starts with merging of indirect object (object of the preposition) which is under the dominance of the prepositional phrase and the verb stem, then the compound stem moves to the non-quantity node (FPSHL). After that, it remerges with an active event (E) for taking the eventive reading, in the next step, it moves to the Specifier of Passive Voice and the specifier of Event phrase (Spec-E). Lastly, the compound verb moves to merge with Categorical functor CN_[V]. As a result, the non-quantity passive DCN structure is generated (e.g. /be æmanætgozɑft-æn/ 'entrust')

Conclusion

The research evidences that although Persian has head-final result Deverbal compound nominals (DCNs) which agrees with the structure proposed in Borer's (2013) Exoskeletal model, it also has head-initial result Deverbal compound nominals and Argument structure Deverbal compound nominals. Subsequently, as to Persian data, a new syntactic structure is suggested by the authors based on the main concepts of Exoskeletal model. In this classification, Persian DCNs have two different structures, namely [N-V]_v CN_[V]_N and [N_{dev}-N]. Similarly, Persian DCNs with argument structures are divided into active and passive DCNs.

Keywords: Exoskeleton Model; Deverbal Compound Nouns, DCNs with Argument Structure, Result DCNs, Syntactic Context.

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