Extended Abstract

An exoskeletal analysis of Persian classifier and quantifier projections focusing on partitive construction

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Introduction

After Abney (1987) introduced the sentence feature to the Noun Phrase/NP, which he referred to as the Determiner Phrase/DP, The nature and structural composition of DP in generative studies is still a topic of debate within the field. Although numerous researchers have contributed to this area of study, including Brame (1982), Szabolcsi (1987), Cinque (1990,1992), Crisma (1991), Cardinaletti (1994), Longobardi (1994), Progovac (1995), Borer (2005), and Alexiadou, Haegeman, and Stravrou (2008), the debate around the intermediate projections of this phrase continues to be a topic of significant discussion and disagreement. Some generative scholars talk about the intermediate projections of this phrase as either classifier projection (T'sou, 1976; Cheng and Sybesma, 2005, 2012) or quantifier projection (Shlonsky, 1991, 1991; Giusti, 1991; Rutkowski, 2002) within (or, in some cases, over) DP. Some others hold the belief that there are other projections within this phrase, including (grammatical) case, number, and gender (Ritter, 1991, 1993; Picallo, 1991; Bernstien, 1993; Loebel, 1994). The remarkable fact, in this regard, is that the majority of these studies have been led using a lexical approach.

Moreover, the studies carried out in Persian on the topic of intermediate projections of DP such as classifier and quantifier phrases have been conducted by researchers including Samiian (1983), Gebhardt (2009), Tafakkori-Rezaei and Nazari (2013), Qadiri (2013), and Moddaresi and Zoughi (2014) were also grounded in a lexicalist approach. Nevertheless, it is essential to scrutinize these projections using a more recent, economic, and non-lexical theoretical model. Furthermore, the examination of the structure of a partitive construction that includes the preposition "æz" in Persian is among the topics that has received limited attention and, to the best of the authors' knowledge, this structure has only been addressed in

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Samiian (1983) and Moazami (2006). Therefore, a new examination of this structure along with classifier and quantifier projections, can aid in gaining a deeper understanding and more economic explanation of these categories in Persian.

Materials & Methods

The ongoing research aims to offer an exoskeletal analysis of intermediate projections of Persian DP including classifier phrase (CL^{max}) and quantifier phrase(#P), focusing on the partitive construction as per Borer's (2005) concept. The preference of Borer's (2005) approach to lexicalist approaches is due to its assigning grammatical categories and argument labels to syntax rather than the lexicon. In other words, the lexicon consists only of form-meaning pairs, which Borer (2005) refers to as listemes. Borer's (2005) model is more economical than its lexicalist counterparts.

Borer (2005) presents classifier and quantifier intermediate projections for DP, a subgroup of Functional Phrase/FP (partitive construction). Each of these projections (CL^{max} and #P) contains open values ($<e>_{DIV}$ and $<e>_{\#}$ respectively) that must be range-assigned directly or indirectly (specifier-head agreement) via an abstract head feature or F-morph. The data gathered for this study was chosen from written Persian. However, conflicting evidence from colloquial Persian was also referred to where necessary.

Results & Discussion

The findings of the present study indicated that the open value of Persian CL^{max} or $<e>_{DIV}$ is range assigned by plural abstract head feature and Persian classifiers such as "tɑ, Ɂæsle, dʒeld". Also, Persian cardinals such as "pɑnzdæh, tʃehel and..." serve not only as quantifiers but also play a dividing function; in the absence of another range assigner in the head of CL^{max}, they range assign the open value of this projection, and, in the presence of another range assigner like Classifiers such as "tɑ, Ɂæsle, dʒeld", they are merged as specifiers in the CL^{max}. However, some Persian data like "dʒæɁbe-hɑ-j-e sib" and "do tɑ dæste gol" and colloquial constructions like "do tɑ doxtær-ɑ-m" demonstrate a contradiction to Borer's (2005) assertion that there is no concurrent existence of plural abstract head features and classifiers. Because in the example of "do tɑ dæste gol", the classifiers "tɑ" and "dæste" as well as in the example "do tɑ doxtær-ɑ-m" the classifier "tɑ" and the plural abstract head feature occupy the same position, or, in other words, the head of the CL^{max} and both are considered as rang assigner to the open value $<e>_{DIV}$. In this regard, the explanation of these constructions based on Borer (2005) is due to double marking (that is to say, the presence of two range assigners for one open value) which will lead to ungrammatical constructions (Borer, 2005: 37), contradicted with Persian data because Persian speakers consider the constructions "do tɑ dæste gol[1] and do tɑ doxtær-ɑ-m" as grammatical constructions.

On the other hand, the study of Persian data based on Borer (2005) verified the presence of #P in DP and the DP under FP and its occurrence above the CL^{max}. In this projection, according to Borer (2005), cardinals, quantifiers, and some demonstratives range assign to the open value $<e>_{\#}$. Hence, within DP in partitive construction, cardinals like "se" /three are merged into the specifier of this projection, indirectly assigning range to the open value $<e>_{\#}$

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[1]. Further investigation is needed to clarify the exact nature of such constructions based on Borer (2005).

through specifier-head agreement. Also, some Persian demonstrative adjectives Persian, like "ʔin"/this are positioned at the head of the #P and DP, directly assigning range to the open values of these phrases (respectively $<e>_\#$ and $<e>_d$). Conversely, where there is a demonstrative adjective in DP along with a cardinal, such as "ʔin se ketɑb"/ these three books, the presence of the demonstrative adjective "ʔin"/ this within DP causes the cardinal "se"/ three to be included as a modifier. In addition, Persian quantifiers in partitive construction, as to Borer's (2005) assumption, belong to the noun NP appearing above the DP.

Conclusion

The description and analysis of Persian data support the efficiency of the explanation of the CL^{max} and the elements which are able to assign the range of the open value of this projection ($<e>_{DIV}$), based on Borer's (2005) exoskeletal theory, is in an aura of ambiguity. As it appears in the analysis of some Persian data such as "ʧehel ʔæsle deræxt", the assumption of the existence of CL^{max} based on Borer (2005) in this language is validated, while in the analysis of some others like "do tɑ dæste gol and do tɑ doxtær-ɑ-m", this assertion is a matter of controversy.

Besides, the research showed that interpreting #P within the Persian FP (partitive construction) as proposed by Borer (2005), is possible in case cardinals, quantifiers, and adjectival demonstratives are found within the DP located under the FP. Furthermore, the quantifiers in the Persian partitive construction, as per Borer's (2005) assertion, are merged in NP located above DP.

Keywords: Exoskeletal approach, Classifier projection, Quantifier projection, Open value, Partitive construction.

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