# Typology of Nominalisation of Adjectives in East Caucasian[*]

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**Abstract**

Traditionally, functioning of major classes of lexical items is described as follows. Nouns prototypically function as arguments, but can also serve as predicates and attributes; verbs are normally used as predicates, but can also appear for arguments and attributes; and adjectives are categorically attributes, while secondary they can be used as predicates. The question arises, whether adjectives can serve as arguments (and how). The answer is, undoubtedly, "yes", they can. When an adjective is used without a head, it begins to function as a noun. The current research aims to describe the morphological behaviour of such nominalised adjectives in the East Caucasian languages. The study of 31 grammatical descriptions of these languages, based on the analysis of nominalised adjectives, reveals 5 groups of the East Caucasian languages.

**Keywords**

East Caucasian Languages, Morphology, Adjectives, Nominalisation, Nominalised Adjectives

INTRODUCTION

Adjectives and nouns are described to have categorial (primary, prototypical) and extended (secondary) use (Schachter/Shopen 2007; Bhat 1994: 19-20). Nouns and adjectives are categorically "thing-words" and "property-words" respectively. If an adjective is used without a head noun, it becomes nominalised and functions as a noun, referring to a person or an object, which has corresponding property. In Tzutujil (Mayan), some ad-

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jectives can also be used as nouns indicating objects or persons (Bhat 1994: 94) (1).

(1) Tzutujil:

|          | Modifier      | Noun          |
|----------|---------------|---------------|
| *meem*   | "mute"        | "mute person" |
| *mooy*   | "blind"       | "blind one"   |
| *be'eyoom* | "rich"      | "rich one"    |
| *ts'iil* | "dirty"       | "filth"       |
| *b'olob'ik* | "cylindrical" | "log"      |

Another example comes from Kildin Saami (Uralic) (Rießler 2016: 11) (2). Here the adjective *odt* "new", used without a head, means "new house", which is clear from the context. The adjective does not inflect as a noun modifier (2a)-(2b). However, the headless adjective inflects in the same way as a noun (2c)-(2d).

(2) Kildin Saami:
a. *čofta*      *odt*      *pērrht*
    very      new      house(NOM.SG)
    "a very new house"

b. *čofta*      *odt*      *pērht-es't*
    very      new      house-LOC.SG
    "in a very new house"

c. *čofta*      *odt* (viz. *pērrht*)
    very      new(NOM.SG)
    "a very new one"

d. *čofta*      *od-es't* (viz. *pērht-es't*)
    very      new-LOC.SG
    "in a very new one"

Besides, in some languages, adjectives can be nominalised in the presence of a special affix-nominaliser only. For example, in Kannada (Dravidian) some pronominal gender markers are required (3)-(4) (Bhat 1994: 95).

(3) Kannada:
a. *dappa*      *halige*      *ell-ide*
    thick      plank      where-is
    "Where is the thick plank"?

  b.   *dappad-**du***      *ell-ide*
         thick-**N.SG**      where-is
         "Where is the thick one?"

(4) Kannada:

a.   *a:*           *kuruḍu*      *huḍugi*      *buddhivante*
     that          blind         girl          wise
     "That blind girl is wise".

b.   *a:*           *kuruḍ-**i***      *buddhivante*
     that          blind-**F.SG**      wise
     "That blind (girl) is wise".

This work aims to describe nominalisation of adjectives in East Caucasian languages. Thirty-one idioms were included in the sample, which can be called rather complete. The source of information and examples is predominantly grammatical descriptions of the languages.

ATTRIBUTIVE USE OF ADJECTIVES IN EAST CAUCASIAN

Adjectives of East Caucasian languages vary in morphosyntactic means they use in agreement with the head noun. Firstly, adjectives used attributively may not agree with the head (Ahkvakh, Khinalugh, Agul, Budukh, Kryz, Lezghian, Rutul, Udi) (5).

  (5) Akhvakh (Magomedbekova 1967: 66):
     *reš:eda*         *wac:i*
     beautiful       brother(ABS)
     "beautiful brother"

Secondly, adjectives can agree with the head in class and number by special affix (Avar, Andi, Bagvalal, Botlikh, Godoberi, Tindi, Chamalal, Karata, Tsez, Bezhta, Hinuq, Hunzib, Khwarshi, Dargwa, Archi, Tabasaran, Lak) (6).

  (6) Khwarshi (Khalilova 2009: 100):
     *ł-ogu-t'a*         *mači-bo*
     **NPL**-good-PL      boot-PL.ABS
     "good boots"

Thirdly, agreement with the head in class, number, and/or case can be marked with an attributiviser[1] (Dargwa, Tsakhur, Lak) (7).

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[1] In some languages, attributivisers can also answer for the category of contrastivity, but I do not focus on it in this paper.

(7) Tanti Dargwa (Sumbatova/Lander 2014: 91,222):

a. *ʕaʕχ-se*          *juldaš*
   good-**ATR.SG**          friend
   "good friend"

b. *q:uʁa-te*          *rurs-be*
   beautiful-**ATR.PL**      girl-PL
   "beautiful girls"

Moreover, adjectives of some East Caucasian languages agree with the head in case by oblique[2] marker (Bats, Chechen, Ingush, Khwarshi) (8).

(8) Ingush (Nichols 2011: 99):

| ABS | *joqqa* | *jurt* "big village" |
|---|---|---|
| ERG | *joqqa-**ča*** | *jurtuo* |
| GEN | *joqqa-**ča*** | *jurta* |
| DAT | *joqqa-**ča*** | *jurtaa* |
| INST | *joqqa-**ča*** | *jurtaca* |

Finally, sometimes adjectives agree with the head in number by plural marker (Andi, Tsez, Bezhta, Hinzib, Khwarshi) (6).

NOMINALISED ADJECTIVES IN EAST CAUCASIAN

Nominalised adjectives in East Caucasian languages acquire nominal morphology, such as oblique and case markers (9).

(9) Tsakhur (Sosenskaya 1999: 199):

*čilwa-n      gurt      jug-da      wo-d      lagar-in-či-l-e*
green-ATR   dress.4   good-ADV.4   be-4   blue-ATR-OBL.N-SUPER-EL

The nominalisation of adjectives can be divided into two types: the context-dependent nominalisation (10) and the simple one (11).

(10) Lezghian (Haspelmath 1993: 111):

**hixtin   televizor   k'an-zawa   wa-z   ʁweč'i-di**
which   television   want-IPF   you-DAT   little-SUBST.SG
*č'eχi-di          rang-uni-n-di*
big-SUBST.SG      color-OBL-GEN-SUBST.SG
"What kind of TV set do you want? A small one, a big one, a colour one"?

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[2] Oblique forms are forms of all cases except absolutive. East Caucasian languages are known to have special suffixes of obliqueness, which precede the case markers and may vary in class and number.

(11) Lezghian (Haspelmath 1993: 112):

*i        dünjada-l       qʰsan-bur       pis-bur.u*-laj
this   world-SUPER.ESS   good-SUBST.PL   bad-SUBST.PL-SUPER.EL

*gzaf     ja*
many     COP

"In this world the good (people) are more numerous than the bad (people)".

In (10), the word *televizor* "TV set" is said once, and there is no need to voice it again. In (11), the speaker does not pronounce the word "people" at all. Nominalised adjectives can appear for animate entities (11), as well as for inanimate ones (10).

FIVE STRATEGIES OF NOMINALISATION OF ADJECTIVES IN EAST CAUCASIAN

East Caucasian languages can be divided into five groups according to the morphological strategy of nominalisation.

1) Languages which use conversion to nominalise adjectives (17/31 languages). In these languages, adjectives in attributive position do not inflect or inflect in some other way than nouns do; when used nominally, adjectives obtain morphological markers, typical for nouns.

In (12), the fragment of inflectional paradigm of Bagavalal nominalised adjective is given. Oblique and case markers in these forms are applicable to prototypical nouns as well (cf. (13)).

(12) Bagvalal (Sosenskaya 2001: 153):

*-eχala-* 'long'

|  |  | SG |  | PL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | M | F/N | HUM | NHUM |
| ABS | w-eχala-w | j/b-eχala-j/b | b-eχala-ba | r-eχala-r |
| ERG | w-eχala-w-š:u-r | j/b-eχala-j/b-ɬ:i-r | b-eχala-ba-lu-r | r-eχala-r-ɬ:i-r |
| GEN | w-eχala-w-š:u-b | j/b-eχala-j/b-ɬ:i-ɬ: | b-eχala-ba-lu-b | r-eχala-r-l:i-ɬ: |

(13) Bagvalal (Daniel 2001: 144):

|  | *hekʼʷa* 'man' | *hakʼuj* 'woman' | *mačʼi* 'kids' |
|---|---|---|---|
| ABS | hekʼʷa | hakʼuj | mačʼi |
| ERG | hekʼʷa-š:u-r | hakʼuj-ɬ:i-r | mačʼa-lu-r |
| GEN | hekʼʷa-š:u-b | hakʼuj-ɬ:i-ɬ: | mačʼa-lu-b |

2) Languages, which use conversion to nominalise adjectives; only full adjectives can be nominalised (3/31 languages). These languages have the so-called full (with an attributive suffix) and short (without one) forms of adjectives. Only full forms can be nominalised (using the same affixes as for nouns) (14). In that sense, attributivisers in these languages can be called nominalisers as well. These markers are different from normal nominalisers (see the 3d group), since the former appear in both prototypical and nominalised adjectives, while the latter are used only in nominalised forms.

(14) Tanti Dargwa (Sumbatova/Lander 2014: 91):
*tuχtur-t-a-li*                hi.l-i:c-e
doctor-PL-OBL.PL-ERG       this-OBL-INTER(LAT)
*č'umma^ʕ-se-**li-ja-w***        *us:-aq-iž*            *b-urs-ib*
firm-**ATR-OBL-SUPER-M(ESS)**   sleep:IPF-CAUS-INF   HPL-tell:PF-PRET
"Doctors told him to sleep on firm".

3) Languages, which use special suffix to nominalise adjectives (3/31 languages). In these languages, adjectives, used attributively, do not inflect; adjectives, used nominally, acquire special suffix-nominaliser, which is followed by usual for nouns morphemes (10)-(11). The example of how nominalised adjectives can be formed is provided in (15a)-(15b). Lezghian distinguishes between three nominalisers (SUBST in abbreviation): absolutive singular, oblique singular and the plural one.

(15) Lezghian (Haspelmath 2003: 110-111):
a.

|       | SG                         | PL                   |
|-------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| ABS   | STEM + SUBST ABS SG        | STEM + SUBST PL      |
| OBL   | STEM + SUBST OBL SG + CASE | STEM + SUBST PL + CASE |

b.

|       | *qacu* 'green' | |
|-------|-----------|-----------|
|       | SG        | PL        |
| ABS   | qacu-di   | qacu-bur  |
| ERG   | qacu-da   | qacu-bur-u |
| GEN   | qacu-da-n | qacu-bur-u-n |
| ADESS | qacu-da-w | qacu-*bur*-u-w |
| INESS | qacu-da   | qacu-bur-a |

4) Languages, which have special oblique morphemes for nominalised adjectives, different from ones for usual nouns (6/31 languages). These are quite similar to the languages, which use conversion. Case markers they use for nouns and nominalised adjectives are the same, but the oblique morphemes for nominalised adjectives are specialised (16). In this sense, this type of languages is also adjacent to the nominaliser-type (the third one).

(16) Godoberi (Tatevosov 1996: 21):
    *-ellara-* "thin":
    NB: OBL.SG + ERG : -š:u- + -di → š-t:i, -ɬ:i- + -di → -t:i

|  | M | F,N | HPL | NPL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ABS | w-ollara-w | j/b-ellara-j/b | b-ellara-b | r-ellara-r |
| ERG | w-ollara-š-t:i | j/b-ellara-t:i | b-ellara-rdu-di | r-ellara-rdi-di |
| DAT | w-ollara-š:u-ɬi | j/b-ellara-ɬ:i-ɬi | b-ellara-rdu-ɬi | r-ellara-rdi-ɬi |
| AFF | w-ollara-š:u-ra | j/b-ellara-ɬ:i-ra | b-ellara-rdu-ra | r-ellara-rdi-ra |

5) Languages, having special oblique morphemes for nominalised adjectives, different from ones for usual nouns; only full adjectives can be nominalised (2/31). This type includes languages with full and short forms of adjectives. Only full forms can be nominalised, using special oblique morphemes, different from ones for nouns (9).

GENETIC AND AREAL ALLOCATION OF STRATEGIES

As it has been said, the strategies of nominalisation are: 1. Conversion; 2. Conversion + full adjectives; 3. Nominaliser; 4. Special oblique suffix; and 5. Special oblique suffix + full adjectives.

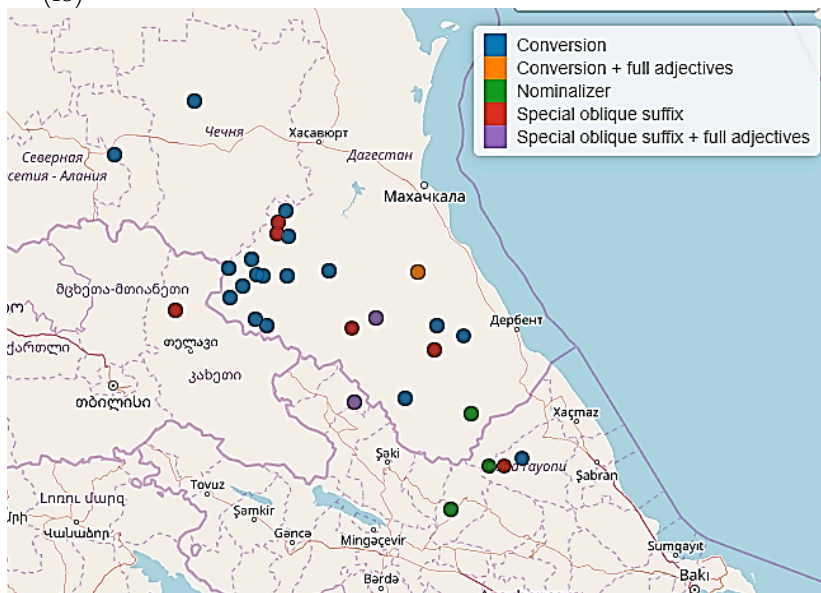Genetic patterns are given in the table (17).

(17)

| *Branch* | *Language* | *Strategy* | *Source* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Nakh | Bats | 4 | Holisky/Gagua 1994; Dešeriev 1953 |
|  | Chechen | 1 | Nichols 1994; Dešeriev 1967; Yakovlev 1960 |
|  | Ingush | 1 | Nichols 2011 |
| Avar |  | 1 | Alekseev et al. 2012 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Andic | Andi | 1 | Alekseev 1999 |
| | Akhvakh | 1 | Magomedbekova 1967 |
| | Bagvalal | 1 | Sosenskaya 2001 |
| | Botlikh | 4 | Gudava 1962 |
| | Godoberi | 4 | Tatevosov 1996 |
| | Tindi | 1 | Magomedova 2012 |
| | Chamalal | 1 | Bokarev 1949 |
| | Karata | 1 | Magomedbekova 1971 |
| Tsezic | Tsez | 1 | Comrie 2007; Lomtadze 1963 |
| | Bezhta | 1 | Madieva 1965 |
| | Hinuq | 1 | Forker 2013 |
| | Hunzib | 1 | Van den Berg 1995 |
| | Khwarshi | 1 | Khalilova 2009 |
| Dargwa | Itsari | 2 | Sumbatova/Mutalov 2003 |
| | Tanti | 2 | Sumbatova/Lander 2014 |
| | Kubachi | 2 | Magometov 1963 |
| Lezgic | Agul | 4 | Magometov 1970 |
| | Archi | 4 | Kibrik et al. 1977 |
| | Budukh | 1 | Talibov 2007 |
| | Kryz | 4 | Authier 2009 |
| | Lezghian | 3 | Haspelmath 1993 |
| | Rutul | 1 | Alekseev 1994; Maxmudova 2002 |
| | Tsakhur | 5 | Sosenskaya 1999 |
| | Udi | 3 | Ganenkov 2008 |
| | Tabasaran | 1 | Magometov 1965 |
| Lak[3] | | 5 | Žirkov 1955 |
| Khinalugh | | 3 | Dešeriev 1959; Kibrik et. al. 1972 |

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[3] According to Žirkov (1955), Lak possesses two types of adjectives; only one of them is included in the investigation, as I have not enough information about the other.

The strategies are spread among branches rather randomly, except the second type, which includes Dargwa idioms only. The areal allocation map[4] also does not show any prominent pattern. Dargwa idioms are represented with one orange dot. Interestingly, all languages with nominalisers are situated on the south, although there can hardly be any contact effect.

(18)



Conclusion

The type of nominalisation of adjectives can tell about the adjective-noun distinction in the language. The languages using conversion do not distinguish between nouns and adjectives to such an extent as the languages with nominalisers do. The other types can be called intermediate ones.

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[4] The map was created based on Moroz (2017).

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