

Compounding in Pashto: An Analysis of Compound and Compound- Complex Adjectives

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Abstract *Compounding as the word formation process is common across languages. Pashto language uses it as a productive morphological process. The paper aims at the structural description of compound and compound-complex adjectives in the language. For this purpose the data were collected through discourse centered method, Pashto newspapers and Pashto programmes on T.V and radio. The data is analyzed using Plag’s (2003) work on word formation in English as theoretical framework. The analysis proves that the grammatical categories exploited in order to derive non-simple adjectives are that of noun, verb and adjective. Further, it also reveals the fact that compound-complex adjectives are derived through synthetic compounding. It also denote the fact that in cases where compound-complex words are formed, the suffixed is invariably attached to the element on the right.*

Introduction

Pashto language is spoken by the people called “Pashtoons” who live in Pakistan, Afghanistan and India. In Pakistan, Pashto is the language of people living in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan provinces. The word “Pashto” has been spelled differently by different people throughout its history. One major reason for this is the middle consonant /S/ in the word. The people using Kandahar dialect pronounce it /S/ while the people using the central and eastern dialect of Pashto pronounce it like the German sound /x/ (Habibullah & Barbara. 1996).

According to Habibullah & Barbara (1996). Pashto belongs to the family of Iranian branch in the Indo-European Language Family. Persian. Kurdish. Balochi, and Tajik are its sister languages. These sister languages of Pashto are mainly

spoken in the surrounding areas of Pakistan, India and Afghanistan. Kandahar or western dialect, the Kabul or central dialect and Ningrahar or eastern dialect are the three main dialects of Pashto.

Pashto is a language that lacks standardization, though, steps have been taken to document the language in the recent history. In this connection the first academy was established by King Zahir Shah in Kabul in the 1930s while another academy was established in Peshawar University in the 50s for the standardization of Pashto language. Though grammarians and linguists (Penzl, 1955; Shafeev, 1964; Tegey, H., & Robson, B., 1996; Roberts, 2000; Hameed, 2012; Yasir, 2015 among others) have studied Pashto, its morphology remains largely uninvestigated.

Apart from introduction, this paper three sections. Section (2) is a brief note on the morphology of Pashto. In section (3) starts with a note on compounding, which is followed by a the structural analysis of the collected data. Section (4) is devoted to conclusion.

Pashto Morphology

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------------|
| a. | <i>HaLak</i> (boy) | <i>HaLakan</i> (boy PLU) |
| b. | <i>Var</i> (door) | <i>Varuna</i> (door PLU) |
| c. | <i>KhaTal</i> (to climb) | <i>KhaTem</i> (I was climbing) |
| d. | <i>GhaReeb</i> (poor) | <i>GhaReebI</i> (poverty) |
| e. | <i>Khandaa</i> (laughter) | <i>KhanDel</i> (to laugh) |
| f. | <i>Zyar</i> (yellow)+ <i>largi</i> (wood)= <i>zyarlargi</i> (a spice) | |

As is evident from the above examples, both inflectional and derivational process in the language take place as a result of the stringing together of morphemes (root and affixes). In examples ‘a’ and ‘b’ the plural of the two nouns are formed by suffixing the plural suffixes ‘-an’ and ‘-una’. In ‘c’, the infinitive *KhaTal* functions as root to derive *KhanDel* (to laugh). In example ‘d’ and ‘e’ we witness derivational process in the formation of new words.

The above examples are sufficient proof of the fact that in Pashto language both affixation and compounding takes place for derivational as well as inflectional purposes.

Compound and Compound-complex Adjectives in Pashto

Besides complex words derived through affixation, many non-simple words in Pashto are derived via compounding as word- formation process. “A compound is a word that is made up of two or more elements, the first of which is either a word or phrase, the second of which is a word” (Benczes, 2006: 8). Some other non-simple words of the language, namely, compound-complex ones are the result of

synthetic compounding. “Synthetic compounding can be seen as the simultaneous use of compounding and derivational morphology in coining a new compound” (Booij, 2007:90). Plag (2003) in his investigation of compounding in English has schematized the structure of compounds in the language.

In Pashto language, compound and compound-complex adjectives are the result of combination of two free morphemes. Most of these compound adjectives have an adjective and a noun (as the head) at the right side. Other compound forms are the result of the combination of a noun with an adjective as the head (N+Adj=Adj), of two adjectives where the one on the right serves as the head (Adj+Adj=Adj), of a noun with a noun as the head (N+N=Adj), of a noun with a verb as the head (N+V=Adj). Based on three major syntactic categories, compound and compound-complex adjectives in Pashto can be schematized as shown in the table below:

Table 1. Inventory of Compound and compound-complex Adjectives in Pashto

	Adj		N		V	
	CADJ	CCADJ	CADJ	CCADJ	CADJ	CCADJ
Adj		/nim puX-ta/ “half cooked”	/zjaR largi/ “a spice”	/baḡ njaṭ- a/ “ill intentioned”		
N	/gul warin/ “shining flower”		/zwani marg/ “one who has died in youth”	/sapar Gwag-I/ “long eared”		/zan Xul-i/
V						

As is evident, there are certain gaps in the table. This implies that all combinations of words are not possible. For example, there is no V+A, V+N, V+V and A+V combination which results in the derivation of adjectives. Also, in cases of compound-complex adjectives, the adjective forming suffix (ADJFSUF) is always attached to the element on right.

Adj+ N→ CAdj

This class consists of compound adjectives made up of adjective with a noun

concatenated to its right side as the head.

/spin s̄t ErgI/
white + eyes
“rude/unkind”

/ghaṭ sunḌI/
big + lips
“big-lipped”

/ghaṭ ḡt ErgI/
big + eyes
“big-eyed”

/ṭ or sunḌI/
black+lips
“dark-lipped”

/ḡin ḡt ErgI/
green+eyes
green/blue-eyed

/zjaR largi/
yellow+wood
“a spice”

Adj+ N+ADJMSUF→ CCAdj

The compound-complex adjectives of this class has an adjective and a noun head to its right side, with the adjective making suffix attached to the noun.

/spEk ḡast̄ -a/
Light+hand-ADJMSUF
“slim”

/ṭor sar-i/
black+hair+ ADJMSUF
“maiden ”

/kaṭa sar-i/
Shaved(head)+head+ADJMSUF
“Shaved headed”

/baḡ kismaṭ -a/
bad+luck+ ADJMSUF
“unlucky”

/baḡ njaṭ -a/
jEb-I/
bad+intention+
+ ADJMSUF
“bad intentioned”
”liar/hypocrite”

/ṭor
ADJMSUF
black+tongue

/ḡin xal-æ
green+tattoo+
ADJMSUF
“(of a woman) tattooed on forehead”

zyar-ghakh-i
ADJMSUF
yellow+teeth+
“pale teethed”

/spIn gIr-i/
 White+beard+ ADJMSUF
 ADJMSUF
 “White bearded (old man)”

/vran kar-a/
 wrong+deed+
 “naughty”

/bađ maX-I
 bad+face+ ADJMSUF
 ADJMSUF
 “ill-omened”
 eared”

ghaṭ-ghwag-i
 big+ear+
 “long

N+ Adj+→ CAdj

In this set, a noun takes an adjective as head to form a compound adjective.

/ĐoĐy Xlas/

/gul Varen/

meal+finished

flower+ice like

“deadbeat”
 flower”

“shining

Adj+ Adj+ ADJMSUF→ CCAdj

Compound-complex can also be formed in some cases where two adjectives and an adjective making suffix concatenate, as the following example show:

/nim puX-ṭa
 half+cooked+ ADJMSUF
 “half cooked”

N+ N+ ADJMSUF → CCAdj

Compound-complex adjectives are also derived by attaching a noun to a noun head. The noun head has an adjective maker suffixed to it.

/zjaR maX-I/
 Yellow+face+ADJMSUF
 “pale-faced”

/pæ makh-i/
 milk+face+ADJMSUF
 “white complexioned”

/sapar Gwag-i/
thatch+ear+ADJMSUF
“long eared”

N+N→CA_{adj}

The data attested here has only one word as an example of compound words of this structure. The noun on the right serves as head.

/zwani marg/
youth+death
“one dead in youth”

N+V+ADJMSUF →CC_{adj}

In this class of adjectives are included compound-complex adjectives derived via noun-verb combination. The verb has suffixed to it an adjective marker (/i/ in this case) before being suffixed to the noun.

/zan Xul-i/
self+show+ADJMSUF
“vain”

Conclusion

As the data reveals, the formation of compound and compound-complex adjectives in the language is a productive process. In the process the grammatical categories exploited are that of noun, verb and adjective. The compound adjectives (CA_{adj}) are derived by attaching two words, the one on the right side serving as the head. Furthermore, the compound-complex adjectives (CC_{adj}) are formed as a result of both compounding and derivation simultaneously. Such words are a combination of two separate lexemes, one of which serves as head, and an adjective forming suffix which is added to the right most element, be that of any grammatical category.

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List of Abbreviations

Adj	Adjective
N	Noun
V	Verb
ADJMSUF	Adjective making Suffix
CAdj	Compound Adjective
CCAdj	Compound-complex Adjective