

MORPHOLOGICAL NOMINALIZATION IN HAWANOKTE

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Abstract

The paper attempts to study the morphological or lexical nominalization in Hawa Nokte. Like in many other languages, in this language also the morphological nominalization is formed with the help of morphological suffixes. In short, this paper examines the morphosemantic features of the morphological elements which help in forming the nominalization constructions.

Keywords: morphological, lexical, nominalization, agentive, locative, purposive,

1. Name of the Language and the People

Nokte (also spelt as Nocte) speakers generally reside in the eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh in Tirap district. As per 2001 census report, the total population of Nokte is 32,957. Of which, approximately 20,000 speakers belong to Hawa group or Hawa Nokte. It is one of the six dialects of Nokte as mentioned in Gupta's *An Introduction to the Nocte Language* (1971). Etymologically, the term 'Hawa' comprises of two words; *ha* (hah) means 'land/earth' and *wa* means 'father/master/owner', thus literally the word means 'owner/master of the land' in Nokte. Similarly, the term 'Nokte' also consists of two words; *nok* means 'village' and *te* means 'person/people', thus the word means "village-people or people living in the village" (Dutta 1978). The term generally refers to both the people and the language. Earlier, the people were also known by different names like *Namsangia*, *Mohongia*, *Borduria*, and *Paniduria* as reported in Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India* (1906:334-340). These exonyms were purely based on the existing Nokte villages at the time of the survey. Basically, these names were given by the outsiders (particularly by Assamese people), and till today these names are frequently used by the people.

2. Defining Nominalization

Mathews (2007) defines nominalization as "...process by which either a noun or a syntactic unit functioning as a noun phrase is derived from any other kind of unit." For Comrie and Thomson (1985), the term 'nominalization' means 'turning something into a noun' (page, 349). Take for instance, in English, the verb 'act' is nominalized to 'acting' and 'actor' by suffixing the clitics-

ing and *-or* respectively to form deverbal nouns. In other words, the morphological nominalization is basically used to derive lexical nouns from verb with help of some derivational suffixes. The derived nouns also have same characteristics as non-derived nouns.

3. Nominalization in Hawa Nokte

The nominalization constructions in Hawa Nokte may be achieved through the suffixation of the morphological elements. These suffixes include /-te-/, /-t^hin-/, and /-li-/. Generally, these morphemes used to derive lexical nouns and are productive in nature. The derived nouns are also capable of taking case marker, number, gender, etc., similar to that of non-derived nouns.

3.1. Agentive nominalization

The morpheme /-te-/ denotes 'person'. It occurs as suffix. Both intransitive and transitive verbs can take this marker. It also takes case, gender, number, and definite marker. The possible order is: V-NOMINALIZER-GENDER-NUMBER/DEFINITE-CASE. When it occurs with verb, it changes the class as in (1a-c).

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|--------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) a. | boəŋ | 'to dance' |
| b. | boəŋ-te | 'dancer' |
| | dance-NOMZ | |
| c. | boəŋ-te-he? | 'dancers' |
| | dance-NOMZ-PMK | |
| d. | boəŋ-te-ju | 'female dancer' |
| | dance-NOMZ-FEM | |
| e. | boəŋ-te-ju-he? | 'female dancers' |
| | dance-NOMZ-FEM-PMK | |
| f. | boəŋ-te-va-he?-nəŋ | 'to the male dancers' |
| | dance-NOMZ-MASC-PMK-DAT | |

The morpheme /-te/ may also be added to nouns. In this case, it maintains class. It is equivalent to Hindi words such as *goan-wala* 'villager', *g^har-wali* 'female member or wife', etc.

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|--------|------------------|---|------------------------|
| (2) a. | ha?daŋ 'village' | → | ha?daN-te 'villager' |
| b. | hum 'house' | → | hum-te 'family member' |
| c. | duken 'shop' | → | duken-te 'shopkeeper' |

The same form may also be added with adverbs. In this case, like verbs, it changes the class of the word.

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|--------|----------------------------|---|---|
| (3) a. | k ^h ↔ma 'front' | → | k ^h ↔ma-te 'one who is in the front' |
| b. | k ^h ↔di 'back' | → | k ^h ↔di-te 'one who is in the back' |

3.1. Locative/instrument nominalization

The morpheme /-t^hin/ denotes 'place' or 'location'. When the morpheme is used with the verbs, it refers to a location or place where the activity described by the verb tends to occur. It can take number, case marker and definite marker, but not gender because the language doesn't allow gender distinction in the case inanimate nouns. The possible order of occurrence is: V-NOMINALIZER-NUMBER/DEFINITE-CASE. Consider the following examples;

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|--------|-----------------------|--|
| (4) a. | toŋ | 'to sit' |
| b. | toŋ-t ^h in | 'a thing/place to sit like chair, stool, etc.' |
| | dance-NOMZ | |

- c. toŋ-t^hin-heʔ-nəŋ ‘to those seats’
 sit-NOMZ-PMK-DAT
- d. toŋ-t^hin-pa ‘(that or this) seat’
 sit-NOMZ-DEF
- e. dʒup-t^hin-heʔ ‘beds’
 sleep-NOMZ-PMK

The morpheme may also be used to derive nouns from verbs, in which, the noun refers to an instrument used to accomplish the act represented by the verb. Thus, it also denotes instrumental nominalization. To illustrate this point, consider the following examples in (5).

- (5) a. k^hen ‘to cut’ → k^hen-t^hin ‘cutter’
 b. laŋ ‘to open’ → laN-t^hin ‘opener’
 c. r↔p ‘to screw’ → r↔p-t^hin ‘screw driver, etc.’

3.2. Purposive nominalization

The morpheme /-li-/ generally denotes ‘thing’ or ‘portion of thing’ kept for the future use. It also denotes ‘type/kind’ or ‘utility’ of something or ‘fit to be’. It occurs as suffix to the verb root. The derived nouns can take number, definite marker and case as shown in examples (6a-d). The order of occurrence is: V-NOMINALIZER-NUMBER/DEGREE/DEFINITE-CASE.

- (6) a. p^hək-li ‘edible thing’
 eat-NOMZ
- b. p^hək-li-pa ‘the edible thing’
 eat-NOMZ-DEF
- c. dʒok-li-heʔ ‘drinkable things’
 eat-NOMZ-PMK
- d. dʒok-li-heʔ-nəŋ ‘to the drinkable things’
 eat-NOMZ-PMK-DAT

4. Conclusion

The nominalization construction in Hawa Nokte is achieved by employing different morphological elements which occur as suffix. Broadly, there are three types: (i) agentive nominalization (ii), the locative or instrumental nominalization and (iii) purposive nominalization. There are class maintaining and class changing derivational suffixes. The nominalizers immediately suffix the verbs (or nouns/adverbs) which in turn may be followed by other nominal markers such as gender, number, definite marker and case.

Abbreviation

DAT=dative, DEF=definite marker, FEM=feminine, MASC=masculine,
 NOMZ=nominalizer, NUM=number, PMK=plural marker,

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