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# Deprepositionalization And Prepositionalization In Noun Phrases

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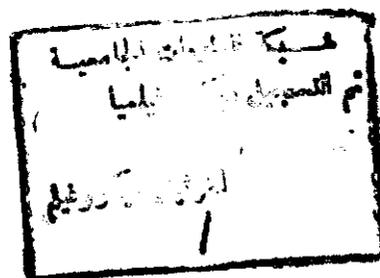
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## List of symbols and abbreviations

$A_1, A_2, A_3, A_4, \dots, A_n$  : sequence of thematic arguments

AP : adjectival phrase

ADVP : adverbial phrase

ATT : attribute

BMP : base maximal projection

C-command : constituent command

$C_p$  : pragmatic constituent

COMP : complement in noun phrases/ complementizer in sentences

$\pm$ DEF : definite or indefinite

DET : determiner

DPR : Depositionalization (deletion of prepositions)

DR : disjoint reference

D-structure : deep structure

e : NP trace

EC : empty category

ECP : Empty Category Principle

F : function in the mathematical sense

GB : Government and Binding

$i, j, k$  : indexing variables

INFL : inflection

LCS : Lexical Conceptual Structure

LE : lexical entry

LRR : lexical redundancy rule

$m_1, m_2, m_3 \dots m_n$  : sequence of non-PGNP  
M-command : minimally command  
NP : noun phrase  
NP PRO : pronominal anaphor  
NT : Nominalization Transformation  
PGNP : prenominal genitive NP  
POSS : possessive  
PRP : Prepositionalization (insertion of prepositions)  
PSR : phrase structure rule  
Qs : Quantifier scope  
R : relation  
SPEC : specifier  
SSC : Specified Subject Condition  
S-structure : surface structure  
Sub-set : subcategorization set  
TSC : Tensed Sentence Condition  
UG : Universal Grammar  
VP : verb phrase  
 $\theta$ -role: thematic role  
 $\theta$ -set : thematic set  
? : indicates a weak grammatical possibility  
# : indicates semantic change  
\* : indicates ungrammaticality  
 $\Omega$  : indicates modification

"Does one arrive at certainty in some linguistic matters, at a single equivocal truth? or are some questions of linguistics abiding questions, to which there will always be as plurality of answers, none of them whole and final? for the scholar, the extreme of allowable dogmatism is that he chooses the best answer the he can and bets his scholarly life on it knowing perfectly well that he might loose his gamble."

Edward Sapir

## PREFACE

Relatively little attention has been given in the literature of Government-Binding (GB) framework to the study of NP-movement in prepositional nominals (illustrated in data 1), and the interpretation of the compound nominals (illustrated in data 2 below). Therefore, the aim of this thesis is (i) to undertake a GB analysis of the internal syntactic and semantic structure of these nominals; (ii) to hypothesize and argue for Depositionalization (DPR) as an NP-movement that can derive nominals like those in (b) from the prepositional nominals in (a) in data 1; (iii) and finally to suggest and defend Prepositionalization (PRP) as an interpretive means that can restrict the possible prepositional interpretations of compound nominals like those in (a) to those in (b) respectively in data 2.

### DATA 1

- (1) *a.* the ban on pornography  
*b.* the pornography ban
- (2) *a.* the plans for higher taxes  
*b.* the higher taxes plans
- (3) *a.* the appeal for charity  
*b.* the charity appeal
- (4) *a.* the reductions in arms  
*b.* arms reductions
- (5) *a.* the investigations into fraud  
*b.* fraud investigations
- (6) *a.* the calls for peace in the Middle East  
*b.* Middle East peace calls

**DATA 2**

- (1) *a.* a drug campaign  
*b.* a campaign against drugs
- (2) *a.* Bush's re-election campaign  
*b.* the campaign for Bush's re-election
- (3) *a.* a White House split  
*b.* a split (in , inside) the White House
- (4) *a.* the adult education project  
*b.* the project for adult education

Correspondingly, Chapter one tries to locate nominals (e.g. data 1 and data 2 above) on the map of Chomsky's GB framework . In the light of X' theory,  $\theta$ -theory, Case theory, and Government theory, this Chapter studies the syntax and semantics of these nominals. That is, this Chapter establishes how X' theory constrains the nature and the internal order of complements and specifiers in these nominals; and how sentence-motivated notions like:  $\theta$ -assignment, case assignment and government can be applied to these nominals.

Depending on the syntactic and semantic findings of the GB analysis of nominals in the previous Chapter, Chapter two falls in two main sections.

The first studies the mechanisms of and the conditions on NP-Preposing. The other develops an argument for DPR as an extension to NP-Preposing, explains why DPR is needed, and proposes some syntactic and semantic conditions that prepositional nominals (e.g. data 1) should satisfy to undergo DPR. Then it examines DPR mechanisms, traces the internal changes that DPR makes in the nominal structure; and finally proposes, in the light of DPR, a Path Schema for movement in nominals.

In Chapter three, the interpretive components in GB are made use of in order to account for the interpretation of the compound nominals (e.g. data 2). This Chapter introduces an outline of interpretation in natural language, moving from Chomsky's *Aspects* approach (1965) to his *GB* (1981-1986) approach. In the light of this outline, the following sections investigate the interpretive status of NP-PRO, prenominal genitive NP, and finally propose and defend PRP for the interpretation of the non-genitive NPs in compound nominals.

Examining the results of the analysis above, some conclusion concerning the generational, transformational and interpretive status of nominals within GB framework could be claimed to be drawn.

# *Chapter One*

# A GB ANALYSIS OF NOMINALS

## 1.0 OVERVIEW

This Chapter tries to locate nominal structures (generally known as nominals) on the map of Government-Binding (GB) theory (Chomsky, 1981-1986). In the light of GB principles of: X' theory,  $\theta$ -theory, Case theory, and Government theory, the syntactic and semantic structure of these nominals is studied.

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

In the early versions of Transformational Grammar (TG) Theory (e.g., Lees, 1960 and Lakoff, 1965) nominals were claimed to be sentence-transforms. The nominals in (a) for example were supposed to be derived from the sentences in (b) in (1-4) by a Nominalization Transformation (NT, henceforth).

- 1) *a.* the enemy's destruction of the city  
*b.* the enemy destroyed the city.
- (2) *a.* Bresnan's hot criticism of Chomsky  
*b.* Bresnan hotly criticized Chomsky.
- (3) *a.* U.S. reductions in nuclear weapons  
*b.* U.S. reduced nuclear weapons.
- (4) *a.* John's eagerness to please Bill  
*b.* John is eager to please Bill.

But in terms of Universal Grammar (UG) evaluation measures and conditions on transformations, such a transformation is highly unsatisfactory (Chomsky, 1970, p. 15).

### 1.1.1 ARGUMENTS AGAINST NT

There are three major types of arguments against incorporating NT in the grammar to derive nominals (1-4) for example (Chomsky, 1970).

#### 1.1.1.1 ARGUMENT 1: NT IS TOO POWERFUL

NT, as far as the examples in (1-4) are concerned, is able to perform widescale operations; it

- (5) (a) changes categories; S into NP, V into N, ADV into ADJ and ADJ into N ....etc.
- (b) inserts prepositions before objects: (of) in (1a) and (2a) , and (in) in (3a). This insertion process has to introduce other prepositions; e.g at, by, for, into, on ....etc. in other examples.
- (c) changes the morphological shapes of the heads; destroyed/destruction, criticized/criticism, reduced/reduction, eager/eagerness ...etc.

If such an enormously powerful type of device is accepted into a grammar and consequently each of the operations in (5) is considered a possible transformation and if further transformations are composed of an arbitrary number of such operations and others, the transformational component of any grammar will be highly chaotic and "clumsy" (Chomsky, 1970, note 9, p.19) in a way that makes the prospect of a concrete and specific characterization of a possible grammar very remote ( Van Riemsdijk and Williams, 1986, p.37).

### 1.1.1.2 ARGUMENT 2: NT IS IRREGULAR AND UNPRODUCTIVE

The essence of a transformational relationship is that it should operate regularly on a given type of structure, and should not be subject to restrictions that depend on the choice of lexical material in any given case. But this is not so at all with NT; the relationship between nominals and their corresponding base forms (verbs or adjectives) is highly irregular, idiosyncratic and unpredictable: syntactically, morphologically, and semantically.

Syntactically, (A) Many sentences have no corresponding nominals (Jackendoff, 1977, p.9)

- (6) *a.* It is easy to please John.  
*b.* \* the easiness to please John
- (7) *a.* John amused the children with his stories.  
*b.* \* John's amusement of the children with his stories
- (8) *a.* It seems that John is gone.  
*b.* \* its seeming that John is gone

(Williams, 1982, p.277)

- (9) *a.* Bill appears to leave.  
*b.* \* Bill's appearance to leave
- (10) *a.* John arrived dead.  
*b.* \* John's arrival dead  
*c.* \* the arrival of John dead
- (11) *a.* The news horrified / terrified John.  
*b.* \* the news' horror / terror of John

(Zubizarreta, 1987, p.40)

(B) None of the following nominals can reasonably be argued to be derived from corresponding verbs (Chomsky, 1970, pp.30-31)

- 12) *a.* the weather in England  
*b.* the story of Bill's exploits  
*c.* the author of the book  
*d.* the prospects for peace  
*e.* my candidate for a trip to the moon  
*f.* the general secretary of the party  
*g.* the vice-chancellor of the university

Any transformational account for these examples would have to invent "Abstract Verbs" (Lakoff, 1968, p.157) whose only function would be to undergo NT, e.g. "auth" to give "author" (Chomsky, 1970, p.32).

(C) Neither the form of the nominal nor the choice of the accompanying preposition is predictable from the form of the associated verb (Horrocks, 1987,p.58)

- (13) *a.* Bertie married Bunty.  
*b.* Bertie's marriage to Bunty.
- (14) *a.* Gazdar proposes transformationless grammar.  
*b.* Gazdar's proposal for transformationless grammar.

Morphologically, the relationship between a verb and the corresponding nominal is to a large extent unpredictable, e.g. (VanRiemsdijk and Williams, 1986, p.37);

- (15) *(a)* prove proof \* proval \*provement  
*(b)* \* refuse refusal \*refusement  
*(c)* amuse \* amuse \* amusal amusement \* amusation  
*(d)* destroy \* destruct \* destroyal \* destructment destruction