Lexical Nominalization in Bodo

Amorjit Daimary[1], Prof. Indira Boro[2]

[1]Ph.D. Research Scholar, Bodoland University, Kokrajhar, Assam, India
[2]Professor, Bodoland University, Kokrajhar, Assam, India

Abstract

One of the most frequently noted characteristics of Bodo language is the presence of nominalization. Most Bodo nouns are derivational. In this language, nominalized nouns are used in a wide range. Here, the nouns are derived from lexical verbs and lexical adjectives through the suffixation process. Lots of suffixes are employed as nominalizer. The nominalizing suffixes or noun denoting suffixes are the derivational in nature. This paper describes the structure and process of forming lexical nouns in Bodo.

Keywords: Noun, Verb, Adjective

Introduction

The Bodo are the inhabitant of Assam, North-East India. Presently, they are scattered throughout the Assam state and some pocket areas of neighbouring states like Meghalaya, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Bengal and also some adjoining countries like Nepal and Bangladesh. Linguistically, they belong to the Bodo-Garo or Bodo group of languages under the Assam-Burmese branch of Tibeto-Burman sub-family of greater Sino-Tibetan Language family (Grierson 1927:53-54). As per the 2001 census, there are 13,50,478 native speakers of Bodo in India. It is mostly spoken in Assam by 12,96,162 speakers.

Nominalization is a linguistic phenomenon where a verb or an adjective is converted into a noun. This process allows verbs and adjectives to be turned into noun and let function as a subject or object in a sentence. The nominalized nouns treat as like primary nouns.

Existing work on nominalization in Bodo

A few researchers have worked on the nominalization process of this language.

Basumatary, P.C. (2005: 34-42) discusses on Bodo noun. Here, he classifies the Bodo noun in two types i.e., basic and derived noun. Basic nouns are the pure noun (e.g., *na* 'fish', *or* 'fire', *dɯi* 'water', *bɔn* 'firewood', etc.) and derived nouns are formed by derivational process from verb and noun with the help of prefix and suffix (e.g., *za* 'to eat' + *naj* > *za-naj* 'eating'). He then, identifies another two processes of nominalization i.e., a) contract form of noun and b) compound noun.

Basumatary, G.P. (2014) analyses the process of nominalization of Bodo language. He analyses both the prefix and suffixes those are used to form nouns from other lexical categories and noun itself. He mentions that there is only one nominalizing prefix in Bodo i.e., *bɔ-* and it is added to only lexical verb to form nouns (e.g., *bɔ-* + *bar* 'to bloom' > *bibar* 'flower'). Then, he describes three types of nominalizing suffixes i.e., (a) deverbal noun suffix, (b) denominal noun suffix, and (c) deadjectival noun suffix. In the first type he mentions 14 numbers of suffixes which are used to derive noun from verb such as *-gra, -giri, -tʰi*, etc. In the second type he describes about the suffixes which are used to form nouns from noun itself and he

mentions 8 numbers of suffixes. In the last type he mentions only one suffix which is used to derive noun from adjectives.

Brahma, Daimalu (2016) discusses about the process of noun formation of Bodo. According to him, in Bodo, nominalization is done through the both affixation and compounding processes of word formation.

Aims and Objectives

This study aims to study at finding out all probable types of lexical nominalization and analysing them in detail.

Hypotheses

1. The Bodo language employs suffixation to form derivational nouns.
2. The derivational nouns behave alike primary nouns and capable to take all nominal inflections.

Methodology

The study is prepared on data from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data had been collected through the interviews from some informants from Bodo community. The secondary data has been collected by reviewing relevant literatures. The data are written in IPA.

Lexical nominalization in Bodo

Bodo language exhibit an interesting composite of nominalized nouns in sentences. There could find many nominalizer suffixes which are added after lexical verb and lexical adjective to form nouns. The resultant nouns may express the name of an activity, state and arguments of that verb or adjective. The lexical nominalization in Bodo may study by categorizing as follows:

1. Action Nominalization
2. State Nominalization
3. Instrumental Nominalization
4. Manner Nominalization
5. Agentive Nominalization
6. Locative Nominalization
7. Objective Nominalization

Action Nominalization

Action Nominalization are made up from action verbs by suffixation process. *-naj* is the action nominalizer suffix, it is added to the verb to create action nouns. The resulting noun represents an action or activity and concept or process of the base verb. It can be seen that this kind of nominalization is frequently used in daily used sentences. For Example:

(1)   a. *bizir* 'to analyse' → *bizir-naj* 'analysis'

       bi-ni   *bizir -naj -ja*   *zɯb-baj*

       3SG-GNC   analyse-NZR-NMC   finish-IPT

       His analysis has finished.

In the given example *bizir-nai* 'analysis' is the action noun of the verb *bizir* 'analyse' which represents the action of analysing.

State Nominalization

State nominalization expresses the state or the condition described by the adjective or verb. It is worth mentioning that the state nominalizer suffix is same with action nominalization i.e. *-naj*. After addition of *-naj* suffix an adjective or a verb transforms into state noun representing the state or condition of correspondent adjective or verb. A few of which are illustrated bellow:

(2)   a. *guɯzɯn* 'happy' → *guɯzɯn-naj* 'happiness'
        b. *buzi* 'to understand' → *buzi-naj* 'understanding'

In above, adjective in a. and verb in b. is transformed into state noun by attaching the *-naj* suffix respectively. It is worth mentioning that, some adjectives are turned into the state noun arising the same spelling. Such kind of state nominalization can be found in Bodo. An example of such nominalization is illustrated in (3) as below:

(3)   a. *nizɯm* 'calm' → *nizɯm* 'calmness'

      bi-ni   *nizɯm*   *akʰutʰai-ja*   *bakʰnajtʰau*

      3SG-GNC   calmness   character-NMC   appreciable

      His calmness character is appreciable.

Instrumental Nominalization

This kind of nominalization focuses on the tools, methods, or objects that are used to carry an action or activity. In such context, a verb is converted into a noun to represent the instrument or means by which an action is performed. In Bodo, *-gra* is the suffix by which a verb is converted into instrumental noun. Examples are given below:

(4)   a. *ha* 'to cut' → *ha-gra* 'cutting tool' (scissors, sickle, etc.)
        b. *su* 'to measure' → *su-gra* 'measuring device' (tape, ruler, etc.)

In Bodo, instrumental nouns do not mention the name of tool or equipment directly, these nouns denote the sense of tools that are associated with corresponding verb.

Manner Nominalization

Manner nominalization focuses on how something is done or happened. It represents the manner or style of an action. *-naj* suffix is added to the verb to transform it into manner noun, the resulting noun represents the manner or way that an action is done. It is to be noted that manner nouns are often used to convey descriptive and adverbial information about the action of a verb. For example:

(5)   a. *tʰabaj* 'to walk' → *tʰabaj*-naj 'way of walking' (slowly, briskly, etc.)
        b. *lir* 'to write' → *lir-naj* 'way of writing' (neatly, hastily, etc.)

Agentive Nominalization

Agentive nominalization is converted from verb. It represents the doer of an action or activity. In Bodo, *-giri* is the agentive nominalizer suffix. The agentive noun describes the person or entity that performs the action denoted by the verb. Agent nouns are particularly useful in specifying occupations of individuals those are perform certain actions. Example of agentive nominalization is given below:

(6)   a. *pʰɯɾɯŋ* 'to teach' → *pʰɯɾɯŋ-giri* 'teacher'

      bi-jɯ   *sase pʰɯɾɯŋ-giri*

3SG-NMC   a   teach-NZR

He is a teacher.

In the above example, *pʰɯrɯŋ-giri* 'teacher' is derived from the verb *pʰɯrɯŋ* 'to teach' by adding suffix *-giri*. It represents the occupation or habit of someone who teaches.

Locative Nominalization

Locative nominalization provides locational information of an action of a verb. *-sali* is the only locative nominalizer suffix in Bodo. After adding it to verb, a verb transforms into locative noun. The resulting noun indicates location, place or a specific area associated with the action describe by the verb. Locative nouns are used to specify the place or location of where action of verb happens. For example:

(7)   a. *pʰɔraj* 'to read' → *pʰɔraj-sali* 'school' (place of reading)

         b. *sibi* 'to worship' → *sibi-sali* 'temple' (place of worshipping)

Objective Nominalization

Bodo language has suffixes to create objective nominalization. Objective noun provides the name of outcome of an action described by the verb. *-tʰi* and *-naj* are the objective nominalizer suffixes. Objective nouns are derived from verb by adding these suffixes and the resulting nouns represent the result of an action of a verb. For example:

(8)   a. *buŋ* 'to speak' → *bu-ŋtʰi* 'speech'

         b. *lir* 'to write' → *lir-tʰi* 'writing'

Conclusion

Suffixation plays an important role to nominalize the lexical verb and lexical adjective. There is a wide range of suffixes in Bodo which are used to derive nouns. Most of these suffixes derive nouns from verb. Nominalization from adjective is very rare in Bodo. It is worth mentioning that the nominalized nouns also behave like as primary nouns and these can also take the principal noun suffixes i.e., plural suffixes and case suffixes. Nominalization is an important aspect of a language as it allows for greater flexibility in sentence structure and expression.

Abbreviations

3SG	3rd Person Singular	IPT	Immediate Past Tense
ACC	Accusative Case	NMC	Nominative Case
GNC	Genitive Case	NZR	Nominalizer

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