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Genitive Case Assignment in Pashto Nested Possessor DPs and Arguments of a De-verbal Noun DPs

ABSTRACT

The goal of this paper is to propose a mechanism for the assignment of genitive Case in Pashto nested possessor Determiner Phrases (DPs) and arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs. This study is significant in the context of the fact that of the few studies that have been carried out on the assignment of genitive Case, none has been able to explain, in an adequate way, the assignment of genitive Case in Pashto nested possessor DPs and arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs. This study while adopting the framework of the minimalist program proposes mechanisms that not only explain the structures of the concerned constructions but also dilates in detail on the assignment of genitive Case. The overall conclusion for the study is that agreement in terms of N feature between the possessor noun and the functional head D, results in assignment of genitive Case in Pashto possessor DPs.

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Introduction

Since the start of the Principles and Parameters theory various mechanisms have been presented to deal with genitive Case in determiner phrases. These mechanisms usually start with explaining possessive determiner phrases of one language and then expand to other languages to show their cross-linguistic significance. However, none of these mechanisms have been able to adequately explain genitive Case assignment in Pashto determiner phrases. The major stumbling block for the failure has been the structure of determiner phrases; cross-linguistically, determiner phrases are so varied in shapes that an account based on one language is unable to deal with the DPs of another language.

Having this background in mind, the current study tries to propose a mechanism(s) for genitive Case assignment in Pashto nested possessor DPs and arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs. To achieve that aim Chomsky's framework of the Minimalist Program (1995, 2001), the latest version of the Principles and Parameter, is adopted for this study. Under the umbrella of the minimalist program, various mechanisms for the assignment/checking of genitive Case have been proposed; however, the two most important for our purposes, namely, Watanabe (2006) and Adger (2004), are analysed to show that they are unable to adequately explain the assignment of genitive Case in Pashto nested possessor DPs and Pashto arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs. As such, a mechanism is proposed that not only tells us about the structure of these DPs but also how genitive Case is assigned in these DPs. For genitive Case assignment/checking, it is proposed that agreement in terms of [N] feature between the functional head D and the possessive nominal results in checking genitive Case of that nominal; thus, the current study is a continuation of the standard theory which states that agreement in terms of phi-features between a functional head and a nominal results in assigning/ checking structural Case of that nominal.

The paper is laid out as follows: Section one introduces the topic. The second Section gives a brief account of the framework adopted for this study. Section three tells in brief about the generative efforts that were made to explain genitive Case assignment, cross-linguistically. This Section also briefly tells about the efforts that were made by Pashto grammarian to describe genitive Case in Pashto. Section four and five give some details about Pashto DPs and the proposed mechanism, respectively. Section six applies the proposed mechanism to Pashto nested possessor DPs. Section seven applies the proposed mechanism to Pashto arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs. Section eight concludes the paper.

Method/Framework

The framework adopted for this study is the minimalist program introduced by Chomsky (1993, 1995, 2001). The minimalist program itself is based on the idea of principles and parameters. The chief attributes of the minimalist program are economy, virtual conceptual necessity, and symmetry. The major techniques of the minimalist program used in this study are Merge, Move, Agree, Features, Probe, Goal, and Valuation. The minimalist program believes in a recursive system for the formation of linguistic items. It is believed that the language faculty has an unordered mass of linguistic items called a numeration. When two items are taken from the numeration and are joined together to form another item, the process is referred to as Merge. Merge could be internal and external. The merge that we have described already is called external merge. In internal merge, an item, already forming part of another item, moves from its base position to the Spec of that original item. Features could be interpretable or uninterpretable. Agree refers to a situation when the same features are exhibited by a noun and a verb. Initially, in a derivation, the phi-features of a verb are uninterpretable. However, when the valuation of features with the noun occurs, then the verb adopts the phi-features of the noun. In the process of valuation two agencies are involved: the probe which has unvalued features and the goal which has valued features. When a valuation occurs, the uninterpretable features of the probe are valued as the features of the goal.

In the minimalist program itself, different theories have been put forward to explain the assignment/checking of structural Case. The standard theory has been that an agree relation between a functional head and a nominal results in assigning structural Case to that nominal (Schütze (1997), Chomsky (2000, 2001, 2005, 2006), Carstens (2001), Bejar (2003), Tanaka (2005), Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou (2006), Bobaljik & Branigan (2006), Richardson (2007), Legate (2008), Baker (2008, forthcoming), Baker & Vinokurova (2010). The other theory is that structural Case is an uninterpretable tense feature on the relevant DP (Pesetsky & Torrego, 2001). Aygen (2002) proposes that mood and modality are responsible for structural Case assignment. Still others (Itkonen (1976), Ramchand (1997), Arad (1998), Kiparsky (1998), Torrego (1998), Svenonius (2001, 2002), Kratzer (2004)) propose that in one way or another aspect assigns Case, while Ritter & Wiltschko (2009) propounds that Case is licensed by location and person.

Literature Review

A lot has been written on the nature of DPs in different languages and cross-linguistically. However, the number of writings on the nature of genitive Case assignment in DPs has been relatively small. Still there are a few accounts,

among which, the two important ones (Watanabe, 2006) and (Adger, 2004), we take for analysis and see how they fare with respect to nested possessor DPs and arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs. The first account is chosen as it has Japanese as its subject language and a few affinities could be found between Pashto and Japanese. The second account is chosen as it makes use of English as its subject language and then that account is extended to other languages.

Watanabe (2006)

Watanabe (2006) has presented the following model DP for the Japanese language:

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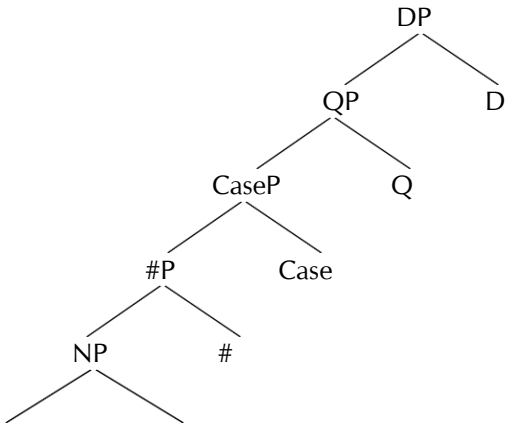

Figure 1. Watanabe's model for Japanese DP (p. 252)

As can be seen from the model, first, he believes that the projection of Case is below the DP. Secondly, he suggests two scenarios for Japanese nominals: in the first, the NP rises to spec CaseP, while in the second CaseP itself rises to spec DP. Third, he believes that Agr, having [-interpretable] feature, is eliminable. However, based on the same argument, it could be asked as to what would be the status of Case itself? Fourth, there is an agreement between the Case head and the Case feature on the NP. That agreement does not result in elimination of one of the two Case features; hence, redundancy is still there. Fifth, DP-external heads such as v or T have a decisive role in determining the nature of Case. Sixth, 'specificity' and 'the raising of CaseP to spec of DP' are due to an agree relation between D and Case.

However, the model proposed by Watanabe does not seem suitable for explaining genitive Case assignment in Pashto complex possessor DPs. First, theoretically this model is for an external factor to determine the Case assigned while the instant study is for an internal agency that is responsible for Case assignment. Second, my proposal does away with the concept of Case head. Third, as per my proposal there is no Case head hence no

possibility of agreement between the Case head and D. Fourth, he thinks that the Case feature is uninterpretable. My proposal is based on the Chomskyian idea that Case feature gets checked/assigned by virtue of agreement between a functional head and a nominal. Fifth, there is a difference in the order of constituents between Pashto and Japanese. Sixth, there is also a difference between Pashto and Japanese in terms of placement of possessors. In Pashto, genitive Case bearing nominals (possessors) occupy the slot below the functional head D. Seventh, Pashto is rich in possessors having genitive Cases; hence, staking all the possessors having genitive Cases would create interpretation problems. Eighth, Watanabe's model is unable to explain those DPs in Pashto in which different nominals show processes and actions, thus requiring a new model.

It is pertinent to mention here that this approach did not start with Watanabe (2006); rather, before him, this idea had been presented in one form or another by different authors, such as Ritter (1988) (her KaseP for Case in Hebrew), Holmberg (1991), Sigurðsson (1993), Fukui and Takano (2000), to name a few.

Adger (2004)

He not only deals with the assignment of genitive Case but also numerates some of the problems that could arise because of the complexity of DPs internal structure. Similarly, like my proposal, he does not believe in an external agency for the assignment of Case; rather, he believes in genitive Case assignment from inside the DP. His proposal for Case assignment consists of two mechanisms: one for possessors (see Figure 2) and the other for nominals showing sort of processes (Figure 3). He, based on analogy of theta-role for nominals inside a verbal domain, proposes theta-roles for nominals inside the complex DPs. Additionally, he proposes the addition of an 'n', which may not be a virtual conceptual necessity as my mechanism is able to do without that postulation.

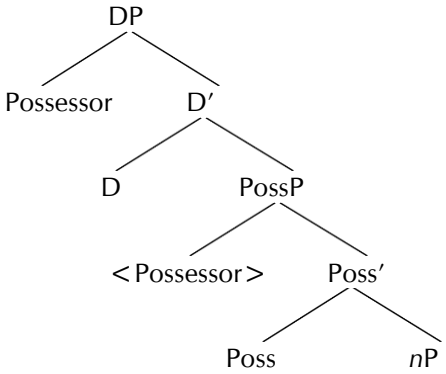

Figure 2. Adger's structure for genitive Case assignment in possessors. (p. 274)

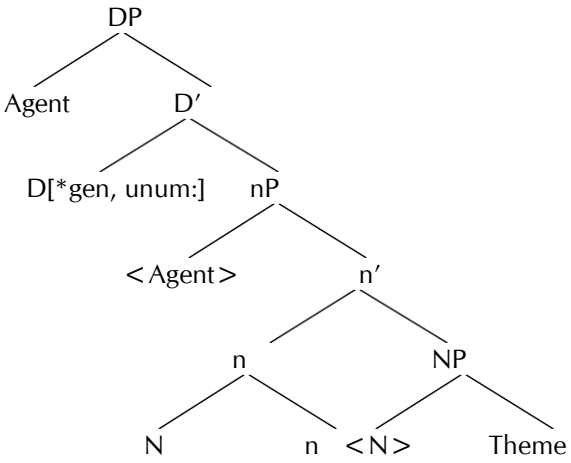

Figure 3. Adger's structure for genitive Case assignment in DPs showing processes. (p. 279)

Adger's (2004) proposals can explain the assignment of genitive Case in simple possessor DPs; however, they are unable to deal effectively with Pashto DPs that have complex structures: nested possessor DPs and arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs. In these DPs there are more than one possessors and if the process of possession and genitive Case assignment are repeated, it would create interpretation issues and it would not be possible to get the required result. Suppose, a derivation for the construction [Peter's sister]'s dog] is needed; however, his mechanism would result in a derivation which has the meaning 'a dog owned by a sister, but which is ultimately owned by Peter'.

Adger's (2004) idea of arguments of a de-verbal nouns is not applicable to Pashto nested possessor DPs. He proposes that the functional head n checks Case on the 'of-phrase'; the zero determiner D checks the Case of the agent or the Saxon genitive. Since, in Pashto only a single possessive marker *da* is used, therefore, it is difficult to decide the yardstick for placing one possessor in a D head and another possessor in an n head. Secondly, Adger has proposed the criteria of agent/ theme etc. on analogy between DPs and clauses. However, even this proposal is not applicable to Pashto nested possessor DPs as possessors inside the characteristic nested possessor DP do not show the characteristics of agent/ patient/ theme, etc. Thirdly, a point could be raised that there are certain DPs in Pashto where the nominals show the characteristics of agents and themes, etc. However, Adger's proposal in such cases revolves around the concepts of of-genitives and Saxon genitives and these cannot be found in Pashto. Additionally, his mechanism has

provision for genitive Case on a nominal which is not a possessor, which is unique. Pashto genitive Case bearing nouns, on the other hand, are characterised by possession as well. Lastly, for the time being, if all these issues are ignored, still, in order to make Adger's mechanisms suitable for Pashto, so many modifications would be needed that it is preferable to present our own mechanisms for genitive Case assignment in Pashto.

As far as Pashto is concerned, genitive case has largely been described from traditional perspectives. In fact, it was Raverty (1855) who gave the most influential account of cases in Pashto, genitive being one of them. Afterwards, many have tried their hands on Pashto grammar and have in one way or another reproduced the details of genitive Case as given by Raverty. The most notable among these are Lorimer (1902), Roos-Keppel (1922), Penzal (1955), Shafeev (1964), Bukhari (1984), Mackenzie (1987), Rashteen (1994), Tegey and Robson (1996), Zayar (2005), etc. However, none of them could be taken as an account to serve as the base for the generative analysis of DPs in Pashto.

Three Types of Pashto DPs Bearing Genitive Case

Among Pashto DPs, three types of DPs could be found that carry genitive Case. They are 1) simple possessor DPs, 2) nested possessor DPs, and 3) arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs. The first type, simple possessor DPs, has one possessor bearing genitive Case inside the DP (please refer to Masood (2022) for detailed discussion of genitive Case assignment in simple possessor DPs in Pashto). Nested possessor DPs have more than one possessors bearing genitive Case inside the DP. Arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs have one or more nominals that carry genitive Case. The relation between the nominals inside the arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs denote processes, as for instance 'Peter's analysis of the specimen.' In such DPs, one nominal can be considered as the doer and the other nominal as the receiver, theme or patient. In such DPs, only one or two nominals carry genitive Case.

The Proposed Mechanism

It is proposed for Pashto possessive nominals that a derivation starts with the merge of a noun and a functional head Poss, having morphological realization as *da*. The nominal comes from the numeration with an interpretable feature [N], while the Poss head has interpretable [Poss] and uninterpretable features [uN, uN]. As a result of this merge, the one uninterpretable feature [uN] of Poss is valued. This merge results in formation of the Poss-bar. Next, the would-be-possessor having [N, uCase, uPoss] features merges with the Poss-bar to form the PossP. This merge results in valuation of the uninterpretable feature [uN] of the Poss head. The PossP merges with an empty functional head D. An agree relation establishes between D and the possessor in terms of [N] feature, resulting in genitive

Case to the possessor. There are some further details which will be unveiled when we study individual cases of nested possessor DPs and arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs. Right now, the blue print for the derivation is given in the following Figure:

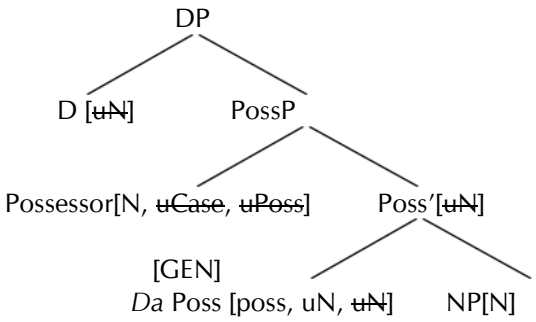

Figure 4.

Nested Possessor DPs

In Pashto, a large number of DPs can be found that have more than one possessors and these possessors also show genitive Case. Our solution for such complex DPs is that first of all a DP of the first possessor and its relevant noun, showing possession and genitive Case, is formed. This DP is merged as a possessor/ would-be possessor in the structure for the last or the main noun. Because of this arrangement, all the nouns/ possessors are involved with the main noun in a possessive relation. This arrangement has the advantage that it does not suffer from the problem of interpretation.

To show how our suggested mechanism works, consider example no.1:

1.	*Da*	*Saleem*	*da*	*khor*	*thor*	*spai*
POSS	Saleem.GEN	POSS	sister.GEN	black	dog	

'Saleem's sister's black dog'

In this construction, first, the functional category Poss *da* having [poss, uN, uN] features merges with the NP *khor* to form Poss'. Due to this merge, one of the [uN] features of the Poss is checked/deleted. The would-be (to be more precise) possessor *Saleem* having [N, uCase, uposs] features merges with the Poss' to form the PossP. Because of this merge, the other [uN] feature of the Poss and the [uposs] feature of the possessor are checked/deleted. An empty functional category D having [uN] feature merges with the PossP to form the DP. The possessor *Saleem* in addition to having satisfied the [uN] feature of the Poss, also serves as a goal for the D and satisfy its [uN] feature. At the same time, the agreement between D and the possessor in terms of [N] feature results in assigning genitive Case to the possessor. Thus, we get the DP *Saleem da khor*.

However, the process does not stop here. The main noun of the nested possessor DP, *spai*, adjoins the adjective *thor* to form the extended NP *thor spai*. This NP then merges with the possessive functional category Poss *da* having [poss, uN, uN] features, to form the Poss-bar. Due to this merge, one of the [uN] features of the Poss is checked/deleted. The possessor which in this case is the already formed DP *Saleem da khor* having [N, uCase, uposs] features, merges with the Poss' to form the PossP. Because of this merge, the other [uN] feature of the Poss and the [uposs] feature of the possessor are checked/deleted. An empty functional category D having [uN] feature merges with the PossP to form the DP. The possessor *Saleem da khor*, in addition to having satisfied the [uN] feature of the Poss, also serves as a goal for the D and satisfy its [uN] feature. At the same time, the agreement between D and the possessor in terms of [N] feature results in assigning genitive Case to the possessor. It is to be noted that the possessor *Saleem* inside the already formed DP *Saleem da khor* bear the genitive Case, and this fresh Case assignment and possessiveness has its effect on the whole DP. Thus, we have the word order *Saleem da khor da thor spai* at this stage. However, in the morphological or spell-out component we find that the word order is *da Saleem da khor thor spai*, showing that the possessive marker *da* in front of *thor spai* has moved to D position at the left-most. Two questions arise, firstly, given the fact that it is already postulated for simple Pashto DPs that the possessive marker *da* has the tendency to move to D (Masood 2022), then why not all *da*s move to the left-most D? And, secondly, which *da* of the two *da*s move to the first and second D positions left-wards?

In Pashto, the possessive marker *da* has the tendency that in the morphological component it tends to move to the D position. Here, we have two *da*s and D at the left periphery is empty. Therefore, technically, both the *da*s should rush to fill that place. However, in reality we see that only one *da* moves to the left-most D while the other *da* remains in the second left-most D. Therefore, it can be concluded that only one *da* moves while the other *da* prefers to stay behind. That this is not an unusual solution/ mechanism is attested by the fact that though at some places languages exhibit repetition, but, at the same time many languages at many places exhibit resistance to repetition, known in phonology as obligatory contour principle (OCP). The idea of OCP has also been extended to syntax and some syntacticians (Perlmutter, 1971; Yip, 1998; van Riemsdijk, 1998; Ackema, 2001; Neeleman & van de Koot, 2006) have tried to explain the non-occurrence of identical elements in different languages, through OCP:

2. Hindi (Mohanan, 1994: 186)

??raam-ko bacco-ko samhaalnaa padaa.
Ram-DAT children-ACC take.care.of.-NF fall.PERF
'Ram had to take care of the children.'

3. Dutch (Neeleman & Van de Koot 2006: 697)
*Vroeg je nou of die plaats vrij is of of-ie bezet is.
asked you now if that seat free is or if-it taken is

4. Old French (Ackema & Neeleman, 2003: 722)
*Einsi corurent li Grieu par mer tant que Ø vindrent à Caldemelée.
thus ran.3PLR the Greeks by sea until C came.3PLR to Cadée

In fact, Mohanan (1994) goes to the extent of formulating a generalized version of OCP that not only holds for phonology, but also for morphology, and syntax. All this points to the fact that the mechanism proposed has a sound foundation in theory and practice of Linguistics. In addition, the conclusion has been supported by various other syntactic studies, such as Bobaljik's (1995, 2002) restrictions on object shift in Germanic, Pesetsky's (1998) wh-in situ in English multiple questions, Franks'(1998) "low" clitics in Slavic, and Boškovic's (2002) exceptions to multiple wh-fronting.

In the last study Boškovic (2002) tells that in certain Slavic languages all wh-words must front in a multiple question, however, this is not the situation with all the multiple wh-words questions. In case multiple wh-fronting results in a sequence of homophonous wh-words, as in the examples a and b given below, then this condition is relaxed and the lower wh-word is in-situ pronounced:

a. *šta šta uslovljava t_i?
what what conditions
'What conditions what?'
b. šta uslovljava šta?
what conditions what
'What conditions what?' (p. 364)

Bobaljik and Branigan (2006) interpret this as:
Post-syntactically, then, where highest-copy pronunciation is expected, a morphological anti-homophony Filter applies, blocking pronunciation of the highest copy, and automatically triggering the pronunciation of the next lower copy. (p. 37)

For our purposes it is an important point that languages avoid, in certain situations, creating homophonous sequences. Pashto cannot be an exception. It also avoids the homophonous sequence of *da da*, especially when *da* sound is also used by Pashto as a demonstrative and as a clitic.

As regards the second question, namely, that in the final word order below the *da* following *khor* has moved, while the *da* following *Saleem* has remained at its place, requiring an explanation that why it does not happen the other way round? At this stage of research about Pashto DPs, it is not clear that whether the process is something like that the *da* following *Saleem* first

moves to D and then the *da* following *khor* moves to occupy its place, or that the *da* following *khor* directly moves from its base position to the front of *Saleem*. This issue requires further research, but the scope of the paper does not permit us to delve into that issue. Therefore, we leave it at this point. In the end, we get the word order *da Saleem da khor thor spai*.

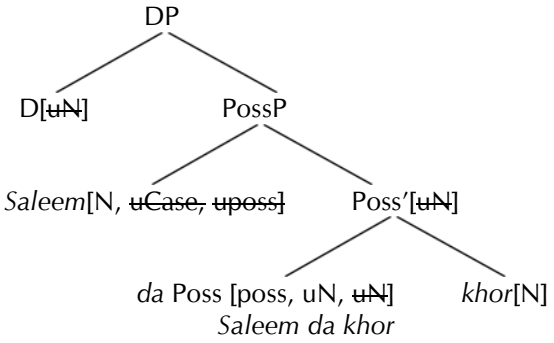

Figure 5.

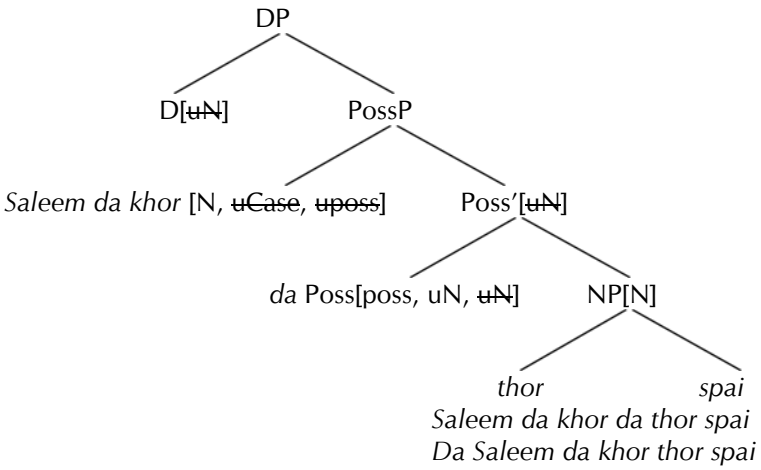

Figure 6.

Arguments of a De-verbal Noun DPs

Our treatment/mechanism for the third type of Pashto DPs has the advantage that it does away with the complex system of agent, theme, goal, etc., introduced by Adger (2004) and others before him. Instead, it is a very simple system. To be more precise this mechanism is a mix of two treatments: the first introduced for simple possessor DPs by Masood (2022) and the second for nested Pashto possessor DPs. Nothing new or theoretically difficult is

added. The simple postulation is that if the larger Pashto DP showing processes consists of three nominals, with one showing possession and genitive Case, such as *da Saleem pen mathawəl* 'Saleem breaking of a pen', then the mechanism suggested for simple Pashto possessor DPs (Masood, 2022) holds equally well for it. If the larger DP consists of more than three nominals such as *da Saleem da ma pen mathawəl* 'Saleem's breaking of my pen', then the mechanism that we have suggested for the nested possessor DPs works for such constructions.

The only difference in treatment lies with reference to the deveral noun. While in the case of Pashto simple possessor DPs and nested possessor DPs we do not have the deverbal nouns, they are a hallmark of the Pashto DPs which express processes. Moreover, as all the deverbal nouns do not show possession, therefore, our mechanism takes care of this fact, and in the last stage of the derivation, the deverbal noun adjoins to the already formed possessor DP consisting of two or more than two nominals. Thus, this adjoin at the last stage is what differentiates the mechanism of the deveral nouns showing processes from nested possessor DPs.

To show how our mechanism for the arguments of a deverbal noun DPs works, let us take a couple of examples. The first example has three nominals and makes use of the mechanism devised for the simple Pashto possessor DPs (Masood 2022) along with the relevant modifications, while the second example has four nominals and makes use of the mechanism devised for the nested Pashto possessor DPs, along with the relevant changes:

5. *da* *Saleem* *pen* *mathawəl*.
POSS Saleem.GEN pen breaking
'Saleem's breaking of a/the pen.'

First, a Pashto Poss functional category having phonetic realization as *da* and [poss, uN, uN] features merges with the nominal *pen* to form the Poss-bar. Due to this merge, one of the [uN] features of Poss is checked/deleted. The would-be possessor *Saleem* having [N, uCase, uposs] features merges with the Poss-bar to form PossP. Because of this merge, the other [uN] feature of the Poss and the [uposs] feature of the possessor are checked/deleted. An empty functional category D having [uN] feature merges with the PossP to form the DP. The possessor *Saleem*, in addition to having satisfied the [uN] feature of the Poss, also serves as a goal for the D and satisfy its [uN] feature. At the same time, the agreement between D and the possessor in terms of [N] feature results in assigning genitive Case to the possessor. Thus, we get the DP *Saleem da pen*. This DP adjoins with the deverbal noun *mathawəl* to form the still bigger DP *Saleem da pen mathawəl*. At the spell-out stage, the Pashto possessive marker *da* moves from its base position to D. Thus, we get the word order *da Saleem pen mathawəl*.

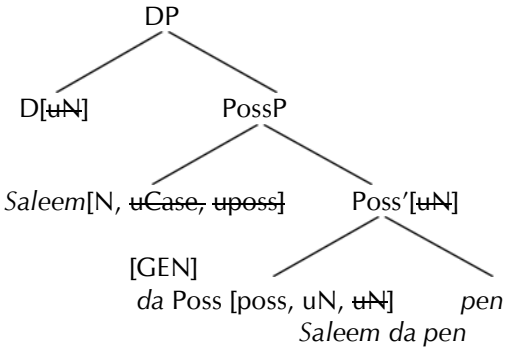

Figure 7.

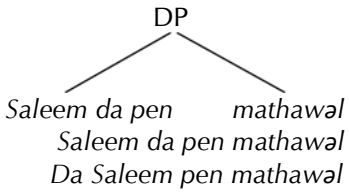

Figure 8.

6. *da Saleem da haghə pen mathawəl.*
   POSS Saleem.GEN POSS his.GEN pen
   breaking 'Saleem's breaking of his pen.'

The derivation for this complex DP would involve three steps. First, the functional category Poss *da* having [poss, uN, uN] features merges with the 3rd person singular pronoun *hagha*, to form the Poss-bar. Due to this merge, one of the [uN] features of the Poss is checked/deleted. The possessor *Saleem* having [N, uCase, uposs] features merges with the Poss-bar to form the PossP. Because of this merge, the other [uN] feature of the Poss and the [uposs] feature of the possessor are checked/deleted. An empty functional category D having [uN] feature merges with the PossP to form the DP. The possessor *Saleem*, in addition to having satisfied the [uN] feature of the Poss, also serves as a goal for the D and satisfy its [uN] feature. The agreement between D and the possessor in terms of [N] feature results in assigning genitive Case to the possessor. Thus, the DP *Saleem da hagha* is obtained.

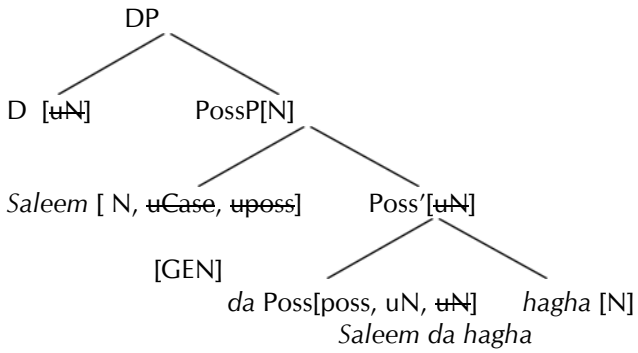

Figure 9.

The second functional category Poss *da*[poss, uN, uN] merges with the nominal *pen* to form the Poss-bar. The DP *Saleem da hagha,* serving as the would-be possessor, merges with the Poss-bar, to form the PossP. D merges with the PossP to form the DP. [N] feature's agreement between the possessor DP *Saleem da hagha* and D results in assigning genitive Case to the nominals in the possessor DP. As the nominal *Saleem* already has genitive Case, Pashto nouns have no morphological markings for Case, while the other nominal 3rd person singular pronoun *hagha* does not have Case, therefore, genitive Case gets visible on the pronoun *hagha*. As a result of the genitive Case the morphological form of the pronoun changes from *hagha* to *haghə*. Thus, we get the word order *Saleem da haghə da pen*.

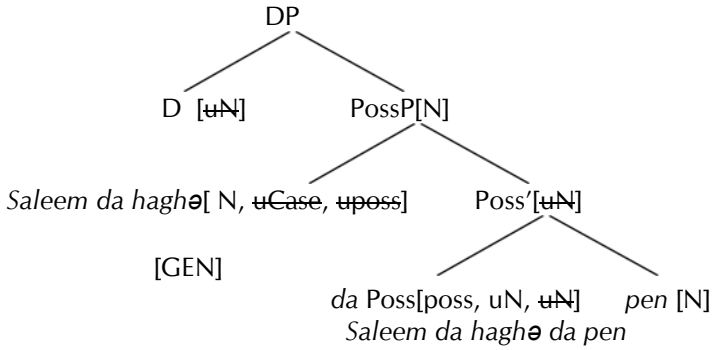

Figure 10.

Third, the DP *Saleem da haghə da pen* adjoins to the deveral noun *mathawəl* to form the DP *Saleem da haghə da pen mathawəl*. As I have already mentioned that in Pashto the possessive marker *da* has the tendency that in the morphological component it tends to move to the D position; and here,

we have two *da*s. Since, it has been an established principle in phonetics and phonology that two similar sound objects prefer to stay away from one another, therefore, one *da* moves to left-most D while the other *da* remains in its base position in this example. As can be seen in the example that the *da* following *haghə* has moved, while the *da* following *Saleem* has remained at its place, requiring an explanation that why it does not happen the other way round? (Both these issues have been discussed in the previous section.) In the end, we get the word order *da Saleem da haghə pen mathawəl*.

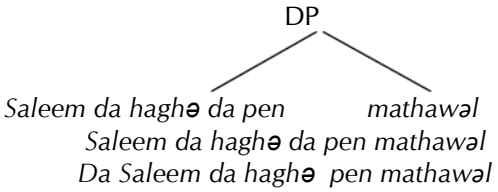

Figure 11.

Conclusion

In this study an effort was made to explain the assignment of genitive Case in Pashto nested possessor DPs and arguments of a de-verbal noun DPs. To explain the assignment, the framework of the minimalist program was made use of. Derivations for the two types were proposed while making use of the minimalist techniques of merge, move, agree, features, probe, goal, and valuation. Among many other things, this paper also tried to explain the unique behaviour of the possessive/ genitive marker *da*, especially in cases where there were two or more *da*s in a single DP. For genitive Case assignment this study proposed that agreement in terms of [N] feature between the possessive noun and the empty functional head D results in assigning genitive Case to the possessive nominal. This proposal was in fact the continuation of the standard theory that agreement in terms of phi-features between a functional head and a nominal results in assigning structural case to that nominal.

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