EZAFE IN THE CONTEXT OF CPS IN PERSIAN AND KURMANJI*

Songül Gündoğdu[a], Arsalan Kahnemuyipour[b], and Marcel den Dikken[c, d]
University of Toronto[a] (Mississauga[b]), Hungarian Research Centre for Linguistics[c] & ELTE[d]

1. Introduction

In many Iranian languages, a linking element known as 'Ezafe' (hereafter EZ) appears between a noun and its modifier (N-EZ Mod), and is repeated on subsequent modifiers, if they are present, except the last one (N-EZ Mod_1-EZ Mod_2-EZ Mod_3) (Samiian 1994, Ghomeshi 1997, Samvelian 2007, Larson and Yamakido 2008, Haig 2011, Kahnemuyipour 2014, among others). As illustrated by the examples in (1) and (2) from Persian and Kurmanji (Northern Kurdish), the form of Persian Ezafe is invariant (except for the epenthetic *-y* after vowels) while Kurmanji Ezafe shows sensitivity to phi-features and definiteness. The Kurmanji Ezafe agrees with the feminine 'goat' in (2a/2a') whereas it agrees with the masculine 'man' in (2b/2b'). Moreover, the definiteness ('the goat / the man') vs. indefiniteness ('a goat / a man') of the head noun is also reflected on the Ezafe vowel, as shown by the distinction in (2a/a') and (2b/b').

(1) Ezafe in Persian

a. (ye) boz-e siaah
a goat-EZ black
'a/the black goat'

b. (ye) mard-e čāq
a man-EZ fat
'a/the fat man'

c. sib-e qermez-e bozorg
apple-EZ red-EZ big
'red big apple'

d. ketāb-e Ali/man
book-EZ Ali/1SG
'Ali's/my book'

(2) Ezafe in Kurmanji

a. bizin-a reş
goat-EZ.F black
'the black goat'

a'. bizin-ek-e reş
goat-INDF-EZ.F black
'a black goat'

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b. mirov-ê şişman
man-EZ.M fat
'the fat man'

b'. mirov-ek-î şişman
man-INDF-EZ.M fat
'a fat man'

c. sêv-ên sor-ên mezin
apple-EZ.PL red-EZ.PL big
'the big red apples'

d. kitab-a Ali/min
book-EZ.F Ali/1SG.OBL
'Ali's/my book'

The focus of the current study is the distribution of EZ in the context of nouns followed by CPs, both relative clauses (RCs) and so-called noun-complement clauses (NCCs) in Kurmanji and Persian.

One prominent analysis of EZ takes it to be a case assigner required before all [+N] elements (Samiian 1994, Larson and Yamakido 2006, Larson and Samiian 2020). This type of analysis predicts that adnominal elements which are [–N] should not be preceded by EZ. Persian non-restrictive RCs seem to provide support for this analysis as they are not preceded by EZ. Meanwhile, restrictive RCs are preceded by a (so-called relative) particle *-i*, phonologically distinct from the regular EZ *-e*. This particle has been analyzed as an allomorph of EZ, presenting it as a counter-example to the case analysis (Kahnemuyipour 2014). This idea finds further support in Kurmanji, which uses the regular form of EZ with restrictive RCs. Under this view (*contra* the case analysis), EZ is used uniformly before a modifier, regardless of its [+/−N] status. Non-restrictive RCs in Kurmanji add an interesting twist to the discussion, as in these contexts, Kurmanji uses a different type of EZ known as anaphoric Ezafe (hereafter AEZ).

We argue in this paper that the distribution of EZ in the context of adnominal clauses in Kurmanji and Persian poses serious challenges to the case analysis of EZ, which predicts that [–N] modifiers should not require the presence of EZ. We further demonstrate that the facts from these two languages are instead compatible with the roll-up analysis of EZ, given a proper understanding of the syntax of N–CP structures.

This paper is structured as follows. The next section provides a brief overview of two prominent syntactic analyses of Ezafe, namely the case analysis and the roll-up movement analysis, and the predicted distribution of Ezafe in N–CP structures. Section 3 presents the distribution of Ezafe in the context of RCs in Kurmanji and Persian providing arguments against the case analysis. We argue that the distribution of EZ in the context of RCs in these languages follows from the general behaviour of EZ and the syntax of N–RC structures. Section 4 discusses the distribution of Ezafe in the context of NCCs in Kurmanji and Persian and provides two possible structures for NCCs: (i) NCC as the subject of predication for the projection of the head noun, with the surface order derived as a result of inversion of NP around CP, and (ii) NCC as (a subpart of) the predicate for the projection of the head noun with no inversion involved. We posit that while Persian allows both strategies, Kurmanji allows the former only. This division corresponds to the optional or obligatory presence of a nominal linker. Concluding remarks with empirical and theoretical implications and the points left for future research are presented in Section 5.

2. Two syntactic accounts of Ezafe: case analysis and roll-up movement analysis

As a distinguishing grammatical feature of the noun phrases in many Iranian languages, Ezafe has been a source of interest for theoretical linguists. Two prominent syntactic accounts of Ezafe take EZ to be either *a case assigner* (Samiian 1994, Larson and Yamakido 2006, Larson and Samiian 2020) or *a reflex of roll-up movement* (Kahnemuyipour 2014). The case analysis of EZ assumes a DP structure where all NP modifiers originate postnominally and as [+N] elements they need to be case-licensed. Under this view, while the head noun is case-licensed by D, all other [+N] modifiers (including adjectives, possessors, etc.) are case-licensed by EZ. Thus, for example, in (1c)-(2c) repeated here as (3a)-(3b), the first EZ case-licenses "red" and the second EZ "big".

(3) a. sib-e qermez-e bozorg (Persian)
apple-EZ red-EZ big
'red big apple'

b. sêv-ên sor-ên mezin (Kurmanji)
apple-EZ.PL red-EZ.PL big
'the big red apples'

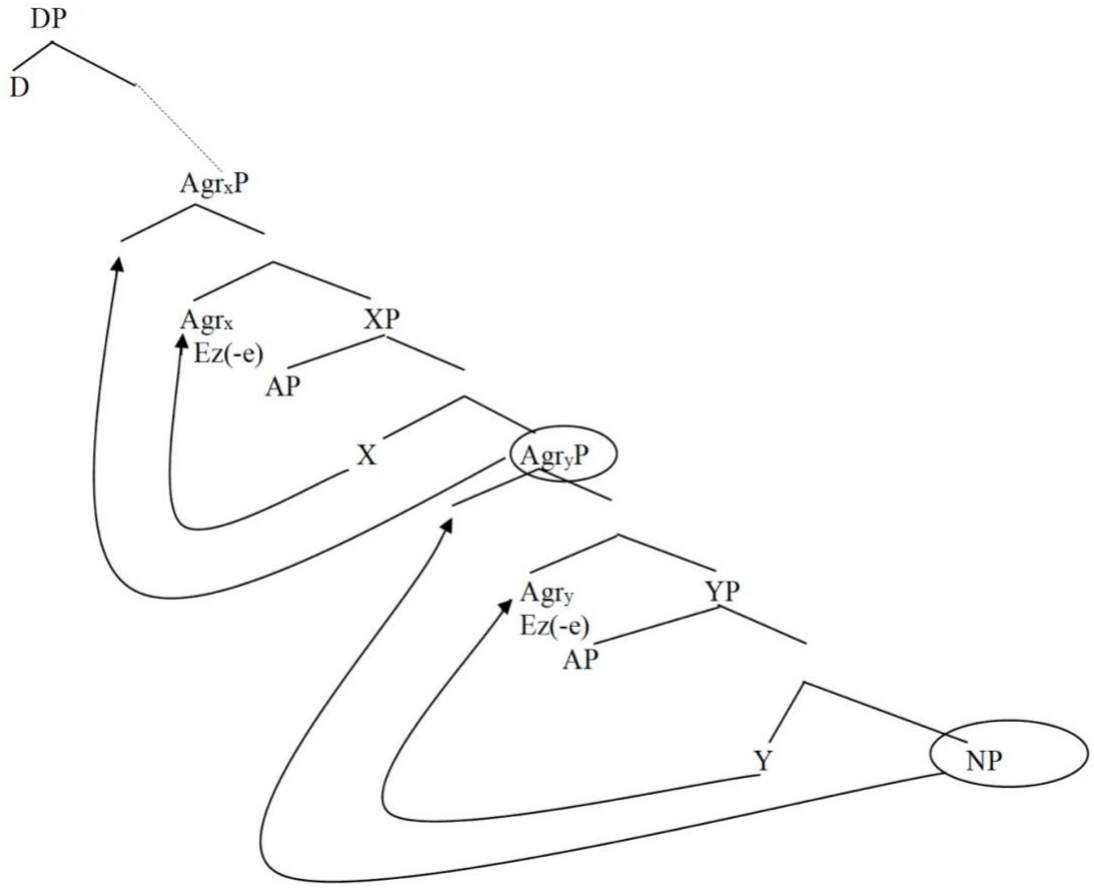
The case analysis of EZ makes the prediction that [–N] modifiers should not require (or even desire) the presence of EZ. In particular, if a head noun is followed by PP or CP, no EZ should be required between them (Samvelian 2007, Kahnemuyipour 2014).[1] We are setting aside here the N–PP context (see Samvelian 2007, Kahnemuyipour 2014, Larson and Samiian 2021 for discussion). Instead, we focus in this paper on the N–CP context and investigate how this prediction of the case analysis of EZ fares with the facts in Persian and Kurmanji. We show below that the case analysis of EZ encounters serious challenges in the face of facts from these two languages as Ezafe is mostly required before the head noun in these adnominal structures.

According to the roll-up analysis of Ezafe, the noun phrase in Ezafe languages is taken to be head-final, with the modifiers residing in the specifiers of projections above N.[2] In addition to the projections which house the modifiers, there are intermediate projections which enable the roll-up derivation, shown schematically in the tree diagram in (4). Under this view, the Ezafe marker can be seen as the surface realization of the inversion process (akin to den Dikken's 2006 linker). Crucially, this account does not predict a blanket absence of EZ in the context of N–CP, an issue we turn to immediately below.

[1]As it is well established in the literature on Persian and other Iranian languages more generally (Samiian 1994, Karimi & Brame 1986, Ghomeshi 1997, Kahnemuyipour 2014, Larson and Samiian 2021, among others), P(reposition)s are divided into two main classes, nominal Ps which take the Ezafe marker, and true Ps which do not. Accordingly, an EZ is expected between a noun and a modifying PP if the P is a nominal P and not a true P.

[2] This structure is in line with other roll-up analyses of DP structure in other languages within the framework best known as cartography (Cinque 2002, 2005, 2010, Shlonsky 2004, 2010, among others).

(4) Deriving the Ezafe construction via roll-up movement



In the following sections, we argue that the distribution of EZ in the context of RCs and NCCs in Kurmanji and Persian poses serious challenges to the Case analysis of EZ, which predicts that [–N] modifiers should not require the presence of EZ, whereas the facts from these two languages are instead compatible with the roll-up analysis of EZ, which predicts that EZ is used uniformly before a modifier, regardless of its [+/−N] status.

3. Ezafe in the context of relative clauses (RCs)

In the previous section, we discussed how the case analysis of EZ predicts the absence of EZ in the context of [–N] modifiers of NP. In apparent accordance with this, Persian non-restrictive RCs are not preceded by EZ (5).

(5) dust-e Hasan, ke tu Tehran dars mi-xun-e,
friend-EZ Hasan that in Tehran lesson DUR-read.PRS-3SG
xeyli baahush=e
very smart=is
'Hasan's friend, who is a student in Tehran, is very smart.'

Meanwhile, restrictive RCs are preceded by a (so-called relative) particle *-i* (6), which is phonologically distinct from the regular EZ *-e*.

(6) Zan-i ke az Tehran umad-e xeyli baahush=e
woman-i that from Tehran came-PERF very smart=is
'The woman who has come from Tehran is very smart.'

This particle has puzzled Persian syntacticians for a long time. In Kahnemuyipour (2014), this particle is analyzed as a grammatically-conditioned allomorph of EZ. If correct, and if, as standardly assumed, restrictive relative clauses are [–N], (6) undermines the case analysis of EZ. The idea that the Persian *-i* particle is an allomorph of EZ finds further support in Kurmanji, which uses the regular form of EZ uniformly in front of any restrictive modifier (regardless of its [+/−N] status), including RCs: (7).

(7) Jin-a ku ji Stenbol-ê hat-iy-e gelek zîrek e
woman-EZ.F that from Istanbul-OBL came-3SG-PERF very clever is
'The woman who has come from Istanbul is very clever.'

Non-restrictive RCs in Kurmanji add an interesting twist to the data presented above, as in these contexts, Kurmanji uses a different type of EZ known as anaphoric EZ (AEZ), which is distinguished from the regular EZ by the use of an initial glide (Haig 2011), as shown in (8). This is in contrast to Persian, which does not use EZ in cases of non-restrictive relativization (5).

(8) Heval-a Hasan, ya (ku) li Stenbol-ê xwand,
friend-EZ.F Hasan AEZ.F (that) in Istanbul-OBL read.PST.3S
gelek zîrek e
very clever is
'Hasan's friend, who was a student in Istanbul, is very clever.'

The distribution of Ezafe in the context of relative clauses in Persian and Kurmanji is summarized in the table below.

Table 1. Distribution of EZ with Relative Clauses in Persian and Kurmanji

	Restrictive RCs	Non-restrictive RCs
Persian	EZ (*-i*)	—
Kurmanji	EZ	AEZ

Once we take the so-called relative particle in Persian to be an allomorph of EZ, the distribution in the context of restrictive RCs shown in Table 1 can be understood as the regular use of EZ with modifiers more generally. In other words, EZ can be said to appear uniformly before a restrictive RC in both Kurmanji and Persian, with the only difference that Persian uses an allomorph of EZ in this context.

For the syntax of non-restrictive relativization, we follow de Vries (2006), who proposes that the relative clause is a restrictive modifier of a noun phrase headed by a silent noun or nominal proform. Under this view, the relativized noun phrase specifies the content of the projection of the overt head noun and is connected to it via asyndetic coordination, (9).

(9) a. [:P [DP *John*] [**:** [DP D [NP ONE/PERSONØ] [CP *who loves Mary*]]]]
b. *John, who loves Mary = John, viz., THE ONE/PERSON who loves Mary*

From (9), the distribution of EZ with Persian and Kurmanji non-restrictive RCs follows straightforwardly, as it matches the distribution of EZ following a silent N more generally: while Persian does not allow EZ in these contexts, Kurmanji uses AEZ (10). In other words, the presence or absence of EZ with non-restrictive RCs is not an idiosyncratic property. If a language like Persian does not allow the presence of EZ after silent Ns, no EZ will be used with non-restrictive RCs. If a language like Kurmanji allows for the presence of EZ (in the form of the AEZ in this language) after a silent N, the same linker is used in the context of non-restrictive RCs.[3]

(10) a. Persian
Man xodkaar-e aabi ro baa ØN(*-e) qermez avaz kard-am
1SG pen-EZ blue RA with EZ red change did-1SG.
'I exchanged the blue pen with a red one.'

b. Kurmanji
Min qelem-a şîn bi ØN*(-ya) sor guhart.
1SG.OBL pen-EZ.F blue with AEZ red change.PST
'I changed the blue pen with the red one.'

So far, we have looked at the distribution of EZ in the context of RCs in Persian and Kurmanji and shown how it follows from the general distribution of EZ and the syntax of RCs. Next, we consider the noun-complement clause context.

[3] One might think that an approach that takes non-restrictive RCs to be enveloped in a projection of a silent head noun which is, in turn, juxtaposed to the projection of the overt head noun could introduce a novel opportunity to take EZ with non-restrictive relative clauses to be the reflex of case assignment (*à la* Larson and Samiian), if one assumes there to be a case relation between the head noun and the silent-headed NP (indubitably [+N]) that envelops the RC. Coupled with a perspective on the distribution of EZ in the context of silent nouns more generally, this could conceivably capture the relevant facts. But assuming there to be a case relation between the overt head noun and the silent-headed NP asyndetically coordinated with it would be quite problematic, for the following reasons. First, case is usually taken to be associated with overt Ns, not silent ones. Second, in other silent-N EZ contexts, no overt N precedes the silent N, making it unlikely that a case-based approach could capture all silent-N cases uniformly. Lastly, on a de Vries-style asyndetic coordination approach (on which the relationship between the projection of the overt head noun and the projection of the silent noun is one of asyndetic coordination), case assignment to the second conjunct is unexpected in light of the fact that case is not normally assigned to second conjuncts separately, let alone by or from the first conjunct.

4. Ezafe in the context of noun complement clauses (NCCs)

Kurmanji NCCs are always linked to the head N with EZ (N-EZ CP) as illustrated in (11), while Persian has been claimed to lack EZ in NCC contexts (12).

(11) Ew gotegot-a ku derzî bêkêr e
DEM rumour-EZ.F that vaccine useless is
'the rumour that the vaccine is useless'

(12) in omid (*-e) ke Shah az Iran xaahad raft
this hope -EZ that Shah from Iran will go.PST
'the hope that the Shah will leave Iran'
(adapted from Larson and Samiian (2020), p. 200)

Larson and Samiian (2020) attribute this difference to the alleged [+N] status of CPs in Kurmanji, as opposed to Persian, without independent evidence. They base their claim that CPs are [+N] in Kurmanji but [–N] in Persian on the following argument with respect to relative clauses. They suggest that Kurmanji *ku* is a relative pronoun while Persian *ke* is a complementizer based on the observation that cross-linguistically, relative clauses introduced by a complementizer allow resumptive pronouns but RCs with a relative pronoun do not. Persian allows resumption under relativization under certain circumstances while Kurmanji does not; *ergo*, Kurmanji *ku* is a relative pronoun but Persian *ke* is a complementizer. This argument has three limitations: First, from the conclusion that Kurmanji *ku* is a relative pronoun (and as standardly assumed, in SpecCP), nothing follows regarding the specification of the relative CP for the feature [+/–N] as CPs do not 'inherit' their categorial feature content from the operator in their specifier; the external distribution of relative clauses is not determined by the categorial features of the relative operator. Second, the conclusion that Kurmanji *ku* is a relative pronoun does not straightforwardly carry over to the syntax of noun-complement clauses (though see Krapova and Cinque (2015), where NCCs are analyzed as reduced relative clauses; cf. fn. 5 below), whose presumed specification for the feature [+/–N] remains largely unsupported. Third, the distribution of Persian and Kurmanji CPs elsewhere is identical: CPs cannot be used as clausal subject in either language without an additional nominal element, e.g. a demonstrative (13), and in both Persian and Kurmanji, CP complements are post-verbal unlike nominal arguments, which are preverbal, (14/15). Therefore, the claimed contrast between Kurmanji and Persian is not fully supported.[4]

[4] A possible fourth limitation of Larson and Samiian's approach is that some of the Kurmanji examples they discuss indeed involve what appear to be resumptive elements. They observe that Kurmanji does not allow resumptive pronouns in direct object position in RCs as given in (i). Based on the assumption that resumptive pronouns cannot occur in RCs introduced by a relative pronoun, they suggest that the impossibility of resumptive pronouns in this language can only be explained if *ku* 'that' is considered as a relative pronoun.

(i) keçik-a [ku min (*wê) doh dît] zehf rind bû
girl-EZ.F that 1SG.OBL (her) yesterday see.PST.3SG very pretty was
'The girl whom I saw (*her) yesterday was very beautiful.' (Larson & Samiian 2020, p.208)

(13) a. Persian

*(in)	ke	vaaksan	bifaayde	ast	kaamelan	doruq-e
this	that	vaccine	useless	is	totally	lie-is

'That the vaccine is useless is totally false.'

b. Kurmanji

Ew-ê	ku	derzî	bêkêr	e	hemi	derew	e.
DEM-EZ.M	that	vaccine	useless	is	all	lie	is

'That the vaccine is useless is all a lie.'

(14) Persian

a. Nominal arguments

Man	ketaab-o	mi-xun-am.
1SG	book-RA	DUR-read.PRS-1SG

'I am reading the book.'

b. CP complements

un	ne-mi-dun-e	ke	man	kitaab-o	mi-xun-am.	
3SG	NEG-DUR-know.PRS-3SG	that	1SG	book-RA	DUR-read.PRS-1SG	

'S/he doesn't know that I am reading the book.'

(15) Kurmanji

a. Nominal arguments

Ez	kitab-ê	di-xwîn-im
1SG.DIR	book-OBL	PROG-read.PRS-1SG

'I am reading the book.'

b. CP complements

Ew	ni-zan-e	ku	ez	kitab-ê	
3SG.DIR	NEG-know.PRS-3SG	that	1SG.DIR	book-OBL	
di-xwîn-im					
PROG-read.PRS-1SG					

'S/he doesn't know that I am reading the book.'

Crucially, under the right circumstances, even Persian allows for the possibility, previously not mentioned in the literature, of using, in the context of NCCs, the same

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However, in P-object position (i.e. when the NP is the complement of a preposition), Kurmanji permits the contracted prepositions in RCs, e.g. *jê* which contains the contracted forms of the preposition (e.g. *ji*) and the 3SG Oblique pronoun *wê/wî*, (ii):

(ii) keçik-a [ku min jê ra gul şand] çû Stenbol-ê
girl-EZ.F that 1SG.OBL P.3SG.OBL P rose send.PST.3SG go.PST.3SG Istanbul-OBL
'The girl whom I sent roses [to her] went to Istanbul.' (Larson & Samiian 2020, p.208)

If we consider the contracted prepositions as resumptive forms, then a sentences like in (ii) poses a problem for the connection between absence of resumption and the relative pronoun status of *ku* in Kurmanji.

particle *-i* used with restrictive RCs and analyzed as an allomorph of EZ used in the context of CPs. We see in (16)–(17) that while absence of EZ is grammatical, the use of the *-i* allomorph of EZ is also allowed (cf. (12)).

(16) {in edeaa / edeaa-yi } ke vaaksan xatarnaak=e=ro
this claim / claim-i that vaccine dangerous=is=RA
man matrah na-kard-am
1SG mention NEG-did-1SG
'I didn't bring up the claim that the vaccine is dangerous.'

(17) {in shaaye'e / shaaye'e-yi } ke vaaksan xatarnaak=e=ro
this rumour / rumour-I that vaccine dangerous=is=RA
az ki shenid-i
from who heard-2SG
'Who did you hear the rumour that the vaccine is dangerous from?'

The above facts present a further challenge for the case analysis of EZ, as the mere claim that Kurmanji CPs are [+N] and Persian CPs are [–N], while itself questionable, will not make the right prediction about the distribution of EZ in the NCC context. The case analysis would need to assume that CPs can be optionally [+N] or [–N] in Persian. There is no morphosyntactic distinction (or any other independently attested difference) between the CPs following the head N in the contexts with or without EZ to support this claim.

In the syntactic literature on NCCs, two main camps can be identified with respect to the analysis of these structures. One camp (Stowell 1981, Napoli 1989:250, den Dikken 2006:244) takes the NCC to serve at the subject of predication for the projection of the head noun (cf. '[that S] is the claim'), with the surface order derived as a result of inversion of NP around CP, as illustrated in (18).

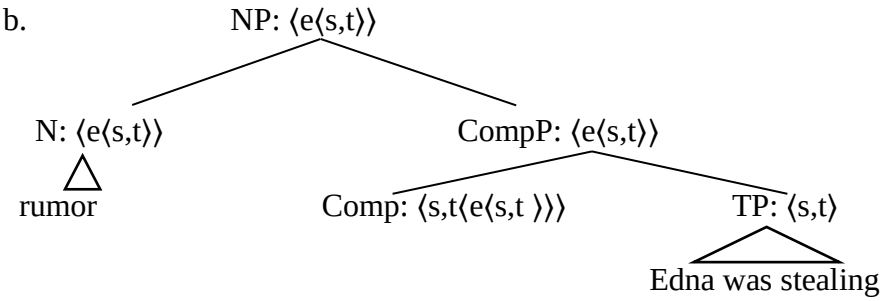
(18) [DP *the* [FP [NP *claim*] [F [RP [CP *that S*] [RELATOR *t*NP]]]]]

According to another prominent approach (Kratzer 2006, Moulton 2009, 2013, Krapova and Cinque 2015), the NCC serves as (a subpart of) the predicate for the projection of the head noun. Under this view, the surface order matches the base-generated order of constituents and no inversion is involved. The *CP Predicate Hypothesis* (Kratzer 2006, Moulton 2009) has the complementizer turn the clause into a predicate: (19).[5] The Comp identifies the content of the noun with the proposition it embeds; e.g., the content of the rumour is the proposition that Edna was stealing, and the CP combines with the noun by predicate modification.

[5] For Krapova and Cinque (2015), the predicativity of the NCC is a function of relativization: the NCC is treated as a subpart of a relative clause with a silent copula and a null relative pronoun (*the claim WHICH IS that S*). Though the Persian and Kurmanji NCC data are compatible with this analysis, we do not follow it in the text because support for the postulation of a relative clause with a silent copula and a silent left periphery is minimal and equivocal.

(19) a. rumor that Edna was stealing

b.



(Moulton 2013, p. 277)

On the assumption that (19) is correct as given, there is no functional head present between the noun and the CP and there is also no inversion. As we have discussed above, we see EZ as the exponent of the inversion process in syntax. The strategy in (19) is thus expected to give rise to absence of EZ. This matches Persian (12) and the versions of (16) and (17) that lack *-i*. These examples are outputs of (19). The versions of (16) and (17) that DO contain *-i* then likely differ in their syntax from their 'bare', EZ-less counterparts. The inversion operation that manoeuvres the NP around the CP in (18) is responsible for the emergence of EZ, in line with Kahnemuyipour (2014). Thus, the versions of (16) and (17) with EZ are outputs of (18).

Importantly, the versions of Persian (16) and (17) with EZ differ from their 'bare' EZ-less counterparts not only in their syntax but also in their interpretation: the NCC in the versions of (16) and (17) with EZ is interpreted as hearer-old, discourse-anaphoric.[6] This falls out naturally from a derivation along the lines of (18). The NCC is base-generated as a subject of predication. In syntactic situations in which a particular constituent can in principle be structurally represented either as a subject or as a non-subject (cf. the active/passive alternation), construal of this constituent as a subject shows a strong tendency to deliver a topical, hearer-old interpretation.

Turning to Kurmanji, one can conclude that only the strategy in (18) is used for the formation of NCCs, and as a result, EZ is always required. We noted at the outset that Kurmanji EZ is sensitive to the phi-features of the head noun, which we take to be a case of agreement. As such, one may relate the obligatory use of the inversion strategy in (18) (and the presence of EZ) to the obligatory requirement in Kurmanji morphosyntax to

[6] The EZ-less versions of (16) and (17), by contrast, are usable in both hearer-old and hearer-new contexts. This interpretive contrast between 'bare' and morphologically more complex NCC constructions is similar (though not identical) to the one Hankamer and Mikkelsen (2020) discuss with reference to the two types of NCC constructions found in Danish. In both Danish and Persian, the morphologically more complex version (employing EZ in Persian and a preposition in Danish) is only compatible with a construal of the information conveyed by the NCC as hearer-old. Danish differs from Persian, however, in that its 'bare' NCC construction apparently requires a hearer-new interpretation for the CP. Moulton's (19), from which we have derived EZ-less NCC constructions, is information-structurally neutral. The discursive versatility of Persian EZ-less (16) and (17) is directly in line with this. We will not address here the question of why Danish 'bare' NCC constructions are apparently not as flexible in discourse as their Persian counterparts.

engage in a phi-feature agreement relationship with the head noun, exponed on EZ. This process can only be an outcome of (18) (as opposed to (19)). The Kurmanji example in (11) is thus based on (18). Kurmanji shows no alternation between (18) and (19): the fact that the head noun must engage in phi-feature agreement with EZ entails that Kurmanji NCCs can only avail themselves of (18), in which the NCC is a subject. Because in Kurmanji the NCC has no choice but to be syntactically represented as a subject (and consequently there is no alternation in this language between (18) and (19)), there is no information-structural effect associated in Kurmanji with the use of (18). As a result, the NCC in (11) and similar such constructions in Kurmanji can be either hearer-old or hearer-new.

5. Conclusion

We have argued in this paper that the distribution of EZ in the context of adnominal clauses in Kurmanji and Persian follows from the general behaviour of EZ and the syntax of N–CP structures. In doing so, we have shown that the distribution of EZ in the N–CP context in Persian and Kurmanji poses serious challenges to the case analysis of EZ, which predicts that [–N] modifiers should not require the presence of EZ. The facts from these two languages are instead compatible with the roll-up analysis of EZ with the correct understanding of the syntax of N–CP structures. We have posited that both languages make use of EZ in the context of restrictive RCs, as expected. In Kurmanji, the regular form of EZ is used, while in Persian, an allomorph of EZ, which appears in the context of CPs, is used instead. With non-restrictive RCs, while Persian does not use EZ, Kurmanji uses a different type of EZ, known as anaphoric EZ (AEZ). We followed de Vries (2006) in analyzing non-restrictive RCs as restrictive modifiers of a silent-headed NP asyndetically coordinated with the projection of the overt head noun. The distribution of EZ in Persian and Kurmanji non-restrictive RCs follows, as it matches the distribution of EZ following a silent N more generally.

With NCCs, Kurmanji uses the regular EZ consistently, while Persian exhibits two options: the allomorph of EZ used with CPs or no EZ at all. We have assumed two possible structures for NCCs: (i) NCC as the subject of predication for the projection of the head noun, with the surface order derived as a result of inversion of NP around CP, (ii) NCC as (a subpart of) the predicate for the projection of the head noun, with no inversion involved. While Persian was taken to allow both strategies, Kurmanji was argued to allow the former only. The distribution of EZ follows accordingly, with EZ only appearing in structures that involve inversion.

Like Kurmanji (and unlike Persian), several other Iranian languages (e.g. Central Kurdish, Zazaki, Hawrami) show some form of agreement with the head N on EZ. In future work, we intend to investigate the distribution of EZ in the context of NCCs in these languages to assess the tentative connection made here between NCC syntax and the presence of agreeing EZ in a language. The distribution of EZ in the context of both RCs and NCCs in other Iranian languages needs further investigation to test the proposal advanced in this paper and to gain a better understanding of the syntax of RCs, NCCs and the Ezafe constructions in Iranian languages and beyond.

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