The Noun Phrase in Hawrami

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In this paper we describe the structure and functional categories of the noun phrase in Hawrami, a Kurdish / Northwestern Iranian language spoken in a region between Iran and Iraq, paying special attention to NP-internal agreement or concord. The major description of Hawrami, MacKenzie 1966, concentrates on morphology and describes a version of the language as spoken by previous generations in Nausud (Luhon), whereas the version of the language which we are describing is spoken in Pāwa, 10 miles to the south-east. While the dialect we describe is obviously the same language as that described by MacKenzie, there are important differences especially in the form of agreement affixes. This paper concentrates on the morphosyntax of the Izafè affix, whose pattern of agreement provides crucial evidence for the structure of the noun phrase, particularly the hierarchical relations among the various functional categories of the noun phrase, including the definite article, number, demonstrative and possessive. Given the standard assumption that agreement is always local, and that what matters is structural locality, not linear locality, these agreement facts enable us to draw firm conclusions about structural relations among the categories in the noun phrase.

1. The Izafè, definiteness, number, and demonstratives

The Izafè (also Ezafè, particularly in connection with Persian) is an inflection on modified categories in the noun phrase, one which corresponds quite closely to English of in some of its uses. In Persian, one affix -e is used for many functions, whereas in Hawrami Izafè has several different realizations, -i, -æ, -e, -u, the choice being based on the category of the modifier and the presence and the nature of certain agreement-triggering elements such as number and definiteness.¹

¹ Research for this paper was supported by a grant from the Leverhulme Foundation to Anders Holmberg. We would like to thank our Hawrami consultant, Koresh Rafie, for his invaluable assistance. The number of speakers of Hawrami is unknown, but is probably less than 100,000, possibly less than 50,000. We take no position on the historical relationship between Hawrami and closely related languages such as Sorani, Kurmanjî and Zazaki.

¹ Gender can be employed in Hawrami, but in the dialect which we have worked on, marking gender via feminine suffixation on adjectives is strongly dispreferred. Thus ženi zd-æ “big woman” is possible but is judged to be “not common”, compared to ženi zd.
Nouns are morphologically bare in their citation form (æsp “horse”) and adjectives are postnominal. The Izafe suffix -i is added to the head noun when it comes before an adjective, and if the noun is modified by more than one adjective, each adjective except the last one is also affixed with the Izafe -i, no matter how many adjectives there may be.

(1) æsp-i sya:w  
    horse-IZ black  
    “black horse” 

æsp-i s ya:w-i zîl  
    horse-IZ black-IZ big  
    “big black horse” 

æsp-i zîl-i sya:w-i xás  
    horse-IZ big-IZ black-IZ good  
    “good big black horse”

Taking a noun phrase consisting of a noun and attributive adjectives to be basically [[[N] A] A]...A], each modified constituent is marked with the suffix -i.

The Izafe suffix appears not only before lexical adjectives, but also before deverbal stative predicates, which may have the past suffix -d- or the negative na-, thus Izafe is not limited to appearing before lexical adjectives.

(2) dræxt-i mær-d-æ  
    tree-IZ die-past  
    “dead tree” 

pyæ-i na -rahæt  
    man-IZ not-comfortable  
    “uncomfortable man”

The appearance of the Izafe on a noun with the indefinite suffix -ewæ is optional, but this optionality exists only on the noun. Omission of the Izafe on an adjective is not possible.

(3) mar-ewæ zîl-i râš  
    snake-indef big-IZ black  
    “a big black snake” 

mar -ew-i zîl-i râš  
    snake-indef-IZ big-IZ black  
    *mar-ewæ zîl-∅ râš

We treat this as optionality in realization, where -i may be omitted after the indefinite suffix.

Examples of feminine agreement on adjectives are rare in our notes, so we do not discuss the mechanics of gender agreement.
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The Izafe suffix is added to the end of the modifier phrase, and does not appear on every word within a complex modifier such as “very long”.

(4) mar-i [fra drež]-i zil
    snake-IZ very long -IZ big
    “big, very long snake”

Prehead elements (various quantifiers) do not bear the Izafe suffix.

(5) faqat tut-ewæ “some dog”
    some dog-indef

hayč kawir-e “any sheep”
    any sheep -PL

kam mar “which snake?”
    which snake

činn mar -e “how many snakes”
    how many snake-PL

tyer-umin taːš -ækæ “the third stone”
    three-ADJ stone -def. art.

We conclude that the Izafe -i is suffixed to a NP modified by an adjective, as a “phrasal affix” (we discuss the relationship of pre-head modifiers to the NP later).

(6)

Marking of definiteness and the resulting pattern of concord provides our first look at the agreement properties of Izafe. The definite article -ækæ appears at the end of the phrase; an adjective will have the Izafe suffix, but in this case it is realised as -a. The definite article, unlike the indefinite article -ewæ, attaches to the end of the NP, and therefore follows any adjectives. All adjectives except the last one are marked with the definite Izafe -a.

(6) æsp-ækæ “the horse”
    horse-def.art.
æsp-æ zil-ækæ “the big horse”
horse-IZdef big-def.art.
*æsp-i zil-ækæ “the big horse”
horse -IZ big-def.art.
æsp-æ sya:w-æ zil -ækæ “the big black horse”
horse-IZdef black -IZdef big-def.art.
cf. qrwa:q-ew -i sawz-ľ zil “a big green frog”
frog -indef-IZ green -IZ big

We assume the structure in (7); furthermore, we assume that the Izafe must agree in features with the definite article (details are discussed below).

(7)
NP                      NP
                     NP
                  NP
                           IZ       zil
               |     -ækæ
     -i
      æsp

In this case, IZ agrees in definiteness feature with the head -ækæ.

Plural noun phrases are indicated with the affix -e (also -a:, which we have not investigated) which appears at the right edge of the phrase. Like the definite article, this affix governs agreement on the Izafe suffix, so the Izafe suffix in a noun phrase before the plural marker -e takes the form -e rather than -i.

(8) wres “rope” wres-e “ropes”
wres-e drež-e “long ropes” wres-e drež-e xas-e “good long ropes”
rope -IZpl long -PL rope -IZpl long -IZpl good-PL

As with the default form of the Izafe suffix, the plural Izafe does not appear inside an adjective phrase, but agreement will propagate past such a phrase.

(9) mar -e fræ drež-e zil-e “big, very long snakes”
snake-IZpl very long -IZpl big-PL

The example in (10) shows the plural affix with a numeral.
(10) du-e æsp-e zil-e sya:w-e “2 big black horses”
two-PL horse-IZpl big -IZpl black -PL

Overt plural marking on the NP is optional when plurality is semantically recoverable from a numeral. The form of the Izafe suffix is therefore plural -e just in case there is an overt plural marker at the end of the clause, and is otherwise -i.

(11) due æsp-e zil-e “two big horses”
two horse-IZpl big-PL
due æsp-i zil “two big horses”
two horse-IZ big

Plural agreement of the Izafe is required if the noun phrase ends with a plural marker; the plural is at the end of the noun phrase, if it is present anywhere.

(12) *due æsp-i zil-e
    *æsp-e zil, *æsp-i zil-e

Izafe marking itself is not optional.

(13) *due æsp zil(-e)
    (no IM, final pl. either lacking or present)
    *due æsp-e zil
    (plural IM without the triggering plural suffix)

This shows that the plural Izafe suffix is due to agreement, not semantic plurality. Definiteness and plurality can be combined in a noun phrase, and the definite article follows the plural marker (which may be -e, -a or -a:n in free variation). If the NP contains an adjective, and consequently contains an Izafe suffix, this Izafe suffix will have the definite form -æ, not the plural form -e.

(14) wres-æk -{e, -a, -a:n} “the ropes”
    rope -def.art.-PL
    wres-æ drež-æ xas -æk -e /-a:n “the good long ropes”
    rope -IZpl long -IZdef good-def.art.-PL
    *wres-e drež -e xas -æk -e “the good long ropes”
    rope -IZpl long -IZpl good-def.art.-PL

Given the principle (universal, as far as we know) that agreement is structurally local, the fact that agreeing Izafe agrees with the definite article and not with
the plural suffix in (14) means that the structure is as in (15): the definite article is c-commanded by the plural suffix.

(15)

This is unexpected given what we know about the ordering of definiteness and number in other languages (see for instance Rijkhoff 2002). The conclusion that the number suffix c-commands the definiteness suffix in Hawrami seems inescapable, though. This means that the suffixed definite article does not close the nominal projection (the way D does under the standard DP hypothesis). We indicate this formally by leaving Def dominated by NP, not DP. For theoretical reasons, we might want to posit a covert D as the highest functional head of the noun phrase, but in the absence of any empirical evidence we are not taking that step here. See, however, the section below on demonstratives.

As expected, the definite Izafe suffix -æ is used in definite clauses with plural numbers, regardless of the presence of overt plurality at the right edge.

(16) duæ æsp-æ ził -æk -a:n “the two big horses”

two horse-IZdef big-def.art.-PL

Rijkhoff (2002) claims, on the basis of a carefully sampled set of languages, that expressions of Locality, for example demonstratives, universally take scope over (i.e. are structurally higher than) expressions of Quantity, for example number or numerals, which in turn take scope over expressions of Quality, for example adjectives. He contends that “/d/efinite articles can also be regarded as localizing elements” (p. 185). If so, then Hawrami appears to present a counterexample to Rijkhoff’s generalization. We acknowledge that a more careful study of the semantics of the Hawrami number suffix, or of the definite article, might explain why Hawrami looks like a counterexample to the proposed universal. This might, for example, provide an argument for a covert highest head D.
The numeral (duæ, not due) agrees with the definite article, showing that the numeral is structurally lower than the article. We assume the following structure:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{duæ} & \quad \text{æsp-æ} & \quad \text{zil-ækæ} & \quad \text{idem} \\
\text{two} & \quad \text{horse-IZdef} & \quad \text{big-def.art.}
\end{align*}
\]

Thus both the numeral and the Izafe agree with the structurally local definite article. In the absence of a definite article, the form of the numeral “two” is due, whether there is plural marking or not. This indicates that this is the default form of the numeral, rather than (or in addition to) being the plural-agreeing form.

The definite Izafe suffix -æ also appears when the clause has a demonstrative particle at the left edge of the clause. The demonstrative consists of two parts: a prenominal particle a:, denoting distal (hence that), or i, denoting proximate (hence this) and a suffix -æ placed at the rightmost edge of the noun phrase. The suffix, we assume, denotes definiteness. In the following examples the final -æ is part of the demonstrative, while other cases of -æ are the Izafe.

(18) a: æsp -æ
    “that horse”
 a: æsp -æ sya:w-æ
    “that black horse”
 a: æsp -æ zil-æ sya:w-æ
    “that big black horse”
 a: ahmað-æ zil-æ
    “that old Ahmad”
In plural noun phrases modified by a demonstrative, the definite Izafe -æ still prevails. The final suffix -æ is not pronounced in this case (hence phonologically, /sya:w-e-æ/ → [sya:we]), but, we assume, is present syntactically.

(19) i      æsp -æ sya:w-e “these black horses”
     these horse -IZdef black -PL.
     i      æsp-æ pir-æ sya:w-e “these old black horses”
     these horse -IZdef old-IZdef black -PL.

Assuming locality of agreement, this implies the structure (20): the prenominal demonstrative is structurally closer to the Izafe suffix than the plural suffix is, so it controls agreement on the Izafe. (The prenominal part of the demonstrative is labelled DEM1 and the postnominal part, unrealized in this case, is labelled DEM2). We assume that DEM2 projects a DP.

(20)

The prenominal particle and the definite article have complementary distribution.

(21) *a: æsp-æ sya:w-ækæ

This supports the claim that they occupy the same structural slot, between any adjectives and the number marker, therefore blocking agreement between the plural marker and the Izafe, even though one is spelled out prenominally, the other postnominally.

As expected, the postnominal modifier pesæ “such” requires Izafe on the NP that precedes it, and does not trigger any kind of agreement on the Izafe (which therefore has the default form -i).
(22) biz-ı pesæ
    goat-IZ such

What is unique about pesæ is that it itself exceptionally does not take an Izafe suffiz when it comes before an adjective

(23) gošt-ı pesæ xas
    meat-IZ such good

The plural marker -e is placed outside pesæ, and is structurally higher than pesæ. As pesæ does not control agreement, it also does not block agreement between the plural marker and the Izafe, as shown in example (24c).

(24) a. biz-ı pes-e
    goat-IZpl such-PL

b. biz-ı sya:w-ı zıl-ı pes-e
    goat-IZpl black -IZpl big -IZpl such-PL

Pesa can take the form pes-e only at the edge of the phrase, i.e. it may host PL (plural) but not IZ. This fact shows that plural -e at the edge of the noun phrase is syntactically different from the homophonous plural agreement on the Izafe: -e at the end of the NP is a functional head, but inside the NP it is an agreement-governed variant of Izafe.

(25) tir -e drež-e pes-e
    arrow-IZpl long -IZpl such-PL

2. Possessive noun phrases

A third form of Izafe agreement is found in possessive noun phrases, where Izafe is realised as -u on the possessed noun’s phrase. In possessive constructions, the possessor also has a case suffix -i at the end of its phrase.
The possessor case suffix -i is realized only on singular possessors.

The form -u is also found after prepositions and in various other nominal collocations.

If the possessed noun phrase contains adjectives and therefore contains multiple Izafe-suffixes, these will all agree with “possessed-Izafe” -u.

The possessed noun phrase can itself be definite-marked or indefinite marked. As (31) shows, the possessed-marker -u appears after the definite article.
The structure of the possessor construction is basically as follows.

(32)  
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  DP     D'                             DP                                                                  NP                                                                                           D-IZ
     NP                                                  a                                               ħmað-i                                                                                AP                                                                                            -u
     NP                                                               IZ              z                          sæk
     N                                                               -u                                    il
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We claim that the Possessee-Izafe -u is not categorially identical with the other forms of the Izafe discussed so far. The Izafe which is realized as -i, -e, or -æ in Hawrami is a “pure linking element” devoid of any interpretable features, whose role is, loosely speaking, to overtly express the syntactic relation between a head and an AP modifier in the noun phrase (we return to the structural role of the Izafe below). The fact that it is subject to agreement with various interpretable functional categories such as the definite article and the plural suffix we take to be an indication of its status as an uninterpretable category. The Possessee-Izafe realized as -u also has the linking function in the special case when the modifier is a DP or NP. However, unlike AP-Izafe, it is not subject to agreement, but instead triggers agreement on AP-Izafe, in the manner of the definite article, the demonstrative, and the plural suffix. That Possessee-Izafe triggers agreement on AP-Izafe is shown in (32), where the lower Izafe -u attached to sæk is the usual Izafe, pronounced -u because it agrees with the Possessee-Izafe. It is harder to demonstrate that Possessee-Izafe is not itself subject to agreement; we return to this below. Since the Possessee-Izafe occurs whenever the noun combines with a nomi-

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3 See Chomsky (1995: 277-8) on the distinction between interpretable and uninterpretable features. Chomsky (2001) proposes that uninterpretable features enter the syntax unvalued, and therefore must receive the values which determine their pronunciation in the course of the syntactic derivation by agreement with interpretable features. His favorite example is subject-verb agreement, i.e. the person and number features spelled out on the finite verb in many languages, inherently unvalued but assigned a value by agreement with the interpretable (inherently valued) person and number features of the subject. The Izafe spelled out as -i, -e- or -æ is another such category, if we are right.
nal phrase marked with the oblique case-suffix -i, we assume that Possessee-Izafe assigns oblique case. Being the head of a noun phrase, we classify it as a determiner, labelling it D-Izafe. It occurs not only in construction with a possessor, but also in other nominal collocations, such as (33), and also in PPs, as in (34), always accompanied by oblique case.

(33) ša:r-u pa:wæ-i “town of Pawa”
town-Izafe Pawa -obl
(34) sær-u meze-kæ -i “on the table”
on -Izafe table -def.art-obl

The reason why D-Izafe -u appears with prepositions such as sær “on” is that these prepositions are actually nouns, which do not on their own assign case (see Ghomeshi 1997 for discussion of the corresponding prepositions in Persian).

Agreement with D-Izafe is blocked by an “inside” definite article (as expected, given locality of agreement).

(35) sæk-æ zil -ækæ-u ahmað-i “A’s big sack”
sack -Izafe big-def.art.-IZposs Ahmed -obl
æsp-æ syæw-ækæ-u žiwa:-i “Zhiwa’s black horse”
horse-Izafe black -def.art.-IZposs Zhiwa -obl
ktew-æ syaw-æ zil -ækæ-u pya:-kæ -i “the man’s big black book”
book -Izafe black -Izafe big -def.art.-IZposs man -def.art-obl
aw æsp-æ sya:w-ækæ-u tær -u ahmað-i “A’s other black horse”
other horse-Izafe black -def.art.-IZposs other-IZposs Ahmad -obl

The following is the structure of the noun phrase with a definite possessee. As can be seen, the definite article is closer to the Izafe than the D-Izafe -u is, and therefore controls the agreement on the Izafe.

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4 It is thereby closely related to English of in the construction a friend of John’s as analyzed in Kayne (1994).
Possessive constructions allow us to investigate some surprising properties of the postnominal part -æ of the demonstrative, which appears at the end of the entire phrase, even after the possessor phrase.

Example (b) reinforces the conclusion reached above in connection with (19)-(20) that the prenominal demonstrative particle is merged low in the NP, in this case lower than D-IZ, as it controls agreement on the AP-Izafe. The contrast between (b) and (c) indicates that the phrase-final suffix -æ bears no relation to the possessor, which is definite in (b), indefinite in (c), but is the other half of the two-part demonstrative discussed earlier. This means that the structure is as in (38).
As discussed, DEM1 encodes location (distal or proximal), in which case DEM2 presumably encodes the definite-deictic feature of the demonstrative. As such we might expect it to trigger agreement on the Izafe, presumably -æ in the manner of the definite article. The fact that D-IZ -u is not affected by the presence of DEM2 then supports the hypothesis that D-IZ is categorically different from AP-IZ, not being subject to agreement.

The positional absolute finality of DEM2 is reinforced by some surprising facts. We observed in (37) in the example a: æsp-u kas-ewi-æ “that horse of a person” that final -æ appears at least at the end of the highest DP which includes both the possessor and possessee. DEM2 appears after the oblique case marker which is assigned to direct objects in non-ergative constructions.

Quite surprisingly, DEM2 is positioned after the subject-referring clitic pronouns attached to the end of the first argument in the VP in ergative constructions. In (38a), the 1st sg. clitic =m, signaling the subject, appears on the direct object. In (b), the 3rd sg. clitic =š, encoding the subject Ahmad.

(39)a: tfæng-æ sya:w-i -æ geræ “take that black gun!”
that gun -IZblack-obl-DEM2 take
a: æsp -i -æ mawreš-u “I will sell that horse”
that horse-obl-DEM2 sell -1s
aš a: biz-a: -i -æ mæwin-o “he sees those goats”
he those goat-PL-obl-DEM2 see -3s

(40)a. æsp=im di “I saw a horse”
horse=1s saw
b.  ahmað  àesp-àækæ=§  wræt  
ahmad horse-def.art=3s sold.3s

“Ahmad sold the horse”

As a clitic reflecting agreement properties of the subject and verb, we would not
expect the apparently strictly DP-internal marker DEM2 to appear outside of the
subject clitic, yet as (41) shows, it does.

(41) i  bizæ=m-æ kuʃ

this goat =1s -def killed.3s

a: tutæ-u  ahmað-i =m-æ di

that dog -IZpos, A -obl.=1s-dem saw.3s

“I killed this goat”

“I saw that dog of Ahmad”

3. Other topics: ‘other’, deverbal nouns, relatives, and the function of the
Izafe

The modifier tær “other” is systematically preceded by Izafe -i, thus we might
expect it to be like any adjective.

(42) tfængi tær  “other gun”

tfæng-ew-i tær  “another gun”

tfæng-ew-i zɪl-i tær  “another big gun”

However, tær follows the definite article (which takes the Izafe suffix).

(43) aw mar-àækæ-i tær  “the other snake”

aw àesp-æ zɪl-àækæ-i tær  “the other big horse”

*aw àesp-æ zɪl-àækæ tær

In N-of-N structures, the Izafe suffix is -u as expected, down to the controlling
definite article.

(44) aw tfæng-æ zɪl-àækæ-u tær-u ahmað-i  “the other gun of A”

*aw tfæng-æ zɪl-àækæ-{∅/i} tær-u ahmað-i

*aw tfæng-æ zɪl-àækæ-u tær-∅ ahmað-i

The role of the initial particle aw in this construction is not entirely clear to us.
MacKenzie (1966) suggests that it means “that, of two”. It shows up in a few ex-
amples without tær, as in aw háfiæ “last week”, aw maræ “other snake”, aw
maraka:n “other snakes”, aw yuka “the other”, aw tfængækæ “other gun”. The
demonstratives $a$: and $i$:; with the phrase-final vowel -æ, appear to have complementary distribution with aw, as expected under MacKenzie’s analysis.

(45) a: kæsæ -i  tær-æ    “that other person”
      that person -IZ other-DEM2
    a: kæs -æ:n-i  tær-æ  “those other persons”
      that person-pl -IZ other-DEM2

According to the tree (15), the definite article does not project a DP, so the pattern of agreement is as expected, under our local agreement account. It shows that the AP-IZafe whose default form is -i is not restricted to occurring inside of the definite article, but also shows that whether it does or not, its form is determined by local agreement.

Deverbal nouns allow an object which comes before the noun, with no case or other marking. The example (46a) shows a direct object, which precedes the nominalised verb, and (46b) shows the subject of an intransitive verb. We bracket the preverbal object and verb for clarity.

(46) a. [har fra=dæ-i]    “throwing of mud”
      mud throw -IZ
    b. rama-u  ḡæsæn-i    “Hasan’s running”
      run -IZpos Hasan -obl

The examples in (47) illustrate nominalization of transitive verbs with null subjects (47a) and overt subjects and objects (47b-c).

(47) a. [aw wardæ-i]    “drinking of water”
      water drink -IZ
    b. [aw wardæ-u]  ḡæsæn-i    “Hasan’s drinking of water”
      water drink -IZpos Hasan -obl
    c. [gaw wʊrætæ-u]  ḡæsæn-i  “Hasan’s selling of a cow”
      cow sell -IZpos Hasan -obl

Notice that the possessive Izafe appears on the nominalised clause before the subject, that is, the nominalization has the same “possessee + possessor” structure of the analogous English “Hasan’s selling of a cow”.

The suffix -i in (46b) and (47b,c) is clearly the oblique case suffix. We are less certain about the suffix -i in (46a) and (47a). The fact that it is overridden by D-IZ -u in (47b,c) suggests that it is the Izafe -i. This is also consistent with the notion
that the Izafe marks the modified constituent when a noun or NP merges with a modifier, even though, in the standard cases the modifier follows the head N/NP.

While subjects of nominalized clauses must come after the verb (thus have N of N structure), objects may come after the verb as well. Accordingly, (48a,b) are ambiguous, where Zhiwa and Ahmad can be construed either as subject or object, but (48c) unambiguously identifies Ahmad as the object of seeing.

(48) a. kuštæ-u žiwæ-i "killing of Zhiwa"
    kill -IZposs Zhiwa -obl.
b. diæ-u āhmað-i "seeing of Ahmad"
    see -IZposs Ahmad -obl.
c. āhmað diæ-i "seeing Ahmad"
    Ahmad see -obl

As shown by (49), only one argument of the noun can be postnominal, constructed with the Izafe -u.

(49) *wʊrætæ-u gaw-i ħæsæn-i ("Hasan’s selling of a cow")
    *wʊrætæ-u gaw-u ħæsæn-i

This supports our claim that this Izafe is different from the other Izafe-suffixes, being categorially a determiner and case-assigner, in addition to being an Izafe suffix.

There is no Izafe -i on object nouns inside of nominalizations, even when they contain an adjective.

(50) *[risq syaw kuštæ-u] āhmað-i "Ahmed’s killing of a black rat"
    rat black kill -IZposs Ahmad -obl
    *[risq-ɛ syaw(-i) kuštæ-u] āhmað-i
    rat -IZ black (-IZ) kill -IZposs Ahmad -obl

In addition, the object in a nominalization cannot be marked as plural or as indefinite; nor can the noun have a pre-head modifier such as a numeral, either

(51) *[risq-ewæ kuštæ-u] āhmað-i ("Ahmed’s killing of a rat")
    *[risq-ɛ kuštæ-u] āhmað-i ("Ahmed’s killing of rats")
    *[duæ risq kuštæ-u] āhmað-i ("Ahmed’s killing of two rats")
All of this could indicate that the complex deverbal noun construction is a compound word, not a phrase. The generalization would then be that a deverbal noun can only take one argument constructed with -u, therefore only one argument can be assigned the oblique case. A second argument can, however, be incorporated, forming a compound with the deverbal noun, thereby avoiding the need for case (cf. Baker 1988: 117ff.). The presence of an adjective is problematic for the compounding hypothesis, though, as the non-head of a noun-noun compound is typically a bare noun, or even (in some languages) just a root (Josefsson 1999). The claim would be that the noun, adjective and deverbal noun combination [risq syaw koštæ] is a complex noun.

(52) [NP [N risq syaw koštæ]-u ahmað-i]

However, a definite-form Izafe shows up in the complex deverbal noun construction just in case the deverbal noun is itself definite, marked by the suffix -ækæ-. Note that A-N ordering is also possible in preverbal objects.

(53) [risq-æ syaw kušt-ækæ -u] ahmað-i “Ahmed’s killing of a black rat”
    rat -IZdef black kill -def.art.-IZposs Ahmad - obl

[syaw-æ risq kušt-ækæ-u ] ahmað-i =
    black -IZdef rat k ill -def.art.-IZposs Ahmad - obl

*[zil risq kušt-ækæ-u] ahmað-i
 [zil-æ risq kušt-ækæ-u] ahmað-i “Ahmed’s killing of a big rat”
 [risq-æ zil-æ syaw kušt-ækæ-u ahmað-i “A’s killing of a big black rat”

This is unexpected if the construction is a compound noun rather than a phrase. We conclude, tentatively, that the preposed argument is a NP large enough to contain adjectives, but not large enough to contain a numeral, number, or definiteness.

Relative clauses are outside of the “core NP”, standing after the definite article or anything else that seems to be inside the NP, including the phrase-final DEM2 suffix -æ. There is in fact no evidence that they are a constituent with the rest of the NP, and the relative clause can be separated from the rest of the NP, appearing after the main clause verb as in the last example below.

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5 The possibility of a proper name as preposed object, as in (48c), is also unexpected under the compound analysis.
(54) tut-æ sya:w-ækæ [kæ  gæfa-i  mægæfo] “the black dog which is barking”
  dog-IZdef black -def.art. comp bark -obl bark.present
  a:  aesp-æ [kæ  ahmaät æææ=š] “horse which A. sold”
  that horse-def REL A. sold- 3s
  a:  aesp=im -æ  di [kæ ahmaät æææ=š] “I saw that horse which A. sold”
  that horse =1s -def saw.3s REL A. sold =3s

As we noted above, in ergative constructions, a subject-referring oblique clitic e.g. 
in appears at the end of the first VP constituent, here the object. The NP-internal 
definite suffix comes after the clitic; the relative clause comes after the verb and is 
discontinous with the object NP.

A number of different hypotheses about the more precise grammatical function 
of the Izafe have been put forth recently. The Izafe is either a Case marker (Sami-
ian 1994, Larson & Yamakido 2005); a morpheme required to make the noun 
project to a phrase (Ghomeshi 1999); a linker required when a predicate is in-
verted with its subject (den Dikken & Singhapreecha 2004); a morpheme required 
to mark the head in an otherwise too symmetrical phrase (Holmberg & Odden 
2004). With the possible exception of den Dikken & Singhapreecha, the theories 
have in common that they regard the Izafe as (the spell-out of) a functional cate-
gory which ensures that the noun (or NP) is the head of the phrase made up of a 
noun (or NP) and an adjective (or AP). This is explicit in Ghomeshi (1999) and 
Holmberg & Odden (2004). If the Izafe assigns Case to AP, as in Samiian (1994) 
and Larson & Yamakido (2005), then that AP does not project further, which 
(presumably) entails that N/NP does. In other words, the Case assigned by the 
Izafe ensures that N/NP is the head and A/AP the non-head in a phrase made up of 
N/NP and A/AP.

We will not, in this paper, take a stand on which of these formal theories of 
the Izafe is closest to the mark, as the purpose of the paper is to present what we 
know about the noun phrase in Hawrami in a relatively theory-neutral fashion.

References

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