Exclamative Constructions in Persian: A Minimalist Approach[1]

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Abstract

In the generative literature much less attention has been paid to the exclamative constructions with an exclamative word than the interrogative ones. This calls for a more detailed analysis of the exclamative constructions, and an attempt will be made within the Minimalist framework to determine the syntactic position occupied by the exclamative word *če* (what). In this regard, we need to distinguish between two types of exclamative expressions due to the (non-) quantificational nature of the wh-phrase. This involves interpreting the wh-word on the one hand in A-bar position as a Q-adverb and keeping its quantificational force, and on the other hand in the head of a demonstrative phrase (DP) as an indefinite article and giving a non-quantificational reading. We will argue that, in addition to this, in Persian the edge feature [EF] on C in an exclamative clause cannot trigger movement of an exclamative expression to spec-C, contrary to

what happens in English. Closer examination of a wider range of data, however, reveals that the Persian exclamative wh-phrase may undergo an optional movement to the specifier position of a focus projection which is above the TP, resulting in a well-formed but emphatic interpretation of the exclamative construction.

Keywords: *exclamative construction, exclamative word, determiner phrase, quantifier, focus phrase.*