

**A vP layer in result and complex event nominals**  
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Grimshaw (1990) argues that English derived nominalizations can be ambiguous, allowing either a complex event reading or a result reading. Unlike a result nominalization (RN), a complex event nominalization (CEN) allows frequency modifiers, agent-oriented modifiers, aspectual modifiers, and purposives using *in order to*; its internal argument, if any, is obligatory. These contrasts have been widely interpreted as evidence that a CEN includes more structure than an RN. Some accounts treat derived RNs as structurally simple nouns, lacking a verbal component (Marantz 1997, 2010). Others (e.g. Alexiadou 2001) treat them as containing a verbal component, but lacking higher functional categories, such as Voice or Aspect. I argue that—though RNs sometimes lack it—vP is not responsible for the distinction between RNs and CENs. Evidence for this claim comes from a comparison of English and Georgian nominalizations.

Marantz (1997) argues that derived nominalizations lack a vP layer, since they disallow a causative reading (1a), while the corresponding mixed nominalization contains vP (1b) (see also Kratzer 1996). If nominalizations involve an *n* head, this head can merge with a root (1a), vP (1b) or VoiceP (as in *his growing tomatoes*). Note that causative gerunds are always CENs.

- (1) a. \*his (deliberate) growth of tomatoes  
 b. his growing of tomatoes

Additional evidence for root-attached *n* comes from derived nominalizations with a special meaning, like the RN *revolution*, whose “radical change” meaning has no verbal counterpart. Arad (2003) argues that the meaning of a root is fixed when it first combines with a category-forming head. Thus, this sense of *revolution* must involve a category-neutral root, not the verb *revolve*. Given this contrast, it might be surmised that the projection responsible for the modification and argument-structure properties of gerunds and other CENs is vP.

However, such a proposal faces difficulties. According to Marantz (2008), category-defining heads like *v* and *n* head phases. Embick (2010) argues that a phase head—even if phonologically null—blocks a lower syntactic head from conditioning allomorphy on a higher phase head. The nominalizing morphology in CENs is the same as in RNs; it does not neutralize to a default form. On Embick’s analysis, this indicates that the projection responsible for the properties of CENs is not an additional vP, but a non-phase head (say, Asp), which is absent from RNs. On this view, RNs cannot contain AspP, but may or may not contain vP.

This view appears to make the correct predictions. For example, if RNs can contain vP, they are correctly predicted to allow verbal morphology (e.g. *-ize* in *nominalization*, *-ify* in *oversimplification*). Nominalizations (masdars) in Georgian provide additional evidence for vP in RNs. Masdars allow both CEN and RN readings; both involve a thematic suffix (here *-eb*), which is present in verbs, and absent from non-verbal categories (Aronson 1990: 71–72):

- (2) a. lamaz<sub>A</sub>- ‘beautiful’      ga=lamaz-d-eb-a      ‘become beautiful’  
 b. inTeres<sub>N</sub>- ‘interest’      da=inTeres-d-eb-a      ‘become interested’  
 c. mzad<sub>Adv</sub> ‘ready’      da=mzad-d-eb-a      ‘be(come) prepared’

The thematic suffix also attaches to the causative suffix *-in*, which represents a *v* head:

- (3) a. Cer-a ‘writing’  
 b. Cer-in-eb-a ‘causing to write’ (Hewitt 1991)

Moreover, the meaning of Georgian RN masdars is transparently related to the corresponding verb, as expected if they involve an *n* head attached to vP, rather than directly to the root:

- (4) a. gamotkma ‘pronunciation’ (from ‘pronounce’)  
 b. aGniSvna ‘meaning, definition’ (from ‘mean’)  
 c. daCqeba ‘beginning, commencement’ (from ‘begin’)

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