Nominalization and relativization

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Abstract

While there are obvious formal similarities between nominalizations and relative clauses, as in Old Japanese, Lahu (Matisoff 1972), Quechua (Weber 1983), and many other languages, the relationship between the two either has not been pursued to its full extent or has been pursued in a wrongheaded way. For example, the connection between relative clauses and the so-called free relatives in European languages deserves further investigation. Popular typological characterizations of different types of nominalization as "free relatives", "headless relatives", and "internally-headed relatives" point to the second problem. This presentation attempts to accord various types of nominalization their proper positions in grammar and examines the roles they play as both referring expressions and modifiers of nominal heads. Special attention is paid to the problems of coreference involved in relativization, which provide crucial information for the association between the standard relatives and argument nominalizations, on the one hand, and the difference between standard relatives and the so-called internally-headed relatives, on the other.