Nominal-based nominalization

Masayoshi Shibatani and Sung-Yeo Chung
Rice University Osaka University

Contrary to the widely held understandings that nominalization derives nouns from verbs or non-nominal categories (Payne 1997, Malchukov 2004, Yap et al. 2011, etc.), it actually applies to nouns as well (cf. speak > speaker, sing > singer, raid > (Oakland) Raiders; village > villager, left field > left fielder, 49 > (San Francisco) 49ers). This presentation argues for reanalyzing the genitive case or possessive forms (e.g. Latin rēgis ‘of the king’, English his/Ken’s, Japanese Ken no ‘Ken’s, Korean Yenghi-uy ‘Yenghi’s’, Chinese wō de ‘my/mine’) as nominal-based grammatical nominalizations. Evidence adduced for the proposal analysis includes the similarity and parallelism between nominal-based and verbal-based nominalizations in (i) formal marking patterns (Taketomi Ryukyuan [iija nu] ūnu ‘father’s’: [iija nu yumu] ūnu ‘one that father reads’; Korean [Yenghi-uy] kes ‘Yenghi’s’: [cikum pap-ul mek-nun] kes ‘one who is eating a meal now’), (ii) the usage patterns—both have NP-use and modification-use in parallel, and (iii) shared nominal denotation properties—both denote things and thing-like entities metonymically evoked by the base forms. Besides doing away with the category of the genitive case altogether, the proposed analysis of N-based nominalizations sheds light on the origins, developments, and true functions of nominalization markers (so-called Juntaijoshi) such as Japanese no, Ryukyuan si, and Korean kes, which are actually not nominalizers, contrary to the popular analysis that they are.