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### **Nominalization as modification**

This paper examines the role of nominalization in modification in Dënesųłiné, a Northern Athabaskan language. In Dënesųłine, nominalization is the most productive structural device for creating modifiers of nouns: Nominalizations have the combined distribution of adjectives and relative clauses in languages such as English.

I will argue that the reason for this is that the standard semantic mechanism for attributive nominal modifiers, predicate modification, is not used (see Compton 2007). Predicate modification combines two predicates – the modifier and the head noun – into one. This mechanism assumes that nouns are of type  $\langle e,t \rangle$ , predicates, at the stage of attributive modification (syntactically, below D/DP).

In Dënesųłiné, however, there are good reasons to believe that nouns are already of type  $\langle e \rangle$ , entities, when they enter the syntax (Wilhelm 2011, based on Chierchia 1998). Since predicate modification does not apply straightforwardly to entities, the language goes another route: In order to become a nominal modifier, a predicate is nominalized into an expression of type  $\langle e \rangle$ . As a nominal expression (type  $\langle e \rangle$ ), it can modify another noun of type  $\langle e \rangle$  in two constructions available in the language: a possessive construction or an appositive construction.

A study of texts reveals that this highly productive modificational use of nominalizations has been extended from nouns to clauses: Adverbial clauses and parentheticals may also take the form of nominalizations.

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Compton, Richard. 2007. Restrictions on the use of predicate modification in Inuktitut. *Proceedings of WSCLA 12*. Vancouver: UBC Working Papers in Linguistics.

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