On the Position of the Nominalizer in Squamish

Toshhide Nakayama
University of California, Santa Barbara

1. Introduction: Nominalization in Squamish

Squamish has a grammatical morpheme s— which turns a root or a stem into a nominal stem. The resulting stem is nominal in that it can appear with an 'identificatory clitic' (=article) or a demonstrative, and possessive affixes.

(1) a) s-qa'ali <smoke> (A:80)
   b) qa'ali-m 'smoke: INTR'

Nominalization in Squamish is pervasive. It can take a variety of forms as input: not only roots, as in (1), but also derived (intransitivized or transitivized) stems and predicative stems.

(2) a) Derived stems (A:80)
   s-pah-?m? <wind> (A:80)
   s-qahl-n 'messenger' (A:83)

(3) Predicative stems (A:135)
   ?n-s-nm-muy? : -na, -mn PREDICATIVE CLITICS
   1SG-NOM-PRED=PRED=leave
   'then I left'

Formally, the nominalization of lexical stems (roots and derived stems) and that of predicative stems cannot be distinguished: it turns a base into a grammatical noun by attaching the nominalizer s—. However, the stems resulting from these two types of nominalization show different semantic and functional characteristics. This can be illustrated by the following examples.

(A:324)

1) a) na-wa-liq <casual: q-stäm-as k'vi-sc-wa-n-n-c'lc'ap:
   PRED=ask-me-they IRREAL=what-it
   'they asked me what it was, that which was being my work.'
   cf. na-wa-s-c'lc'ap: 'that which was being my work (job)'

2) b) c-n-wa-?a-nšt
   PRED-1SG=PRED=nocturnal
   a=1SG-NOM=PRED=PRED=work
   'I work at night.'
   cf. c-n-c-wa-c'lc'ap: 'my being at work, working'

The final words in these examples contain the same set of morphemes, but the meanings are different. In (3a), where the nominalizer s— has scope only over the root c'lc'ap, the nominalized form refers to the concrete object-like concept, i.e., 'work, job'. On the other hand, in (3b), where the predicative clitics na- and wa- are inside the scope of the nominalizer, the nominalized complex refers to the action of working as a whole. Apparently the way stems are nominalized carries important semantic information, and the relative location of the nominalizer seems to be one of the relevant variants. In this paper, I will examine the semantic and pragmatic properties associated with alternative positions of the nominalizer relative to the predicative clitics, and explore a functional explanation for the association.

I distinguish two nominalization types: INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION and EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION. In INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION (see 3a), the nominalizer is attached to lexical roots or stems, while in EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION (see 3b), it is attached to predicates which contain predicative clitics as well as lexical stems.

II. Data

1. Semantics

The semantic patterns observed in (3a) and (3b) can be seen in other forms in the Kuipers material: INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION implies concrete object-like concepts, while EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION implies facts.

INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION

Forms in (4) are used to refer to the objects rather than expressing the fact or event of borrowing or stealing (B:324-327).

(4) (B:324-327)
   a) s-ka'qar
      NOM-borrow
      'borrowed object'
   b) ?n-s-čam?
      1SG-NOM-steal
      'what I stole'

The same can be said for (5) and (6): the nominals in (5) and (6) refer to the 'victim of my killing' and the 'fish caught (my catch)', respectively, rather than the fact of my killing or of my catching the fish.

(5) na-wa-s-čam
   PRED=1SG-NOM-murder
   'I killed him; he is my victim.'

(6) ?a-č-mu?n
   1SG-NOM-have.caught. (fish)
   'I have caught a lot; My catch is plenty.'
In (7) (see below), the speaker is focusing on the physical damage left by the event of getting hit, rather than the event itself.

In (8) the speaker focuses on the manner of an action and not to the events of 'your telling me'. The nominal in (8) refers to a manner of an action and not to the events of 'your telling me'.

**EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION**

Unlike INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION, nominalized stems which have undergone EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION refer to the event or state as a whole.

- (10) \( k'm-n-s-n-a-t-\tilde{a}-\tilde{n}x=i-t^m \)
  - good =ISG-NOM-PRED=learn-TRANS-ISG this
  - 'lit. (It is) good my having found this out.'
  - 'I'm glad to have found this out.'

- (11) \( na-c'\tilde{u}-w'lt \)
  - PRED=say-3PL =ISG-NOM-PRED=be.audible
  - 'they said that they heard me (lit. my being audible).'

- (12) \( c-n\tilde{x}-\tilde{n}x \)
  - PRED=see-TRANS =ISG-NOM-PRED=be.a.s
  - 'I saw him coming down'

- (13) \( n-a-w=m=t\tilde{i}m \)
  - PRED=INTER=be.like =ISG-NOM-PRED=be.arrested the=Peter
  - 'Is it true that Peter was arrested?'

- (14) \( na-\tilde{x}-\tilde{i} \)
  - PRED=stop =ISG-NOM-PRED=be.write
  - 'He stopped writing.'

- (15) \( na-t-\tilde{x}-\tilde{n}a=m \)
  - PRED=be.how.much =ISG-NOM-PRED=be.there
  - 'lit. how (much) was it as regards its being long, his being there (=absent)'

Although examples of EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION do occur, they are limited in number and in the type of predicative clitics which the nominal complex can contain. The limitation on predicative clitics can be accounted for by the nature of nominalization as a process for changing more verb-like concepts into noun-like ones. In Kuiipers' examples externally nominalized complexes contain predicative clitics which concretize events, such as the factual na-, or stabilize events, such as the continuative wa-. This skewing would be predicted from the fact that nouns prototypically denote entities or states which have stable continuity over time (cf. Hopper & Thompson 1984): both na- and wa- are compatible with the features of 'noun-ness'.

**Summary of semantics**

As we have seen above, INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION is associated with more concrete 'object-like' concepts, while EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION is associated with more factual concepts. This semantic difference reflects the scope difference between INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION and EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION. In INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION, the only element contained within the scope of the nominalizer is a basic lexical stem. This explains why INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION tends to express specific concepts, like objects or entities. On the other hand, EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION contains a lexical stem and predicative clitics, i.e., reference to events or states, and thus the nominalized words refer to facts as wholes, not simply the participants or objects.

### 2. Syntactic Function

INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION and EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION also differ in the syntactic functions they serve. The syntactic function of stems derived through INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION is intr-clausal. By contrast, nominal stems built by EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION can serve inter-clausal functions. In (16), nominalized stems express the background context, i.e., time, reason, etc., for the main part of the sentences. This function of EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION seems to be comparable to that of English subordination.

\[ (16) \]

a) \( a-NOM=be.there-PRED=3SG-PRED=be.warm \)
  - a=ISG-NOM-PRED=be.warm
  - 'It would be good if you came and helped while it (bear) is still warm, because it is easy to carry when it is still warm.'

b) \( a-NOM=be.there-PRED=3SG-PRED=be.warm \)
  - a=ISG-NOM-PRED=be.warm
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\[ (16) \]
EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION is also used in building up the narrative line.

\( (17) \) (A: 80)
\[
\text{cat} = \text{mm} = \text{n}\text{mm} = \text{c}\text{t} = \text{c1} = \text{m},
\]
\[
PRED = \text{IPL} = \text{PRED} = \text{approach} \quad \text{PRED} = \text{PRED} = \text{go} = \text{approach}
\]
\[
\text{s-n-s-n} = \text{mm} = \text{k}\text{ym}, \quad \text{s-n-s-n} = \text{mm} = \text{n}\text{mm} = \text{x}\text{1} = \text{t} = \text{an}.
\]
\[
\text{ISG-NOM-PRED} = \text{PRED} = \text{go} = \text{ashore} \quad \text{ISG-NOM-PRED} = \text{PRED} = \text{go} = \text{stakl} = \text{ISG}
\]

'If we approached and went up close, then we went ashore and sneaked up on it.'

The difference illustrated here reflects the difference in functional domain. Nominalization is a concept formation process which helps in packaging fragmentary information into a unitary concept. Although this basic function is the same across the different types of nominalization, the domain of the function is different between INTERNAL and EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION. INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION is a 'thing'-level process, used to form and organize 'thing'-level concepts. The way 'thing'-level concepts are organized is important only within one event or state, and it does not have any relevance to concept organization in other events or states. On the other hand, EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION manipulates 'fact'-level concepts, and has relevance in how facts, which are expressed in the form of clauses, are organized.

3. Lexicalization

The difference between the two nominalization types can also be observed in a difference in susceptibility to lexicalization. In INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION, we can find many examples of lexicalization.

\( (18) \) (A: 80)
\[
\text{s-yac} = \text{m} '\text{news}' \quad (\text{yac} = \text{m} '\text{to tell}')
\]
\[
\text{s-nlcm} '\text{speech, word, language}' \quad (\text{nlcm} '\text{spoken: INTR}')
\]
\[
\text{s-tlqim} '\text{breast}' \quad (\text{tlqim} '\text{nurse, take the breast}')
\]
\[
\text{s-c\text{\-\text{a}}} '\text{messenger}' \quad (\text{c\text{-a}} '\text{send: TR}')
\]
\[
\text{s-taq} '\text{water}' \quad (\text{taq} '\text{to drink}')
\]
\[
\text{s-na? '\text{naam}' (\text{na? 'to call}')}
\]
\[
\text{s-\text{\-\text{a}}} '\text{desire, thing wanted} (\text{:\text{a} 'to be dear}')
\]

There are also examples of more advanced lexicalization, where the nominalized stems have acquired totally independent status in the lexicon through loss of their unmarked counterpart: s:\text{\-ic} 'meat', s:\text{\-i} 'flesh', s:\text{\-i} 'slingshot', s:\text{\-i} 'stick for digging clams', st\text{\-kw} 'child', s\text{\-\text{\-a}} 'man' (all examples are from A: 80), etc.

In EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION, on the contrary, lexicalization is totally absent. This difference in susceptibility to lexicalization reflects the difference in closeness between the nominalizer and the root. In INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION, where the nominalizer is close to the stem in terms of physical location and of 'relevance', there is better chance for the nominalized stem to have a specialized meaning and to acquire independent lexical status. However, in EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION, the relation between the nominalizer and the root is indirect. The two elements are separated by other elements and the semantic impact of the nominalizer on the root is minimal. Thus, there is less motivation in EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION for lexicalization involving the nominalizer and the root.

As for lexicalization which involves nominalization, the degree of semantic effect of the nominalization on the lexical stem (INTERNAL NOMINALIZATION) and that of predicative stems (EXTERNAL NOMINALIZATION) suggests that the internal/external distinction in nominalization may not be fully productive synchronically in the sense that the speaker may not take advantage of the alternatives. Nonetheless, this systematic differentiation should be considered as a part of the grammar of Squamish; it is one of internal functional forces shaping the appearance of the grammar.

The regular difference associated with the relative position of the nominalizer in the nominalized complex has important implications for the study of the morphological structure of human languages in general. Very interestingly, our observations about the alternative ordering of the nominalizer and formation in what Bybee (1985) says about the order of elements in verbal morphology. According to Bybee, the order of elements correlates with the degree of semantic effect of the element on the base (RELEVANCE PRINCIPLE) and with the degree of semantic generality of the element: the more semantic effect it has on the base and the more specific (less general) meaning it has, the closer the element is put in relation to the base. Although Bybee's principles are intended for the synchronic static order of elements in the morphological complex, they fit the facts about alternative ordering, either through diachrony or in synchronic grammar, of the morpheme in the complex. The relative position of an element is not free from 'functional pressure', and this pressure shapes the way the morphological complex is built up through time and at the moment of speaking.

References


9 'Relevance' in the sense defined by Bybee (1985): 'A meaning element is relevant to another meaning element if the semantic content of the first directly affects or modifies the semantic content of the second.' (p.13; emphasis original)