

**Noun incorporation as a marginal transitivity-related
phenomenon in Indo-European (and beyond),
or How to distinguish between noun incorporation and
nominal composition**
(a diachronic typological perspective)

Leonid Kulikov

Ghent University

Abstract

In this paper I will discuss the diachronic aspects of noun incorporation as a low transitivity phenomenon, concentrating on evidence from Indo-European languages. I determine canonical noun incorporation as a particular productive type of compounding in which a verb (V) and a noun (N) combine to form a new verb. The paper focuses, in particular, on the full verbhood of the V component and of the entire compound, thus distinguishing canonical noun incorporation from nominal compounds derived from deverbal nouns. It will be demonstrated that, although noun incorporation is unusual for the Indo-European linguistic type, it can be found in some Germanic languages (in particular, in Frisian) and in late Sanskrit. I will argue that one possible scenario of the emergence of noun incorporation is based on the expansion of nominal compounds derived from deverbal nouns (i.e. formations outside the verbal paradigm properly speaking) to non-finite forms belonging to the periphery of the paradigm, such as converbs or infinitives. In the event when this compounding is further extended to finite forms, which form the core of the verbal paradigm, we observe the emergence of the full-fledged canonical noun incorporation. This generalization is further corroborated by evidence from some non-Indo-European languages (Quechua, Old Tamil).