Reflexive Nominal Compounds

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Reflexive compounds like *self-assessment* in English or *zi-ài* ‘self-love, self-respect’ in Mandarin Chinese have rarely been analyzed in individual languages and even less so from a comparative perspective. Based on a sample of ten languages, this chapter presents a detailed analysis of the salient properties of such compounds in the languages under comparison: their derivation, their argument structure, their meanings, their productivity as well as their categorical properties. Reflexive compounds are typically combinations of event nominalizations of transitive verbs and intensifiers like *self-* in English or *sam(o)*- in Russian and thus manifest a reflexive meaning and a reduced argument structure. From a semantic perspective at least two types can be distinguished, depending on the use of the underlying intensifiers. It is also shown that languages may differ with respect to the intensifiers used in these compounds (one in English, two in German and Finnish, a loanword in French) in the type of nominalizations used as input (event vs. agentive nominalization) and the categorical output (N, ADJ, V1) of the relevant compounding processes.

Key words: reflexive, compounds, intensifiers, nominalizations, parameters of variation, argument structure, semantic analysis

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1 The following abbreviations are used: ADJ (adjective), DP (determinal phrase), INSTR (instrumental), INT (intensive), N (noun), NEG (negative), NOM (nominative), REF (reflexive), SG (singular), V (verb).