

# Conceptual bases and structural correlates of government

Christian Lehmann

University of Erfurt

## **Abstract**

Like all grammatical relations, government has a two-fold basis, viz. in the cognitive and communicative functions fulfilled by language and in the formal properties of semiotic objects, viz. distributional properties that allow them to combine according to rules. Specifically, the former basis of government is conceptual relationality, while the latter is that kind of exocentricity which results from non-recursiveness of the combination of a head with its dependent.

Government between a regens and a rectum may be mediated by an intervening item which combines a governing relation with a relation of a different kind. This intervening item may be a case relator (CR) or a cross-reference marker (RM). In the constellation [ regens [ CR rectum ] ], the case relator directly governs the rectum and passes this government upwards to the regens. In the constellation [ [ regens RM ] rectum ], the cross-reference marker is directly governed by the regens and passes government downwards to the rectum. Through grammaticalization, the mediate government relation becomes immediate, and such intervening items become mere markers of government.