

Summary

In this study, Arabic and German relative clauses are discussed in order to enlighten the interrelation between form and function of constructions in typologically different languages.

This purpose requires a continuous reflected method of language comparison (§ 1.1.1). Because of the diglossia of spoken and written language in Arabic areas, only written actions in both languages are compared to one another. An overview of both the most important typological traits of Arabic (§ 1.2.2) as well as of the autochthonous Arabic grammar (§ 1.2.3) is also provided.

Beginning with the depiction of the relative clause in German and Arabic grammars (§ 2.1 relative clause in German, § 2.2 relative clause in Arabic) the subject of research is then narrowed to those subordinate clauses that are attributive to a noun in a superordinate construction.

Taking into consideration new concepts such as Universal Grammar, Functional Grammar and Functional Typology, it becomes clear that an appropriate analysis of linguistic forms must also consider the mental processing linked with these forms. Such an objective requires a theoretical approach, by means of which smallest linguistic units can be comprehended not only functionally but also formally as purposeful units of action, i.e. as linguistic procedures. Such an approach can be found in Functional Pragmatics, whose central arguments are presented here (§ 3).

Through a procedural analysis it is shown that German so-called relative pronouns do not represent a noun (and are not to be considered as pro-nouns *stricto sensu*). Therefore it is argued that the traditional term *relative pronoun* should be replaced by the expression *relativum* (§ 4.1). The action characteristics of the relativa *der, die, das* (§ 4.1.1) and *welcher, welche, welches* (§ 4.1.2) are then ascertained as paraphoric procedures that create a connection of a special kind to a noun in the superordinate construction. In contrast, the relativa *wo* (§ 4.1.3), or *wer* and *was* (§ 4.1.4) trigger on the part of the listener/reader a mental search procedure for pieces of knowledge, from which the propositional content of the introduced subordinate clause can be determined through the predicate. From this hypothesis it can be drawn that subordinate clauses introduced by *wo, wer* and *was* should be differentiated from relative clauses. Furthermore, typological means contained in the relative clause, as well as the position of the relative clause contained in the superordinate construction, are analysed in their role during the mental processing of relative clauses (§ 4.2).

Since the realization of the relativum in Arabic depends on the determiner of the noun referred to, it is first worked out that attributing determined, semantically seemingly saturated nouns requires more linguistic processes than attributing the non-determined nouns (§ 5.1.1). It can then be explained that the German relativum does not have an equivalent in Arabic, and why this is so (§ 5.1.2). Therefore, for the Arabic relativum the term of the traditional Arabic grammarians 'ism mausūl إسم مو صول is to be preferred.

One procedure that can, however, be compared to German is the connection of the relative clause to the superordinate noun. This occurs in Arabic by means of a phoric procedure, that is realized either through the finite verb or through a suffixed anaphoric expression (§ 5.1.3).

The purpose of the 'ism mausūl إسم مو صول is to make the listener's/reader's knowledge of a determined, semantically saturated noun accessible again. This in turn allows the proposition of the following relative clause to be processed as an integral part of the semantic extension of this noun (§ 5.1.4). After it has been shown that the na't sababī نعت سببي is an attributive participle construction and not - as often assumed by European grammarians - an attributive subordinate clause (§ 5.2), the topological means of connection to attributive relative clauses are discussed (§ 5.3). From the results, it can also be maintained for Arabic that, second to the Position of the relative clause contained in the superordinate construction, the internal topological means of the relative clause guides the mental processing of attributive relative clauses.

In Arabic and German the connection of the relative clause to its related noun is therefore controlled by a combination of various linguistic procedures the architecture of which depends on the type of language. In which way these procedures are combined, and how the language-specific combinations of them occur, is illustrated by an action-theoretical analysis through a catalogue of approximately 400 German and Arabic examples.