

FALLING BETWEEN THE CHAIRS: ARE CLASSIFYING ADJECTIVE+NOUN COMPLEXES LEXICAL OR SYNTACTIC FORMATIONS?

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The present talk aims at clarifying the lexical/syntactic status of nominal phrases hosting Classifying Adjectives (ClassAs, henceforth) in Polish. Such modifiers seem to defy various adjective classifications proposed in literature, by not strictly conforming to any of the proposed adjectival classes, such as (i) classificatory vs. thematic adjectives in Bosque & Picallo 1996; (ii) qualifying vs. classifying adjectives in Rutkowski & Progovac 2005; (iii) direct vs. indirect modifiers in Cinque 1994 and later; (iv) subsecutive vs. intersective in Partee 2009, 2010, ao.

In our talk we will show that ClassAs form a heterogeneous class and can be further subdivided according to different criteria. For instance, derivationally we may distinguish between primary and derived (or denominal) ClassAs (e.g., *panda wielka*, "a great panda" vs. *las iglasty* "a coniferous forest"). Those that are derived, in turn, may be sub-divided into thematic and non-thematic depending on the nature of N (e.g., *przewozy pasażerskie*, "passenger transportation" vs. *samoloty pasażerskie*, "passenger planes"). Though often claimed to resist reiteration and be confined to a unique postN position (cf. Rutkowski & Progovac, *ibid.*), many ClassAs do appear pronominally (1b) and can form multiple strings of modifiers (2) (cf. Cetnarowska, Pysz & Trugman (CP&T) 2008, 2009) still retaining their classifying nature:

- (1) a. służba **dyplomatyczna** "diplomatic service" (ClassA)
b. **dyplomatyczna** służba Watykanu "Vatican's diplomatic service" (ClassA)
c. jego **dyplomatyczne** zabiegi "his tactful steps" (QualA)
- (2) a. mundur **wojskowy brytyjski** "British military uniform" (multiple ClassAs)

Neither do ClassAs conform to the direct-indirect modifiers classification proposed in Cinque (*ibid.*)—falling in between the chairs with respect to their gradability, ability to take adverbials, complements/adjuncts, to participate in relative clause expansion, etc. Yet, irrespective of the multifaceted nature of ClassAs, we will claim that they exhibit common properties allowing for their treatment as a uniform class of modifiers. On the other hand, we will argue that the ClassA-N complexes fall into three distinct groups—(i) lexical units proper (e.g. *biały kruk*, crow white "a rarity", *kura domowa*, hen house_{ADJ}, "a housewife"); (ii) hybrid lexical/syntactic units ("tight predicates" proposed in CP&T, *ibid.*, as in (1a)); and (iii) syntactic units, as in (1b). It will be shown that ClassA-N complexes of the first group (i) do not participate in N ellipsis (a correlate of the pro-form *one* test in English), NP-splits of various kinds (cf. Nowak 2000), nor function as primary or secondary predicates without the loss of idiomatic meaning, as in (3), whereby *kury domowe* is interpreted as domesticated chickens, not as housewives.

- (3) a. Nie znalazłem dzikich kur, były tylko **domowe**.
"I haven't found wild chickens, there were only domesticated (ones)."
b. **Domowych** nie znalazłem kur.
domestic not found_{1SG.MASC} hens_{GEN} "I haven't found domesticated chickens."
c. Kury były **domowe**. hens were domestic "The chickens were domesticated ones."

Thus, such ClassA+N complexes exhibit the prototypical behavior of lexical compounds. In contrast, N+ClassA complexes (called "tight units" in CP&T, *ibid.*), demonstrate mixed behavior with respect to the tests in illustrated in (3), with some ClassAs (shown in (4)) participating in all the constructions in (3); while others—not (see (5)).

- (4) a. Kupiłam bilet na pociąg pośpieszny, a nie **osobowy**.

- "I bought a ticket for a fast train, not for a slow/passenger one."
- b. Nawet **osobowym** bym pociągiem dojechał tam szybciej niż ty swoim starym autem.
"Even by a slow train I'd go there faster than you in your old car."
- c. Pociąg był **osobowy**. "The train was a slow one."
- (5) a. #Nawet **kulturalnego** bym nie zatrudnił referenta.¹
"I wouldn't even hire a well-mannered clerk."
- b. #Referent był **kulturalny**. "The clerk was a well-mannered one."

This behavior of Polish ClassA-N complexes (illustrated in (3)-(5) above) resembles that of English A-N constructions with "associative adjectives" (e.g. *dental decay*, *bovine disease*), which have been claimed by Giegerich (2005) to have a hybrid status: "their structural characteristics identify them as objects of the lexicon, while at the same time they may behave as though they are syntactic constructions" (ibid.: 572). The hybrid nature of N-ClassA constructions is supported by some word-formation processes in Polish, e.g. "univerbation", wherein a suffixal derivative is coined from a ClassA preserving the meaning of the ClassA+N complex, implying that the whole complex underlies a lexical derivation:

- (6) a. łódź **żaglowa**, boat sail_{ADJ} → żaglówka "a (small) sailing boat"
b. sklep **warzywny**, shop vegetable_{ADJ} → warzywniak "a grocery store"

We will show that the proposed tripartite classification of Polish ClassA-N complexes finds cross-linguistic support in the realm of possessive satellites of N (cf. Taylor 1996 for English and Trugman 2007 for Russian):

- (7) a. **kocie** łby, cat_{POSS.ADJ} heads, "cobblestones" possessive idioms
b. **kocia** karma, cat_{POSS.ADJ} food, "food for cats" non-idiomatic possessive modifier
c. **koci** ogon, cat_{POSS.ADJ} tail, "cat's tail" argumental possessive

To conclude, we will argue that irrespective of a particular class that a ClassA belongs to, ClassA+N complexes in Polish fall into several distinct groups exhibiting properties that may classify them as purely lexical or syntactic formations, or as hybrids of the two above. This phenomenon has cross-linguistic correlates in other languages and supports the overlap between the lexicon and syntax proposed in Giegerich (ibid).

Selected References:

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- Giegerich, H. 2005. "Associative adjectives in English and the lexicon-syntax interface". *Journal of Linguistics* 41: 571-591.
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¹ The sign # indicates readings infelicitous under the classificatory interpretation of *kulturalny* 'related to culture', yet felicitous in the QualA reading 'well-mannered, polite'.