

## ATTITUDINAL ADJECTIVES IN ENGLISH AND POLISH

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The task of the present paper is to classify attitudinal adjectives in English and Polish, present their syntactic features, and compare the relations between attitudinal adjectives of these two languages. The model which will be followed in the paper is that of Fillmore's as described in the article "The Case for Case" (cf. Fillmore 1968) and modified by D. Terrence Langendoen (1969) and Ekkehard König (1970). The cases which have been found useful in the description of these languages and which will be most often used here are the following:

- Agent (A) — the animate perceived instigator of the action identified by the verb.
- Objective (O) — the semantically most neutral role, the case of any noun whose role in the action or state identified by the verb is identified by the semantic interpretation of the verb itself.
- Experiencer (E) — the entity which receives, accepts, experiences or undergoes the effect of an action.
- Instrument (I) — the immediate cause.

(cf. König 1970: 61)

The formations taken into consideration here are the following:

- 1) Equi NP Deletion — which deletes the NP in the embedded sentence identical to the Np of the matrix sentence.
- 2) Subject Raising Transformation — which raises the subject NP of the embedded into the matrix sentence and makes it the derived subject of the whole complex structure.

3) **Extraposition Transformation** — which copies a clause at the end of a clause in which it is contained and deletes the original clause or replaces it by a pronoun "it" (in English).

Let us analyse English attitudinal adjectives to show their syntactic and semantic peculiarities. We shall adopt Ekkehard König's manner of presentation from his description of English and German attitudinal adjectives in "Adjectival Constructions in English and German. A Contrastive Analysis." (1970).

The class of English attitudinal adjectives consists of such items as following: *careless, clever, crazy, absurd, foolish, mean, silly, (un)wise, rude, polite, sensible, mad, stupid, noble, naive, rash, perceptive, bold, civil, ungrateful, honest, just*; all of them judging or describing human behaviour. Two more could be added: *false* and *splendid* but the imperatives of these are very odd.

Attitudinal adjectives may occur in imperatives:

- E1. Be honest!  
E2. Don't be stupid!

They can also co-occur with the progressive aspect of the present tense:

- E3. John is being ungrateful.

The above examples show that attitudinal adjectives have Agent as one of their arguments. This argument is realized as John in the series of the examples below. These, at the same time, are the constructions which define the class of attitudinal adjectives in English.

- E4a. It was rude of John for him to insult me in front of all these people.  
E4b. It was rude of John that he insulted me in front of all these people.  
E4c. It was rude of John to insult me in front of all these people.  
E4d. Insulting me in front of all these people was rude of John.  
E4e. It was rude for John to insult me in front of all these people.  
E4f. John was rude to insult me in front of all these people.  
E4g. John rudely insulted me in front of all these people.

Attitudinal adjectives have certain selectional properties. They may choose Agent as one of their arguments. The embedded clause in the above sentences may be analysed as Objectives. Experiencer may be another argument that can be selected by attitudinal adjectives.

- E5. She was very unkind to me.

Two subgroups of attitudinal adjectives may be distinguished. Adjectives

like *wise* or *bold* are two place predicates and may combine with Agents and Objectives. Their argument structure is represented as follows:

wise [— (A $\bar{\bar{O}}$ )] (cf. König 1970: 78)

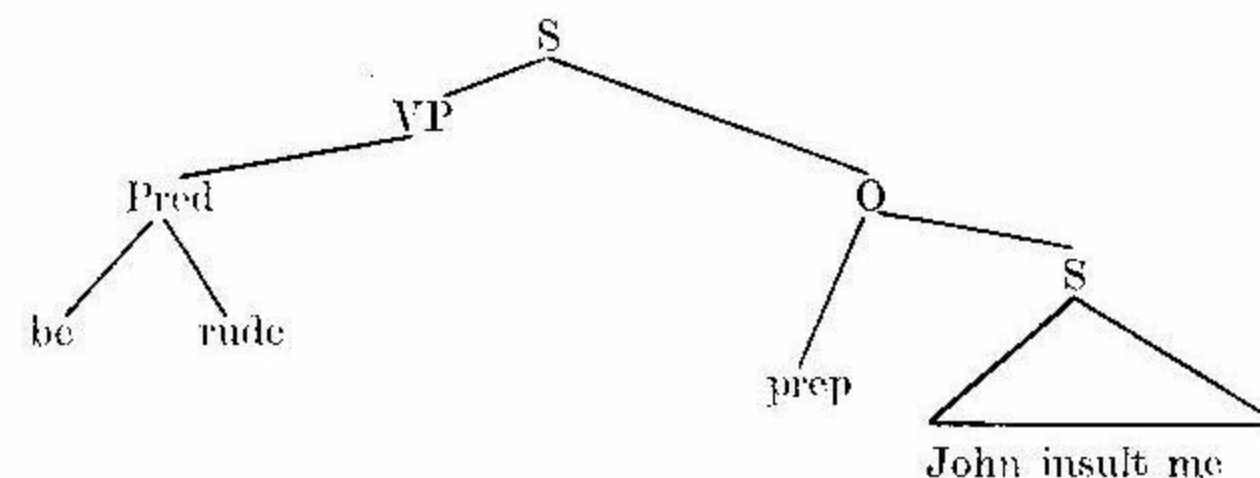
Whether or not A is optional depends on the choice of Equi NP Deletion or Subject Raising in the deep analysis of, let us say, E4f. The interlocking parentheses mean that at least one element in the parentheses must be selected though both may be. Noun phrases with the function Objective must be rewritten as S, as is the case in the embedded sentences in E 4.

According to König adjectives which involve a certain "moral" component such as *mean, nasty* could be analysed as three-place predicates. In his opinion however, they cannot combine with three arguments. On the other hand examples such as

John was mean to me to insult me in front of all those people.

show that there are grammatical sentences in which adjectives like *mean* or *nasty* can combine with three arguments their order being as follows: AEO.

The sentences listed under E4 have undergone certain transformations. In E4a, b, c, d and e the Objective has been subjectivalized; E4a, b, c and e have undergone Extraposition; in E4a and b the second NP John has been pronominalized, E4c and d are the result of the Equi NP deletion. In E4a and E4c the For — to complementizer has been introduced. We may assume that no Agent has been selected for the matrix sentence in the underlying structure of E4f.



E4f could also be derived from this underlying structure by means of Subject Raising transformation, where the subject NP John of the embedded sentence becomes the subject of the whole complex sentence.

If we assume that in E4f the Agent has been chosen as subject instead of assuming that the Agent is unspecified, we shall avoid the possible difference in meaning between E4f and the preceding sentences. Otherwise we can assume that E4f implied that John was unaware of his rude action or that he did not intend it.

Word order, however, is a matter of secondary importance since it is a surface structure phenomenon.

As in English or German, there are three-place predicate attitudinal adjectives in Polish. They may co-occur with Agents, Experiencers and Objectives. In Polish, as in English, there is a specific construction in which all the three arguments may be selected:

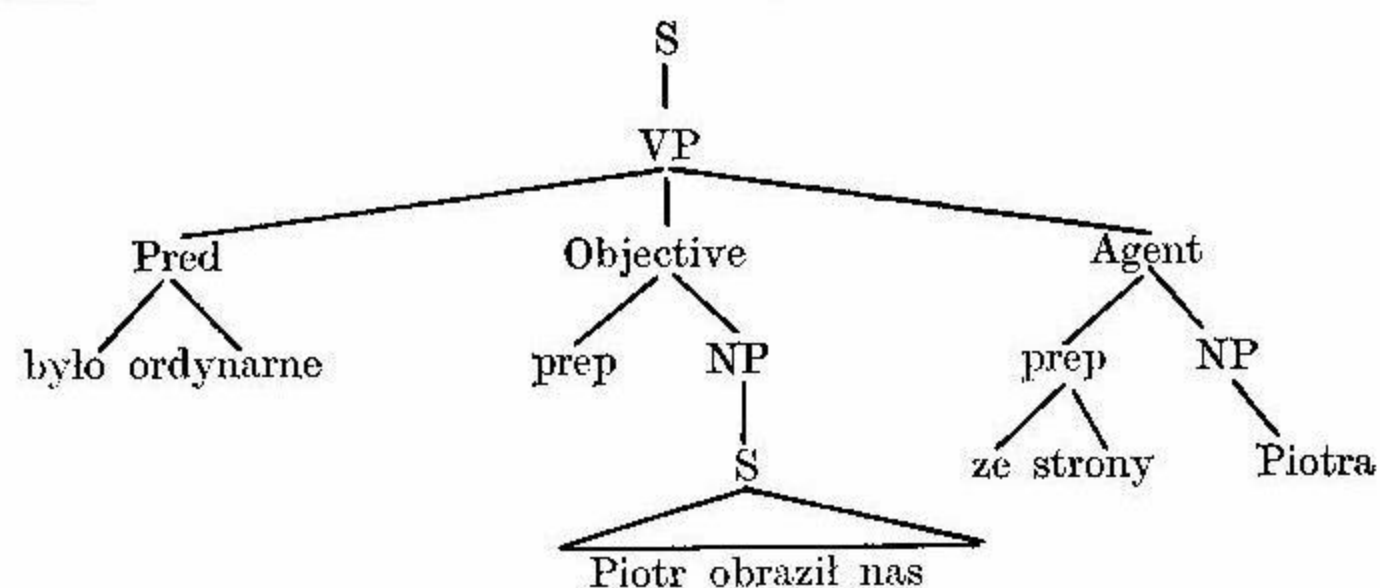
P8. Piotr był ordynarny wobec mnie obrazając mnie przy nich wszystkich. In both the languages, however, adjectives like *wise* and *bold* or *rozsądny* are restricted from realizing three arguments:

P9. rozsądny [-(A)(O)]

All the examples of the constructions in which the attitudinal adjectives may occur in Polish are similar or even equivalent as far as meaning is concerned. The only minor difference that can be noticed in conveying information is that between P2f. and the rest of P2.. Examples P2a, b, c, d, and e could hardly serve as a means of informing somebody that *Piotr* was rude to us. This is assumed beforehand. Only sentence P2f. conveys this as something new.

Since all these examples are paraphrases of a certain underlying structure it might be worthwhile to derive them from one structure. The underlying structure for sentences like P2a, b, c, d, e may be represented as follows:

Ph I.



The question may arise as to whether the impersonal or personal construction should be taken as basic and what is the direction of the derivation. P.S. Rosenbaum's theory would be best applicable to Polish since in Polish, as well as in German, attitudinal adjectives can be nominalized in impersonal constructions but not in personal ones:

P10a. Było niegrzeczne z jej strony spóźnić się tak bardzo.

P10b. Było brakiem grzeczności z jej strony spóźnić się tak bardzo.

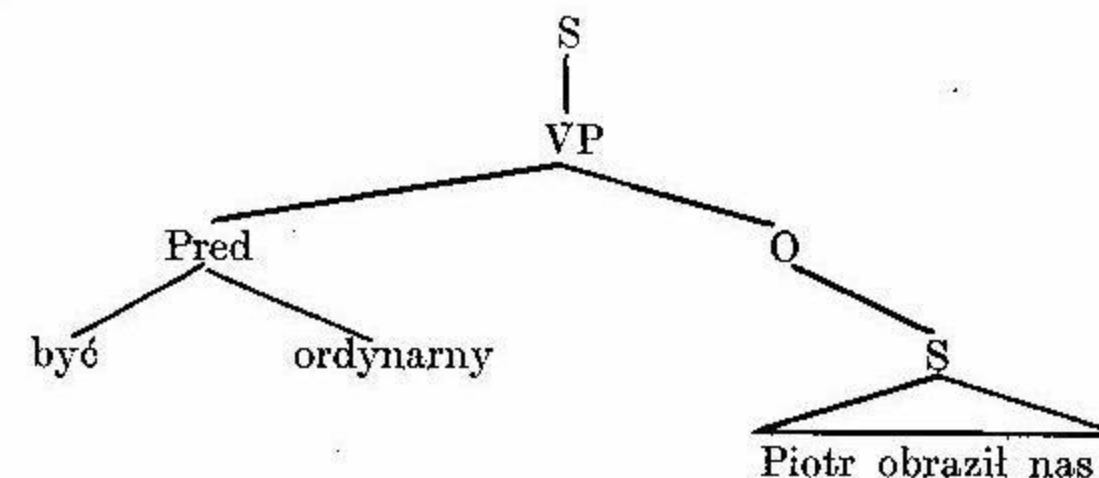
In Polish sentences P2a, b and c the Agent has been subjectivalized and the sentences have undergone Extraposition.

In a Polish sentence with an emotive predicate like P2. there is a possibility of substituting a participle for the construction *że+S* (i.e. *that+S*) with no change in the meaning of such a sentence. Both solutions are possible because the sentences are derived from the same construction, cf. examples P2d and e.

In E4b the second occurrence of the noun phrase *John* has been pronominalized, whereas in Polish it is impossible for reasons of style.

If the phrase marker Ph I undergoes Equi NP Deletion we will get sentences like P2b and c.

Ph II.



If we apply Subject-Raising Transformation to this underlying structure we may get sentences like P2e. Subject-Raising Transformation raises the subject NP of the embedded sentence into the matrix sentence and makes it the derived subject of the whole complex structure. This transformation occurs fairly often in Polish. This might, however, change the meaning of P2e. since the NP *Piotr* is moved out of an underlying Objective, and there is no Agent in the matrix sentence. One would expect *Piotr* to be unaware of the fact that he was rude. But there is no difference in meaning between e and the rest of the examples, so we can assume that Agent in this sentence has been chosen as subject. The other solution would be to assume that no Agent has been selected for the matrix in the underlying structure. The first possibility, however, is preferable and the transformations applied to Agent in the course of derivation are: Subjectivalization and Equi NP Deletion.

In Polish the order of priority for subjectivalization is A, O since impersonal constructions are much rarer in Polish than in English.

Sentences like P2f. are derived from coordinated structures like the following:

P11. Piotr obraził nas i to było ordynarne z jego strony.

*to* is the result of a prosententialization and corresponds to English *that*.

Containing information *Piotr obraził nas* and a comment *to było ordynarne z jego strony*, the sentence is a paraphrase of *P2f*. If it undergoes relativization, we will get:

P12. *Piotr obraził nas, co było ordynarne z jego strony.*

The Polish examples *P2* from *a* to *e* show that there is a great deal of correspondence between English and Polish as far as these constructions are concerned. It is, however, not always possible when considering a construction of this type with a certain adjective in one language to predict that the respective construction with the lexical equivalent of that adjective will be acceptable in the other language. In both the languages there are irregularities in the distribution of the lexical items that occur in these constructions. Some adjectives may occur only in personal constructions (*zły, oszukany*) other only in impersonal ones (*nieprawdopodobny, niewytłumaczalny*). Incongruity may exist between structural correspondence and lexical correspondence between two languages even in case of two formally very similar constructions. Sentences *P2f* and *E4g* may serve as the example. They are formally similar but in English attitudinal adverbs precede the verb, and in this respect differ from adverbs of manner which usually follow intransitive verbs.

E13a. *John generously contributed.*

E13b. *John contributed generously.*

In Polish, however, since the word order is less strict than in English, the corresponding adverbs follow the main verb and the indirect object, or they may occupy the initial position. They also resemble sentence adverbs and may cause structural ambiguity, e.g.

P13a. *Jan szczerze zapłacił robotnikom.*

P13b. *Jan zapłacił robotnikom szczerze.*

P13c. *Szczerze zapłacił Jan robotnikom.*

This may either be interpreted as manner or attitudinal adverbs. If there is only one interpretation possible in such cases this will probably be due to certain selectional restrictions between verbs and those two types of adverbs which are not understood adequately at present.

In Polish almost all attitudinal adjectives can form adverbs, and what follows, almost all of them are permissible in constructions like *P7*. The only exception is a small group of adjectives expressing the state of mind: *szalony*, (as opposed to "*szaleńczy*"), *postrzelony*, *wrażliwy*, *rozeźlony*, *rozwścieczony*.

In Polish as well as in English we can find adjectives in the initial position equivalent semantically to attitudinal disjuncts.

P14. *Dziwne to właśnie on marzył, żeby tam pojechać.*

Three groups may be distinguished here:

(i) It is ADJECTIVE BASE (that) CLAUSE

P14a. *Dziwne, że on zawsze marzył, żeby tam pojechać.*

P14b. *Dziwnie, że on zawsze marzył, żeby tam pojechać.*

but

P14c. *On dziwnie zawsze marzył, żeby tam pojechać.*

(ii) What is ADJECTIVE, CLAUSE

may be represented in Polish by

P14d. *Co dziwne, to właśnie on marzył ...*

which may come from

P14e. *Co wydaje się dziwne, to właśnie on marzył ...*

with *wydaje się* deleted.

(iii) What is ADJECTIVE is (that) CLAUSE

P14f. *Co (jest) dziwne to to, że marzył aby tam pojechać.*

*Co jest dziwne* may also appear in the final position and correspond to English *which is strange*:

P14g. *To właśnie on marzył, żeby tam pojechać co {jest  
wydaje się} dziwne.*

Adjectives in the comparative degrees may also occur in clauses as groups equivalent to attitudinal disjuncts:

P14h. *Co dziwniejsze, marzył, żeby tam pojechać.*

Let us now sum up the similarities and differences between English and Polish attitudinal adjectives.

1. English attitudinal adjectives co-occur with the Progressive Aspect of the Present Tense. There is no Progressive Aspect in Polish.
2. In both the languages attitudinal adjectives may occur in imperatives.
3. Both English and Polish attitudinal adjectives have certain selectional properties. They may choose Agents, Objectives and Experiencers as their arguments.
4. In Polish and in English attitudinal adjectives may be two- or three-place predicates.
5. As far as the term "subject" referring to underlying structures is concerned, there are two theories discussing the direction of the derivation of personal and impersonal constructions in English. In Polish P. S. Rosenbaum's theory is more applicable: personal constructions are derived from impersonal ones.

6. In both the languages constructions resulting from the application of Subject Raising transformation are fairly common.
7. The order of priority for subjectivalization in the case of attitudinal adjectives is O, A in English. In Polish it is A, O since the impersonal constructions are not so commonly used, as they are in English.
8. In both the languages attitudinal adjectives form two groups of which one can occur in personal constructions while the other occurs only in impersonal constructions.
9. There are only subsets of the set of attitudinal adjectives which permit the formation of adverbs in both the languages.

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