

A contrastive analysis of prepositional post-copular Multi Word Units in French, Norwegian and Polish

Authors:

Agnieszka Kaliska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland
Harald Ulland, University of Bergen, Norway

Theoretical background

- The typical constituent appearing in the post-copular position of a copular clause is normally an **adjective phrase** or a **noun phrase**:
 - John is very intelligent
 - John is a teacher
- But we can also have a **prepositional phrase (PP)** in this position:
 - John is on his high horse
- A PP occurring in this position will very often be a MWU, having many semantic characteristics in common with a simple adjective or an adjective phrase.

Following Danlos (1988), Gross (1996) and Machonis (1988), we will consider the copula of such clauses as a "support verb", and the PP as a prepositional predicate.

	PL	NO	FR	PL	NO	FR
Literal meaning for three sentences	Max jest w siódym niebie	Max er i den syvende himmel	Max est au septième ciel	Max is in the seventh heaven	Max is in the seventh heaven	Max is very happy
Actual meaning for three sentences	Max is very happy	Max is very happy	Max is very happy	Max is in the seventh heaven	Max is in the seventh heaven	Max is very happy
Syntactic manipulations	(1) *Kilka dni temu, w którym jest Max (2) *Max jest w (siódmym / siódmym niebie) (3) *Max jest tam / jest w nim	(1) *Max er i den syvende himmel som Max er i (2) *Max er i den syvende himmel (3) *Max er der	(1) *Max est au septième ciel (2) *Max est au septième / septième ciel (3) *Max y est	(1) *Kilka dni temu, w którym jest Max (2) *Max jest w (siódmym / siódmym niebie) (3) *Max jest tam / jest w nim	(1) *Max er i den syvende himmel som Max er i (2) *Max er i den syvende himmel (3) *Max er der	(1) *Max est au septième ciel (2) *Max est au septième / septième ciel (3) *Max y est
				(1) *Kilka dni temu, w którym jest Max (2) *Max jest w (siódmym / siódmym niebie) (3) *Max jest tam / jest w nim	(1) *Max er i den syvende himmel som Max er i (2) *Max er i den syvende himmel (3) *Max er der	(1) *Max est au septième ciel (2) *Max est au septième / septième ciel (3) *Max y est

NLP background

- Prepositional predicates have been included in the manually constructed electronic dictionary for French in the *Unitex corpus processor*.
- They are POS-marked as **adjectives (A)**, and they are also subcategorized according to formal complexity.
- We would like to include MWUs of this kind also in the **Norwegian** and the **Polish dictionaries of Unitex**. In doing so, we want to use the same criteria of selection for the three languages.
- Furthermore, we want to investigate the possibility of adding **translational equivalents** for each entry in each dictionary, so that an entry in the Polish dictionary, for instance, would have a translation proposal into French and Norwegian, and likewise for the predicational predicates entries in the French and the Norwegian dictionaries.

Formal characteristics and classification of the BE PREP C MWUs

- The **BE PREP C** structure contains **three basic components**:
 - (1) the verb to be (**BE**)
 - (2) a preposition (**PREP**)
 - (3) a complement (**C**)
- The complement may
 - be determined by an ADJ, ex.:
dobra[ADJ] + *datą*[N] in: *być pod dobrą datą* in Polish
 - or another prepositional complement, ex.:
takt[N] + *med*[Prep] *tiden*[N] in: *være i takt med tiden* in Norwegian.
- Each of the components may accept other expansions which make possible a form-based classification of the **BE PREP C** constructions.

Prepositional post-copular MWUs

- The **PREP C** sequence is **lexicalized** and partially or totally **idiomatized**, i.e.:
 - (a) it has a figurative meaning, separate from the literal meaning, and/or:
 - (b) it cannot be transformed in a way that the similar non-idiomatized constructions usually can be;
- HOWEVER:** the **borderline between free combinations and MWU** is often difficult to define:
 - (a) the **PREP C** may be considered as being always idiomatized as far as its locative meaning is figurative
 - (b) a semi-lexicalized **PREP C** can accept some syntactic manipulations like modifiers insertion if only it corresponds to the internal selection rules;
 - (c) an adjective internal to the **PREP C** can sometimes be replaced by its antonyme (*good* vs. *bad*).

Formal characteristics of prepositional post-copular MWUs			
Class	Explanation	Example FR	Example PL
EPC	BE PREP C (without determiner)	<i>être à cran</i> (to be edgy)	<i>być w modzie</i> (to be in fashion)
EPDTC	BE PREP DET C (with determiner)	<i>être à l'abandon</i> (to be abandoned)	<i>być na para gębiczoch</i> (to be without a stich)
EPAC	BE PREP ADJ C (with adjective)	<i>être en plein boom</i> (to be booming)	<i>być w dobrym tonie</i> (to be in full swing)
EPCA	BE PREP C ADJ (with adjective)	<i>être devant un choix difficile</i> (to be faced with a difficult choice)	<i>być na porządku dziennym</i> (to be on the day's order)
EPCDC	BE PREP C GEN C (genitive complement)	<i>être à l'abri du vent</i> (to be safe)	<i>być na wszelką niebezpieczeństwa</i> (to be on everyone's lips)
EPCPC	BE PREP C PREP C (additional PREP C)	<i>être en avance sur son âge</i> (to be advanced for one's age)	<i>være i takt med tiden</i> (to be up to date)
ENEPC	BE PREP C NEG (negative complement)	<i>ne pas être dans son assiette</i> (not be feeling well)	<i>być nie w humorze</i> (not be out of the way)
EPACDC	BE PREP ADJ C GEN C (adjective and genitive complement)	-	<i>być pod drągłym strażni</i> (to be on the other side)
EPCONC	BE PREP C CONJ C (conjunction)	<i>être entre le marais et l'écluse</i> (to be caught between a rock and a hard place)	<i>być między miotłem a karawatem</i> (to be caught between a rock and a hard place)

Aspectual extensions of the copula

- Potential co-occurrence with the **standard copular verb** in each language (*être*, *być*, *være*) is a prerequisite of selection of the items to be included in our lists.
- In many cases, the selected **PREP C** units can also be used with other verbs that could be interpreted as **aspectual extensions of the standard copula**.
- If the standard copular verb is only imperfective (and that is probably in any language), its aspectual extension in Polish usually manifests itself in two ways: perfective and imperfective. Both variants will have a single equivalent in other non-aspectual language.

GENEALOGICAL AND TYPOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS		
Indo-European family	Romance group	French = isolation, no nominal inflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● prepositional case (no inflection of the C) ● no grammatical aspect
	Slavic group	Polish = advanced morphological inflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● case (e variation of the C element) ● grammatical aspect (double aspectual extension)
	Germanic group	Norwegian = residual nominal inflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● residual case (= residual variation of the C element) ● no grammatical aspect

Aspectual extensions of the copula

- The aspectual extensions seem to form two semantic classes:
 - (a) **verbs of movement** that indicate a change of state (usually inchoative), rather than motion, ex.:
 - *komme (under kontroll)* – literally: 'to come (under control)' in Norwegian;
 - *iść (na emeryturę)* – literally: 'to go to (retirement)' in Polish
 - (b) **static verbs** which indicate a certain continuation of a state, ex.:
 - *rester (en mouvement)* in French and *pozostawać (w ruchu)* in Polish – both: 'to (retire) in motion'.

In this aspect, the data results are very similar to those elaborated by Machonis (1988) for English.

Aspectual extensions of the copula

- Inchoatives:**
 - Fr.: *Luc entre dans une colère noire*
 - No.: *komme, gå, falle, bli*
 - Pl.: *zależnie się, wchodzić/wejść, przechodzić/przejść, iść...*
- Terminatives:**
 - Fr.: *Luc sort du coma*
 - No.: *komme ut av*
 - Pl.: (?)
- Static:**
 - Fr.: *Luc nage dans le bonheur*
 - No.: *sitte, ligge, stå, forbli*
 - Pl.: *pozostawać/pozostać, zostawać/zostać*

Dictionaries of MWUs using the DELAF formalism (example)

de retour, +A+EP/TC/TEN tilbake TEP z powrotem; (= 'be) back')
 en place, +A+EP/TC/TEN på plass TEP w toku; (= 'be) there')
 à la mode, +A+EP/TC/TEN på moten TEP w modzie; (= 'be) in fashion')
 à la limite, +A+EPDTC/TEN være på grensen TEP na krawędzi (= 'be) on the edge')
 à portée de la main, +A+EPDTC/TEN være innen rekkevidde TEP na wyciągnięcie ręki (= 'be) at your fingertips')
 de bonne humeur, +A+EPAC/TEN være i godlag TEP w dobrym humorze (= 'be) in a good mood')

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