

2nd General Meeting, Athens 10-11 March 2014

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

WG: 1 Lexicon/Grammar Interface

Agnieszka Kaliska (AM University, 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.

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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.:
dobrą[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**.

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Dictionaries of MWUs using the DELAF formalism (example)

de retour, .A+EPC/TEN tilbake TEP z powrotem; (= '(be) back')

en place, .A+EPC/TEN på plass TEP w toku; (= '(be) there')

à la mode, .A+EPC/TEN på moten TEP w modzie; (= '(be) in fashion')

à la limite, .A+EPDETC/TEN på grensen TEP na krawędzi (= '(be) on the edge')

à portée de la main, .A+EPCDC/TEN innen rekkevidde TEP na wyciągnięcie ręki (= '(be) at your fingertips')

de bonne humeur, .A+EPAC/TEN i godlag TEP w dobrym humorze (= '(be) in a good mood')