

Polish variable behaviour nominalizations in support of neo-constructivist approaches to the lexicon-syntax interface.

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Following the most recent abundant literature on derived nominals, I will attempt to reconsider previous claims and proposals in view of the current neo-constructivist approaches to the relationship between the lexicon and syntax which are based on the event-structure and sub-eventual analysis (for different instantiations of this kind of approach see Borer 2005 a, b, in press, Ramchand 2008, among others). I will focus on inchoative/inceptive and stative nominalizations, in particular psych-nominalizations (derived from Object Experiencer verbs) but also deadjectival nominalizations, to verify the approaches that are available on the market. The majority of recent analyses of nominalizations and their multiplicity of meanings (much richer than the mere ambiguity between process vs. result identified in Grimshaw 1990) point out to the importance of a variety of functional projections within the nominal phrase, which differ from language to language (see the collection of papers in Alexiadou and Rathert 2010). Despite such a variety of possible configurations, there are still constraints which disallow some of the interpretations. On the other hand, there are verbs whose nominalizations exhibit variable behaviour (correlated with different interpretations). Polish OE psych verbs and their nominalizations belong to the variable behaviour type of predicates, at the same time obeying certain constraints. On the basis of English and Hebrew nominalizations, Sichel (2010) postulates that derived nominals (in addition to other syntactic limitations) are constrained to host simple, single events. In Polish there are a variety of nominalizing suffixes, yet the fully productive nominalizing *-nie/-cie* suffix has been recognized as heading the most verbal nominalization, similar to the English gerund, and thus heading a nominal with a rich verbal substructure. While within the action domain the *-nie/-cie* nominalization seems to be unconstrained, within the psych domain it is similar to Sichel's constraint. Polish psych nominalizations allow only inchoative/inceptive interpretation and stative interpretation, but not causative process interpretation (2). This is illustrated in (1) – (4):

- (1) Zafascynowanie Janka historią było dla wszystkich oczywiste.
'John's fascination with history was obvious to everyone.'
- (2) *Fascynowanie Janka historią było dla wszystkich oczywiste.
'*Fascinating John with history was obvious to everyone.'
- (3) Zafascynowanie się Janka historią ucieszyło wykładowcę.
'John's getting fascinated with history pleased the lecturer.'
- (4) Fascynowanie się Janka historią nie trwało długo.
'John's being fascinated with history did not last long.'

I take the above pattern as evidence for the unavailability of complex event reading within the psych domain. In other words, OE psych verbs do not lexicalize complex events, but either simple state events or simple inchoative/inceptive events with one structure participant only. Importantly, OE verbs and their nominalizations can be coerced into causative, complex event reading and receive agentive interpretation with 2 structure participants as long as the conceptual/encyclopedic meaning associated with a particular listeme is compatible with such a shift. Therefore, (5) seems to be acceptable on the agentive reading, while (2) is not:

- (5) Celowe irytowanie rodziców głupim zachowaniem przez dzieci może mieć złe skutki.
'A deliberate irritating of the parents with stupid behaviour by the children can have bad consequences.'

The data from psych verbs, often murky and controversial, support context dependence inherent in constructivist approaches. Moreover, note that the interpretations available for psych-nominalizations are independent of morphological complexity. This in turn supports Bašić (2010) conclusion that a vocabulary item can lexicalize different subsequences of the functional sequence (however constructed). In other words, it is possible to maintain different structural representations for Complex Event and Simple Event/ State nominals despite the fact that they often have the same morphological shape. In addition to providing further support for the selection of constructivism claims, I also plan to demonstrate, following Roy (2010) and Borer (in press) that deadjectival nominalizations are similar to deverbal nominalizations in their argument structure/ event structure properties. All in all, stative psych nominalizations and deadjectival nominalizations are not unlike eventive deverbal nominalizations in their internal syntactic structure and argument structure properties.

References

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