

SOME REMARKS ON THE RELATION BETWEEN THE  
COMPLEMENTIZER AND THE FORM OF THE VERB IN THE  
COMPLEMENT STRUCTURE IN ENGLISH AND POLISH

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The two languages considered in this paper, English and Polish, do not operate only by simple sentence structures. Complementation is one of the processes which provide for an infinite set of strings by means of embedding sentences in other sentences<sup>1</sup>. The existence of some parallel and some different complement constructions in English and Polish is apparent and only logical<sup>2</sup>. A complete presentation of predicate complementation in the two languages is the subject for a lengthy dissertation. The aim of this paper is to point out some problems connected with the presence of complementizing morphemes, i.e. complementizers, in the sentences of English and Polish.

Complementizers are the media for introducing sentential complements into the sentence structure. They have no meaning of their own either in English or in Polish.

The approach assuming that the complementizing morphemes are not generated in the base but are inserted into the underlying structure by means of the Complementizer-Placement Transformation is adopted here (cf. Rosenbaum 1967 : 25). In a different approach the derivation of complementizers takes place in the underlying structure through the operation of context-free rewriting rules.

The phrase structure rules generating strings on which  $T_{CP}$  operates for English are the following (cf. Rosenbaum 1967):

$$\begin{array}{ll} \text{PS Rule 1} & \text{VP} \rightarrow \text{V(NP) (PP) } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{S} \\ \text{PP} \end{array} \right\} \\ \text{PS Rule 2} & \text{NP} \rightarrow \text{Det N(S)} \end{array}$$

<sup>1</sup> Relativization and conjunction are the other two processes which use the same device of recursion.

<sup>2</sup> Basic for this contrastive paper is the assumption that the rules for complementation and, consequently, the deep structures in Polish may be identical or similar to those in English.

In Polish the following two PS rules are central to the generation of predicate complement structures (cf. Rothstein 1967):

$$\text{PS Rule 1} \quad \text{VP} \rightarrow \text{V} \left( \left( \left( \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP} \\ \text{PP} \end{array} \right\} \right) \left( \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP} \\ \text{PP} \end{array} \right\} \right) \right) \right) \\ \left( \begin{array}{l} (\text{NP}) \\ \text{S} \end{array} \right)$$

$$\text{PS Rule 2} \quad \text{NP} \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Det N} \\ \text{to S} \end{array} \right\}$$

If the SD is met the transformational rules introduce the following complementizing morphemes into these phrase structures:

English: that, for, to Poss, ing, and the so-called wh-complementizers<sup>3</sup>,  
Polish: ze, żeby/by/by, Inf, Nom.

Some of the morphemes co-occur: FOR-TO, POSS-ING, ŻEBY-INF, some are mutually exclusive: FOR never occurs with THAT, THAT does not co-occur with either ING or TO. Similarly, in Polish INF is mutually exclusive with ŻE and NOM, etc.

Both in English and in Polish different complementizers are grammatical in different sentences: +*I know that John to come* is as ungrammatical as +*Wiem, że Jan przyjdź*. Apparently a one-to-one correspondence cannot be established between English and Polish structures.

Among the multiple problems of predicate complementation and the role of complementizers in the processes of embedding the following seem to require closer attention in the contrastive analysis of English and Polish:

- 1) the transformational rules introducing, changing, or deleting specific complementizers in both languages,
- 2) the influence of a higher sentence verb and its form on the selection of complementizers,
- 3) the influence of a lower sentence verb on the choice of complementizers,
- 4) verbs marked and unmarked for the application of some complementizers,
- 5) complementizers common and uncommon in the two languages,
- 6) the effects of different complementizers on the same verb,
- 7) the relation between the complementizer and the form of the verb of the complement structure.

<sup>3</sup> In sentences like: I dislike it when you do it

I know where he went

I doubt if / whether he is going

This group of complementizers is not taken into consideration in the present paper.

Of these only 6 and 7 will be discussed in this paper.

Both in English and in Polish some verbs admit more than one complementizing morpheme.

- (1) he likes for Mary to wear this dress  
she loved John's singing in the bathroom
- (2) zapomniałam zawiadomić Jurka/ I forgot to inform George  
zapomniałam, żeby zawiadomić Jurka  
zapomniałam o zawiadomieniu Jurka/ I forgot about informing George

In the above examples the choice of complementizer is merely stylistic. The meaning of the verbs is not altered by the selection of different complementizers.

However, in

- (3) he told her that she had written a good paper
- (4) he told her to write the paper as soon as possible  
he told her that she should write the paper as soon as possible

the semantic reading of (3) would be different than that of (4). *tell* (3) would belong to the verbs of communicating whilst *tell* (4) would be included in the verbs of ordering (cf. R. Lakoff 1968 : 20). Polish even prefers the use of the verb *kazać* as a translation equivalent:

- (3') powiedział jej, że napisała dobry artykuł
- (4') kazał jej jak najszybciej napisać ten artykuł
- (4'') powiedział jej, żeby jak najszybciej napisała ten artykuł

The lexicon should contain features semantically specifying verbs for the selection of complementizers *powiedzieć* (3') states the fact whereas (4'') refers to action. According to some authors the difference in the semantic reading of a sentence is considered to be due to differences in its embedded sentences.

Even the superficial comparison of the complement structures in English and Polish reveals some correspondence between the complementizers of both languages. The prevailing ways, of translating these elements from one language into the other would provide good material for setting up equivalences. Hence: NOM tends to correspond to POSS-ING<sup>4</sup>, INF to TO, ŻE to THAT, ŻEBY to FOR-TO. This, however, is mainly a translation correspondence, not a structural one. For example, the infinitival complements are less frequent in Polish. And when they occur they tend to correlate with the complementizer ŻEBY:

- (5) he wants people to visit him

<sup>4</sup> POSS functioning as an object to NOM. The higher sentence verb imposes the case on the NOM.

- (5') chce, żeby go odwiedzać/odwiedzić  
 (6) the officer ordered /for/ the soldier to leave the room  
 (6') oficer rozkazał żołnierzowi, aby opuścił pokój  
 (6'') oficer rozkazał żołnierzowi opuścić pokój

Examples presented above show that in some cases in Polish the pair ZEBY-INF may be considered equivalent to the English pair FOR-TO. Compare the two pairs of sentences:

- (7) John wants to come  
 (7') Jan chce przyjść  
 (8) John wants anybody to come  
 (8') Jan chce, żeby przyjść/przychodzić

The deep structure of 8,8' contains a dummy subject. In 7,7' the subject of the higher sentence and the lower one is the same.

ZEBY, similarly to NOM and INF, is introduced into the underlying structures containing the dummy auxiliary. Nominalizations and infinitives are, by their very nature, tenseless forms both in English and in Polish.

The aspect, however, of the complement verb joined with the NOM complementizer seems to be of importance in Polish. Compare:

- (9) oskarżyłem go o malowanie złych obrazów  
 (9') oskarżyłem go o namalowanie złych obrazów

Sentence (9) gives ambiguous time interpretation.

ZEBY and ŻE, analogically to English THAT, require a real auxiliary in the embedded sentence in order to enable the generation of grammatical sentences. ŻEBY demands the past tense form of the verb in the lower sentence when its subject, different from that of the higher sentence, is explicitly stated. The time factor is, however, irrelevant:

- (11) Jan zaproponował Pawłowi, żeby przyszedł na obiad  
 (12) Przedsiębiorstwo wymaga, aby pracownicy lepiej pracowali

In Polish the pronominal subject of the complement must be deleted. The person, number, and gender markers are retained by the complement verb and/or by the complementizer: ŻEBY-m, -ś, -śmy, -ście. If left in the sentence the personal pronoun is used for the purpose of emphasizing the agent:

- (13) Chce, żebyśmy my to zrobili

The English sentences containing THAT-complementizer observe rather strictly the rules of tense sequence between the higher and lower sentences, unlike in Polish where the auxiliary of an embedded sentence refers to the time of action, no matter what auxiliary is present in the higher sentence.

From the point of view of language learning the relations between the complement structures are of primary importance. Varying complement patterns in the two languages would either interfere or create difficulties by being completely new structures. Complementizers and the patterns they introduce should be learned along with the verb from.

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