

ENGLISH THE—THE CONSTRUCTIONS
AND THEIR POLISH EQUIVALENTS

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This paper treats sentences such as (1)—(4):

- (1) The more I thought of her, the more I missed her.
- (2) The less he sleeps, the more restless he becomes.
- (3) Im więcej o niej myślałem, tym bardziej było mi jej brak.
- (4) Im mniej śpi, tym bardziej staje się niespokojny.

The English constructions are formally marked by the occurrence of *two-the's* (henceforth TT) followed by the comparative. Polish equivalent sentences have two formal markers *im-tym*, (henceforth IT) each introducing a clause and being followed by an adjective inflected for the comparative degree.

Our discussion rests on the assumption that equivalent constructions in any two languages have identical semantic structure, even though on the surface they are different, cf. Krzeszowski (1974), Lipińska (1975). Thus the semantic elements and situations dealt with in this paper are taken to be figuring in the semantic base of both English and Polish, and possibly of all languages, that is, they are taken to constitute a part of universal semantic organization.

The present analysis is broadly located within the framework of generative semantics. Accordingly, a semantic relational structure underlying TT and IT constructions will be proposed, and a step-by-step derivation establishing a relationship between semantic configurations and observable surface sentences will be indicated.

It is also assumed that lexical insertion rules apply at various stages of the derivation, replacing portions of a tree that terminate in semantic material by complexes of syntactic and phonological material, cf. McCawley (1968).

SEMANTIC PROPERTIES OF THE-THE AND IM-TYM CONSTRUCTIONS

What we intend to say about the semantic characteristics of the constructions in question will largely be based on our earlier discussion of TT constructions, cf. Post (1977).

In pre-transformational grammar of English, sentences like (1—2) were classified with other complex sentences. Some grammarians treat them as constructions of proportionate agreement (Curme 1931, Poutsma 1914, Quirk et al. 1972). Others like Jespersen (1940) and Grzebieniowski (1964) think they are adverbial clauses of parallelism; Ganshina & Vasilevskaya (1964) subsume them under the class of adverbial clauses of comparison.

In standard grammars of the Polish language, IT's are assumed to be adverbial clauses of degree and measure (Klemensiewicz 1957, Szober 1947). In a recent work on adverbial clauses (Ampel 1976), it is suggested that IT sentences, being adverbial in function, define degree of intensity through comparison. To our knowledge, there does not exist a detailed discussion of semantic and syntactic aspects of IT constructions in the Polish grammar.

Even a superficial examination shows that TT's and IT's have certain formal characteristics in common. Thus, the subordinate clause regularly precedes the main clause in both languages. The constituent clauses open with the formal markers *the-the* in English and *im-tym* in Polish, which, in turn, are followed by *comparative+NP+VP*. We conclude then that the corresponding constituent clauses in English and Polish have the same gross structure; i.e. they are congruent in the sense of Krzeszowski (1971).

- (5) a. the—Comp—NP—VP, the—Comp—NP—VP
b. im—Comp—NP—VP, tym—Comp—NP—VP

We also suggest that *the-the* and *im-tym* are syntactic correlates of the same semantic material. The justification for this claim will be presented below.

Crucial to our discussion of TT constructions was the historical source of their formal markers. Some grammarians argue that neither of the *the's* is a development of the old definite article (Jespersen 1940, Curme 1931, House & Harman 1946). Jespersen holds that one of the *the's* is a development of *py*, the OE instrumental of the determinative pronoun *that*. The other *the* originates from the relative *pe*. In Curme's opinion the *the's* are the OE double determinative. The first *the* is a determinative; i.e. neuter instrumental case of the determinative *pæt*. The second *the* is a demonstrative *pæt*. House & Harman maintain that the *the's* in OE were the instrumental case of the demonstrative *pæt*. In Jespersen's interpretation the two *the's* mean "by how much — by so much", while in Curme's they have the meaning akin to "in that degree — in that degree". House & Harman propose "by that much — by

that much" to render the meaning encoded in the *the's*. Accordingly, a sentence like (6) seems to mean something like (7):

- (6) The more money he makes, the more he wants.
(7) In that degree: he makes more money, in that degree he wants more.

Since *im-tym* are the Polish counterparts of the English *the's*, we suggest they mean "(o) tyle — (o) tyle samo". Thus, the Polish equivalent of (6) should be interpreted as in (9):

- (8) Im więcej zarabia, tym więcej pragnie.
(9) (o) tyle; zarabia więcej, (o) tyle samo: pragnie więcej.

Considering the origin and the meaning of the *the's* we hypothesize that the relationship between the degrees of properties encoded in the constituent clauses of (6) and (8) is that of equality. But such an assertion of identity as holding between invariant values of properties contradicts a universally recognized dynamic character of TT and IT constructions. Jespersen (1910: 380) says that TT's indicate a "parallel increase in two interdependent cases". Ampel (1976: 86) observes that IT's "define the degree of a property as changeable and dependent on another property".¹ It is plausible then that in sentences like (1—4) one has to do with a change of two qualities, cases, propositions etc.

Now we shall attempt to reconcile the apparently static statement of identity holding in TT's and IT's with their implicit dynamism. To show this, we propose to examine the following sentences:

- (10) The wealthier he grew, the stingier he seemed
(11) Im bardziej był bogaty, tym bardziej stawał się skąpy.

In keeping with the above, we suggest that in (10) and in its Polish equivalent (11) two scales are involved; i.e. the scale of wealthiness/*zamożności* and the scale of stinginess/*skąpstwa*. (10) and (11) assert, among other things, that his being stingy/*skąpym* has a degree, and his being wealthy/*zamożny* also has a degree. These degrees, however, are not constant values but are subject to change; i.e. any change on the first scale is accompanied by a change on the other scale. If we now represented the increase of wealthiness/*zamożności* as an imaginary movement along the axis of wealthiness/*zamożności* from point to point, then each of the degrees of wealthiness/*zamożności* would have its corresponding degree of stinginess/*skąpstwa*. Graphically, this might be represented as in (12):

¹ ... mogą określać stopień cechy jako zmienny i zależny od innej cechy. (Ampel 1976: 86).

(12) wealthiness/zamożność stinginess/skapstwo

x_n y_n
 x_{n-1} y_{n-1}
 x_1 y_1
 x y

where arrows indicate the direction of the change. It follows from the diagram that the quantities of the properties at any x_n and the corresponding y_n are larger than the respective quantities of the properties at x_{n-1} and y_{n-1} . Needless to say, the quantities at the starting points of the movement along the axes; i.e. x and y , are irrelevant. They can be identical but not necessarily so.

In our earlier paper (Post 1977), we suggested that the quantitative increase of two qualities measured at any of the corresponding points along the dimensions involved is identical. More precisely, the increased quantity of wealthiness/zamożności at x_1 is equal to the increased quantity at y_1 ; the increased quantity at x_2 is equal to the increased quantity at y_2 ; the increased quantity at x_s is equal to the increased quantity at y_s . It would seem then that at every point along the axes we have the relation of equality holding between the corresponding quantities of properties, the total semantic content of TT's and IT's being a "sum" of n comparisons of identity.

However, there is a different view on between what and what the identity relationship holds. In Zandvoort's opinion what TT's express is "that two qualities increase or decrease at an equal rate" (Zandvoort 1968 : 224). Thus in TT's and IT's either 1) quantitative increase of two qualities is equal, or 2) the rate of quantitative increase of two qualities is equal.

In Post (1979) we subscribed to view 1. As far as the second view is concerned, we hypothesized that the relation of identity remains unchanged under the condition that the degrees of properties change at the same rate, and proposed that asserting the propositions of (1-4) presupposes the same as to the rate, change in the interdependent cases described in the main and subordinate clauses respectively.

Since writing the mentioned paper, we have come to believe that view 2 is the correct one. The chief reason for the change of our opinion is that the majority of the speakers of English that we consulted find the second interpretation corresponding with their own understanding of the meaning of TT's. What's more, they consider view 2 as more realistic, while the former as improbable, though not impossible.

Having subscribed to view 2, we feel obliged to explain how we interpret Zandvoort's phrase *at an equal rate*. In our discussion, rate will be denoted by the semantic predicates INCREASE and DECREASE. *Equal* is a derived

semantic relationship meaning SAME QUANTITY.² Thus the expression *at an equal rate* means to us something like "the quantity of the increase described in the main clause is the same as the quantity of the increase described in the subordinate clause. But recall that in TT and IT constructions we already deal with the quantities of properties (wealthiness/zamożność and stinginess/skapstwo in (10) and (11) respectively). These remarks seem to indicate what a well-formed semantic representation underlying the constructions in question should be like. At this stage of the discussion, we envisage the obligatory part of such a representation as something approximate to (12), for English, and (13) for Polish:

(12) the quantity_n of the increase_i of the quantity_i of the property_i is the same as the quantity_c of the increase_e of the quantity_i of the property_t.

(13) ilość_c wzrostu_e cechy_i t_e jest taka sama jak ilość_c wzrostu_e ilości_i cechy_t.

The last statement of the preceding paragraph implies that an adequate semantic representation of both TT and IT constructions should include other semantic material as well. This is exactly what we mean and intend to show later in our paper.

In the above formulae we have two predicates INCREASE/WZRASTAĆ, which by no means implies that this is the only possible combination of change predicates in the structures underlying TT's and IT's. In the mentioned paper of ours, we observed that depending on the type of the change predicate in the constituent clauses, two semantic types of TT's can be distinguished. We called them symmetric and asymmetric TT's, respectively. It appears that exactly the same observation applies to Polish equivalent constructions. Consider the following sentences:

(14) The longer I think of your proposal, the less I like it

(15) Im dłużej zastanawiam się nad twoją propozycją, tym mniej mi się ona podoba.

Structurally, (14) and (15) are similar to all other constructions we have discussed above; i.e. we find a comparative in both clauses preceded by the *the's* and *im-tym*. Semantically, however, (14) and (15) differ from (10) and (11). In (10) and (11) it made sense to have predicates INCREASE/WZRASTAĆ

² In our dissertation (Post 1978) we assume that the relations of comparison can optionally be quantified. Accordingly, we distinguish between quantitative and qualitative comparison constructions. The basic comparison relations are IDENTITY and DIFFERENCE. EQUAL is a derived semantic relationship; i.e. a quantified relation of IDENTITY. [QUANTITY_i[SAME[QUANTITY_j]]] → EQUAL

in the sentential arguments of SAME/TAKI SAM indicating the growth of degrees; in (14) and (15) it seems that we should have INCREASE/WZRASTAĆ in the subordinate clauses, and DECREASE/MALEĆ in the main ones. (14) and (15) assert that duration of my thinking/myślenia increases at the same rate as my liking/lubienie decreases.

One should not be surprised to find sentences with the DECREASE/MALEĆ predicates in the subordinate clauses, and INCREASE/WZRASTAĆ in the main clauses, as in (16) and (17):

(16) The less he sleeps, the more restless he becomes.

(17) Im mniej śpi, tym bardziej niespokojny się staje.

Naturally, we also find constructions with the DECREASE/MALEĆ predicates in both constituent clauses:

(18) The less he sleeps, the less effective his work becomes.

(19) Im mniej śpi, tym mniej efektywna staje się jego praca.

The above examples indicate that both in English and Polish we deal with 1) symmetric constructions, based on INCREASE-INCREASE/WZRASTAĆ-WZRASTAĆ or DECREASE-DECREASE/MALEĆ-MALEĆ predicates, and 2) asymmetric constructions, based on DECREASE-INCREASE/MALEĆ-WZRASTAĆ and INCREASE-DECREASE/WZRASTAĆ-MALEĆ pairs.

Now we wish to indicate one more semantic property of TT's and IT's, which, we believe, should be represented in the semantic structures underlying them. It is plausible that, semantically, the constructions involved are more than just comparison constructions founded on the relation of identity. That we are right in this claim becomes evident when one examines the nature of the interdependence of two situations described in the subordinate and main clauses respectively.

Consider the following sentences:

(20) The noisier they were, the more impatient their mother was.

(21) The longer he stayed, the more sullen he became.

(22) The more I thought of her, the more I missed her.

(23) Im bardziej hałasowali, tym bardziej niecierpliwiła się ich matka.

(24) Im dłużej przebywał, tym bardziej stawał się ponury.

(25) Im więcej o niej myślałem, tym bardziej było mi jej brak.

It can be said about (20) through (25) that if the situation described in the subordinate clauses (S_1) had not taken place, the situation described in the main clauses (S_2) would not have taken place either:

(26) $\sim S_1 \supset \sim S_2$

But what precisely are the situations described by S_1 and S_2 ? We said above that TT and IT constructions describe quantitative increase/decrease of certain properties. Thus, it is probably more accurate to say that if there had not been the increase/decrease in S_1 , there would not have been the increase a decrease in S_2 . Or in more general terms, we should say that if there had not been the quantitative change in S_1 there would not have been the quantitative change in S_2 :

(27) $\sim C_1 \supset \sim C_2$

In view of the above, it is only natural to claim that the change in S_1 causes the change in S_2 and the change in S_2 is the result of the change in S_1 . But to suggest that is tantamount to saying that we deal with cause-result relation in TT and IT constructions. If this argumentation is true, then we are dealing with two semantic relationships in TT's and IT's, namely of cause and equality.

But the notion of causation is far from being homogeneous. In an important paper entitled *Remarks on What Can Cause What* McCawley (1976) observed that in the following sentences two different types of causation are involved:

(28) John boiled the eggs for five minutes.

(29) John boiled the eggs in five minutes.

In (28) the caused proposition — the eggs are boiling — is a condition that the activity maintains at each instant. It is noncommittal as to whether the activity ends with the eggs in a cooked state. (29) involves the causal relation present in (28) and additionally the fact that the activity ends with the eggs in a cooked state. The activity is at each point causing the eggs to be boiling and the total activity causes the eggs to be cooked. McCawley calls the two types of causation CONTINUOUS CAUSATION and CULMINATION respectively.

It seems to us that in TT's and IT's we deal with the first of the two types of causation described by McCawley. For example, in view of what has been said about the properties of TT's and IT's so far, it is true to say about (30) and (31) that the increase of the quantity of thinking is causing at each instant the increase of the quantity of missing her:

(30) The more I think of her, the more I miss her.

(31) Im więcej o niej myślę, tym bardziej mi jej brak.

It goes without saying that the "at-each-instant-causation" can be easily extended to all TT and IT constructions. Thus we suggest that in the con-

structions involved the proposition described by the main clause is caused and maintained at each instant by the process described in the subordinate clause.

It appears then that the relational meaning of TT's and IT's involves two semantic relationships, namely, of cause-result and equality. Consequently, the semantic structure which we would like to assign for TT's and IT's will involve the assertion of identity and the assertion of causation, respectively. The first assertion can be spelled as in (12) and (13), repeated here for convenience:

- (32) the quantity_n of the increase_i of the quantity_i of the property_i is the same as the quantity_k of the increase_j of the quantity_j of the property_j
 (33) ilość_n wzrostu_i ilości_i cechy_i jest taka sama jak ilość_k wzrostu_j ilości_j cechy_j

For the second we propose the following formulae:

- (34) the increase_i of the quantity_i of the property_i causes the increase_j of the quantity_j of the property_j
 (35) wzrost_i ilości_i cechy_i powoduje wzrost_j ilości_j cechy_j

The appropriate semantic representation for TT's and IT's will be formed through a combination of the two types of formulae, represented by (32), (33) and (34), (35) respectively. We can think of two ways this could be accomplished: either through coordination or subordination. Of the two, only subordination is consistent with our earlier (Post 1977) recognizing of the fact that TT's are identity constructions involving causation. Accordingly, we propose (34), (35) be embedded in (32), (33) in the manner to be described below.

DERIVATION OF TT AND IT CONSTRUCTIONS

Before starting the discussion proper, we wish to make some remarks on the notation we intend to use. As may have been noticed by the reader, in representing semantic material we refrain from employing tree diagrams. Instead, we use prose, cf. formulae (32) through (35). Consequently, what we present in this section should be viewed as a prose derivational sketch in which various semantic entities are spelled with capital letters.

Now we shall outline the derivation of a typical English TT construction and its Polish equivalent, believing the proposed route to be essentially the same for all TT's and IT's. The semantic structures underlying (36) and (37)

- (36) The more they drank, the noisier they were.
 (37) Im więcej pili, tym bardziej hałasowali.

involve assertions of the identity of rates and assertions of causation, illustrated here in (38—39) and (40—41):

- (38) the QUANTITY_n of the INCREASE_i of the QUANTITY_i of X DRINK is the SAME as the QUANTITY_k of the INCREASE_j of the QUANTITY_j of X be NOISY
 (39) ILOŚĆ_n WZROSTU_i ILOŚCI_i X PIJE jest TAKA SAMA jak ILOŚĆ_k WZROSTU_j ILOŚCI_j X HAŁASUJE
 (40) the INCREASE_i of the QUANTITY_i of X DRINK CAUSES the INCREASE_j of the QUANTITY_j of X be NOISY.
 (41) WZROST_i ILOŚCI_i X PIJE POWODUJE WZROST_j ILOŚCI_j X HAŁASUJE.

Considering the matching of semantic material in (38—40) on the one hand, and (39—41) on the other; i.e. the INCREASE_i of the QUANTITY_i of X DRINK and WZROST_i ILOŚCI_i X PIJE, the most likely position for embedding seems to be immediately after the first occurrence of X DRINK and X PIJE.

- (42) the QUANTITY_n of the INCREASE_i of the QUANTITY_i of X DRINK (the INCREASE_i of the QUANTITY_i of X DRINK CAUSES the INCREASE_j of the QUANTITY_j of X be NOISY) is the SAME as the QUANTITY_k of the INCREASE_j of the QUANTITY_j of X be NOISY.
 (43) ILOŚĆ_n WZROSTU_i ILOŚCI_i X PIJE (WZROST_i ILOŚCI_i X PIJE POWODUJE WZROST_j ILOŚCI_j X HAŁASUJE) jest TAKI SAM jak ILOŚĆ_k WZROSTU_j ILOŚCI_j X HAŁASUJE.

At the next stage, the underlined portions of our representation are replaced by the derived predicates EQUAL and RÓWNY, yielding the intermediate structures like (44) and (45):

- (44) the INCREASE_i of the QUANTITY_i of X DRINK (the INCREASE_i of the QUANTITY_i of X DRINK CAUSES the INCREASE_j of the QUANTITY_j of X BE NOISY) EQUAL_s the INCREASE_j of the QUANTITY_j of X be NOISY.
 (45) WZROST_i ILOŚCI_i X PIJE (WZROST_i ILOŚCI_i X PIJE POWODUJE WZROST_j ILOŚCI_j X HAŁASUJE) jest RÓWNY WZROSTOWI_j ILOŚCI_j X HAŁASUJE.

The deletion of the material to the left and right of the causal predicates,

followed by the conflation of these predicates with EQUAL and RÓWNY, yields the structures illustrated by (46) and (47):

- (46) the INCREASE_i of the QUANTITY_i of X DRINK CAUSE_s EQUAL INCREASE_j of the QUANTITY_j of X be NOISY.
 (47) WZROST_i ILOŚCI_i X PIJE POWODUJE RÓWNY WZROST_j ILOŚCI_j X HAŁASUJE.

At this point of the derivation, actual lexical items start replacing portions of the representations. The first lexical insertion takes place in the lowest S's; i.e. in X DRINK/X PIJE and X be NOISY/X HAŁASUJE. As a result, the following intermediate structures are generated:

- (48) the INCREASE_i of the QUANTITY_i of [they drank] CAUSE_s EQUAL INCREASE_j of the QUANTITY_j of [they were noisy]
 (49) WZROST_i ILOŚCI_i [oni pili] POWODUJE RÓWNY WZROST_j ILOŚCI_j [oni hałasowali.]

The first lexicalization is followed by a non-lexical rule of COMPARATIVE SPELLING, which is basically a replacement rule. A set of derived comparative predicates is the output of this rule:

- (50) [[INCREASE [QUANTITY]] → MORE
 [[WZRASTAĆ [ILOŚĆ]] → WIĘCEJ

and

- (51) [DECREASE [QUANTITY]] → LESS
 [MALEĆ [ILOŚĆ]] → MNIEJ

in cases involving DECREASE/MALEĆ predicates. The COMPARATIVE SPELLING rule yields structures like (52) and (53), in which the comparative predicates have clauses in their scope:

- (52) MORE [they drank CAUSE EQUAL MORE [they were noisy]
 (53) WIĘCEJ [oni pili] POWODUJE RÓWNIE WIĘCEJ [oni hałasowali]

It seems that the selection of the actual morphological for the comparative predicates is contingent on the prior lexicalization of the S's in their scope. For example, in Polish, for the proposition X HAŁASUJE, besides the option we chose, there are other options as well. Thus apart from *oni hałasowali*, *oni byli hałaśliwi* and *oni zachowywali się hałaśliwie* are perfectly possible. For all three cases, predicate WIĘCEJ may surface as an analytical form "bardziej":

- (54) oni byli bardziej hałaśliwi
 oni zachowywali się bardziej hałaśliwie
 oni bardziej hałasowali

For the first two, however, one might choose synthetic forms as well, under the circumstances which we shall not specify here:

- (55) oni byli hałaśliwsi
 oni zachowywali się hałaśliwiej

In short, the choice of appropriate exponents for the comparative predicates is determined by the prior lexicalization of the propositions in their scope. The actual insertion of selected forms does follow a non-lexical rule of COMPARATIVE LOWERING which brings the comparative predicates into the clauses in their scope. The output of the two rules is presented in (56) and (57):

- (56) [they drank more] CAUSE EQUAL [they were noisier]
 (57) [oni pili więcej] POWODUJE RÓWNY [oni bardziej hałasowali]

Next, a conflation rule brings together the predicates given in (58) and (59), thus creating the inputs for the lexical rule to insert the *the's* and *im-tym* markers:

- (58) [INCREASE [EQUAL [INCREASE]]] → the-the
 (59) [WZROST [RÓWNY [WZROST]]] → im-tym

Notice that the non-lexical rule proposed above is a global one. It "looks back" to the earlier stage of the derivation, where the semantic predicates INCREASE_i, INCREASE_j and WZROST_i and WZROST_j were explicitly present. At this point of the derivation, they have been incorporated in the comparative morphemes.

In our grammar, we also need a rule responsible for the shift of the already inserted markers to the position which they occupy on the surface; i.e. sentence initial position. The output of this rule is given in (60) and (61):

- (60) the [they drank more] CAUSE the [they were noisier]
 (61) im (oni pili więcej) POWODUJE tym [oni bardziej hałasowali]

The last two processes involved in the derivation of TT's and IT's are the deletion of the causal predicates, and the shift of the comparative morphemes to the position between the subject NP's and the *the-the/im-tym* markers. In the case of synthetic forms of the comparative morphemes, the forms themselves plus whatever they are attached to are subject to shifting. The

output of the two operations are the actual surface structures, exemplified by (62) and (63):

- (62) the more they drank, the noisier they were
 (63) Im więcej pili, tym bardziej hałasowali.

SUMMARY

The primary objective of our paper was to discuss the semantic and syntactic properties of English the-the constructions and their Polish equivalents. We assumed that the constructions involved can be adequately interpreted in terms of the interpretation of their formal markers. Thus, we found crucial to our discussion the historical source of the *the's*, which seems to indicate that TT's are an instance of comparison expressions of equality. Then, we suggested that Polish *im-tym* markers encode the same semantic material as the *the's*, and thus the constructions containing them should also be treated as equative. Since the degrees of the properties defined in the constituent clauses are changeable, we proposed to regard TT's and IT's a dynamic equative constructions.

Considering the type of the change predicate in the constituent clauses, we distinguished two semantic types of TT and IT constructions; symmetric constructions, based on INCREASE-INCREASE or DECREASE-DECREASE predicates, and asymmetric constructions based on DECREASE-INCREASE and INCREASE-DECREASE pairs. We also pointed out to the fact that TT's and IT's display an interesting interplay of two semantic relationships; equality and cause.

As far as the proposed derivation is concerned, it has been confined to only those processes which are involved in the derivation of both English and Polish constructions. We do not intend, however, to say that no language specific processes are involved in the derivation of the constructions in question. Simply, a thorough derivational sketch lay beyond the scope of our paper.

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