

THE POSITION OF OBJECT PRONOMINALS IN POLISH VERBAL NOMINALS¹

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1. Introduction

The present paper investigates the following type of word order variation in Polish verbal nominals, i.e. in noun phrases headed by verbal nouns terminating in the suffix *-nie/-cie*:

- (1a) Protestujemy przeciwko opublikowaniu tej książki.
protest-1st p. pl. against publishing-perf. this book-gen.
'We protest against the publishing of the book.'
- (1b) Protestujemy przeciwko opublikowaniu jej.
protest-1st p. pl. against publishing-perf. her/it
'We protest against the publishing of it.'
- (1c) Protestujemy przeciwko jej opublikowaniu.
protest-1st p. pl. against her/its publishing
'We protest against the publishing of it.'

The semantic interpretation of the sentences given above as (1b) and (1c) is the same. There is a slight stylistic difference between (1b) and (1c). While (1b) can occur both in spoken and in written Polish, (1c) is characteristic of literary (usually written) Polish.

The pronominal element *jej* 'her' – paraphrased as 'it, its' in (1bc) above when referring to an inanimate object of the feminine gender in Polish – occurs in the post-head position in (1b), as is expected of object pronouns such as *mnie* 'me-gen.'. In (1c), on the other hand, *jej* 'her' occupies a pre-head position, which is typical of possessive adjectives such as *mój* 'my-nom. sg. m.'. The object form and the posses-

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sive form are phonologically identical for the third person pronouns in Polish² (as historically the third person possessives derive from object forms). The third person possessive pronouns in Polish exhibit also the morphological properties of object pronouns since, unlike the first person and the second person possessive pronouns, they are not inflected for case, gender and number to agree with their head.

Verbal nominals in (1c) and in (2b, 3b) below appear to contain object possessives, i.e. pronominals in the pre-head position which realize syntactically the internal argument of the head.

- (2a) pomimo przechowywania mrożonek/ich przez pół roku
in spite of storing-imperf. frozen foods-gen./them-gen. for half year
- (2b) pomimo ich przechowywania przez pół roku
in spite of their storing-imperf. for half year
'in spite of storing frozen foods/them for half a year'
- (3a) bezzwłoczne przysłanie tłumacza/go
immediate sending-perf. interpreter-gen/him-gen.
- (3b) bezzwłoczne jego przysłanie
immediate his sending
'the immediate sending of the interpreter/him'

Verbal nominals with object possessives are felicitous only when containing the third person object possessives. The second person and the first person object possessives in (4b, 5b) make the verbal nominal unacceptable – in contrast to their well-formed variants with genitive (post-head) object pronouns in (4a, 5a). Observe that the first and second person possessives are phonologically and morphologically distinct from corresponding object pronouns.

- (4a) bezzwłoczne przysłanie ciebie
immediate sending-perf. you-gen. sg.
- (4b) *bezzwłoczne twoje przysłanie
immediate your sending
'the immediate sending of you'
- (5a) ukrywanie nas w piwnicy
hiding-imperf. us-gen. in the cellar
- (5b) *nasze ukrywanie w piwnicy (possible only as a variant of 5c)
our hiding in the cellar
'hiding us in the cellar'
- (5c) nasze ukrywanie (się) w piwnicy
our hiding refl.cl. in the cellar
'our hiding (ourselves) in the cellar'

² There is a slight difference between the possessive and the object form in the third person singular masculine pronominal. The object pronoun has two prosodic allomorphs: the stressed *jego* 'him' and the unstressed *go* 'him-cl.' The possessive has only one form, i.e. *jego*.

I will argue in the present paper that verbal nominals with object possessives, such as those in (1b, 2b, 3b), should be regarded as noun phrases containing object pronouns shifted to the pre-head position as a result of surface reordering. The hypothesis of a post-syntactic (PF) rule of pronominal object shift in Polish verbal nominals will highlight the parallelism between verbal nominals and sentential structures. The post-syntactic movement of object pronouns in clausal structures³ analogous to the one shown in (3) is exemplified in (6b) below. (6a) is possible in colloquial Polish but regarded as "stylistically bad" in literary Polish. In the rest of the paper, examples which are judged to be "stylistically bad" will be preceded by the exclamation mark.

- (6a) !Bezzwłocznie przysłano go.
immediately send-past impers. him/it
- (6b) Bezzwłocznie go przysłano.
immediately him/it send-past impers.
'(They) sent him immediately.'

The analysis of object possessives in verbal nominals as "preposed" object pronouns diverges from the generally accepted view (as presented in Puzynina 1969 or Topolińska 1981, 1984).⁴ The standard traditional account provided for the data in (1-3) above is the postulation of alternative syntactic patterns in verbal nominals: [Head Noun + Object Pronoun] and [Possessive Adj. + Head Noun]. Consequently, no movement of object pronouns is generally believed to take place in nominals.

In order to provide justification for the proposal of PF movement of pronominal objects in nominals, I will demonstrate in sections 2 and 3 that object possessives in verbal nominals differ in their syntactic behaviour from subject possessives and from object possessives in deverbal (derived) event nominals and in passive nominals. In section 4 prosodic conditioning of pronoun placement will be illustrated. Section 5 will present syntactic restrictions on the pronominal object movement in Polish verbal nominals. Section 6 will offer a summary and conclusions.

³ Traditional descriptions of Polish (e.g. Džuska 1976) show that pronoun placement is determined mainly by prosodic requirements. The occurrence of a PF rule adjoining pronominal objects to VP or IP in clausal structures in Polish is postulated in Kraska-Szlenk (1993). A different hypothesis of the nature of pronoun movement in Polish is advanced in Witkoś (1996). He assumes that clitic pronouns move in overt syntax. There is a lack of consensus among researchers as to the most felicitous account of pronominal clitics in other Slavonic languages. While Čavar and Wilder (1994) argue for a syntactic rule of the Long Head Movement in Croatian, King (1996) postulates a PF last-resort rule of Prosodic Inversion to account for the same data.

⁴ Rozwadowska (1995) tentatively suggests the possibility of a post-syntactic movement of pronominal objects in Polish verbal nominals but she does not elaborate on her proposal.

2. Subject possessives and object possessives

The pre-head pronominal arguments in (7) and (8) differ in their theta-roles. Subject possessives in (7) denote the Agent or the Possessor. Object possessives in (8) refer to the Theme/Experiencer.

- (7a) jego śpiewanie w łazience
his singing in the bathroom
- (7b) ich częste spóźnianie (się)
their frequent coming late (refl.-cl.)
- (7c) twoje zdjęcia
your photos
'the photos that you have taken or that belong to you'
- (8a) jego pobicie
his beating
- (8b) ich prowokowanie
their provoking
- (8c) twoje zdjęcia
your photos
'the photos of you'

Object and subject possessives exhibit different binding properties, as demonstrated in Willim (1989, 1995) and Rozwadowska (1995). The possessive reflexive *swój* 'self's' is an anaphor that is subject-bound in Polish. The anaphor is co-indexed with a c-commanding subject NP (within a clause or an NP), as in (9a). Willim (1995) provides support for the existence of the grammatical relation "Subject of NP" in Polish, which may either be realized overtly (as in 9a) or remain implicit (and license an agentive adjunct as in 9b). Willim (1995, 1997) argues that the Possessor is different from the Subject of NP. The genitive NP *dzieci* 'children' or the object pronoun *ich* 'them' cannot c-command and bind the anaphor in (9b), while the implicit subject can. The inability of *ich* 'them/their' in (9c) (cf. Rozwadowska's 1995 example 38c) to bind an anaphor indicates that the pronominal is not in the position of "subject of NP". The nominals in (9c-d) are slightly awkward since they are felt to be "too heavy".

- (9a) wasz_i powrót do swoich_i korzeni
your-pl_i return to self's_i roots
- (9b) odwiezienie dzieci/ich_i do swoich_{*i/k} rodziców (przez Piotra_k)
taking-back children_i/them_i to self's_{*i/k} parents (by Peter_k)
- (9c) ?ich_i odwiezienie do swoich_{*i/k} rodziców
their/them_i taking-back to self's_{*i/k} parents
- (9d) ?ich_i wypędzenie ze swojego_{*i/k} domu
their/them_i expelling from self's_{*i/k} house

- (9e) ich_i zwrot ich_i/*swoim_i prawowitym właścicielom
their_i return their_i/*self's_i rightful owners-dat

The evidence from binding properties of pronouns, presented in (9) above, can be construed as supporting either of the two hypotheses:

- (10) *Hypothesis I.* Object possessives are base-generated in a position distinct from subject possessives, namely as complements⁵ of N⁰, and move to the configurationally higher pre-head position in the course of their syntactic derivation.
- Hypothesis II.* Object possessives are base-generated as complements of N⁰ and are moved to the pre-head position by a post-syntactic (PF) rule of movement.

Hypothesis I is advanced in, among others, de Wit and Schoorlemmer (1996), de Wit (1997) and Veselovska (1995). They argue that object possessives in Russian, Czech and Dutch are base-generated as complements of N⁰. In order to check the feature [+POSSESSIVE] object possessives move in overt syntax to the specifier of PosP (Possessive Phrase). Post-head object pronouns originate as complements of N⁰ with the case feature [+GENITIVE] and are licensed in the specifier of a functional projection immediately dominating NP and immediately dominated by PosP, namely NumP (Number Phrase).

I assume that Hypothesis I is appropriate for deriving object possessives in result nominals such as *twoje zdjęcia* 'the photos of you' in (8c) and in deverbal event nominals such as *ich zwrot* 'their return' in (9e). However, I would like to propose that the pronominal pronominal arguments in verbal nominals in (9c-d) originate as complements of N⁰ with the case feature [+GENITIVE]. They move to spec, NumP in overt syntax and are moved further leftwards post-syntactically.

3. Object possessives vs. preposed object genitives

There is a difference between the behaviour of pronominal internal arguments in Polish verbal nominals (terminating in the suffix *-nie/-cie*) and in deverbal (derived) event nominals, passive event nominals or result nouns. Internal arguments in result nouns in (11) and in deverbal event nominals in (12) can be realized syntactically only as pre-head possessives⁶.

⁵ Willim (1997) regards Polish possessive pronouns and adjectivized personal names as modifiers, i.e. specifiers in the functional projection FP of the noun. Arguments supporting the analysis of Russian possessive adjectives and pronouns as pronominal arguments are provided in de Wit and Schoorlemmer (1996) and de Wit (1997).

⁶ Traditional accounts of nominals (e.g. Puzynina 1969) disallow the occurrence of object pronouns in deverbal nominals such as **utrata was* 'the loss of you-pl'. In spoken colloquial Polish, however, examples of such deverbal nominals can occur, though acceptability judgements provided by native speakers vary considerably (see Cetnarowska 1998 for discussion). The post-head position of possessive pronouns in the nominals *utrata ich* 'the loss of them' and *zwrot jej* 'the return of her/it' in literary Polish results presumably from the leftward movement of the head (see note 9 below).

- (11a) Zauważyłam jego/wasze zdenerwowanie.
'I noticed his/your annoyance.'
- (11b) *Zauważyłam zdenerwowanie go/was.
'I noticed the annoyance of him/you-pl'
- (11c) Paszport jest ważny dziesięć lat od daty jego wydania.
'The passport is valid for ten years from the date of its issue.'
- (11d) *Paszport jest ważny dziesięć lat od daty wydania go.
'The passport is valid for ten years from the date of its issue (lit. of issuing it-gen.)'
- (12a) jego odbudowa w ciągu trzech miesięcy
his/its rebuilding in course three-gen. months-gen.
'the rebuilding of it in the course of three months'
- (12b) ?*odbudowa go w ciągu trzech miesięcy
rebuilding him/it in course three-gen. months-gen.
- (12c) jego zwrot w ciągu dwóch dni
his/its return in course two-gen. days-gen.
'the return of it within two days'
- (12d) *zwrot go w ciągu dwóch dni
return him/it in course two-gen. days-gen.

In verbal nominals in (13) internal arguments can surface either in the pre-head or the post-head position, which can be construed as an exemplification of a post-syntactic movement of pronouns.

- (13a) odbudowanie go w ciągu trzech miesięcy
rebuilding his/it in course three months-gen.
- (13b) jego odbudowanie w ciągu trzech miesięcy
his/its rebuilding in course three months-gen.

The non-occurrence of the first and the second person object possessives and the felicity of the third person object possessives in verbal nominals in (14) contrasts sharply with the acceptability of all kinds of object possessives in passive event nominals in (15).

- (14a) ich/*nasze/*wasze pielęgnowanie
their/our/your-pl nursing
'taking care of them/us/you-pl'
- (14b) ich/*nasze/*wasze reklamowanie
their/our/your-pl advertising
'advertising them/us/you-pl'
- (14c) jej/*moje/*twoje rewidowanie (przez policję)
her/my/your-sg searching (by police)
'her/my/your-sg. being searched (=examined) by the police'

- (15a) ich/nasze/wasze aresztowanie (przez miejscową policję)
their/our/your-pl arresting (by local police)
'their/our/your-pl arrest (by the local police)'
- (15b) jej/moje/twoje odwołanie ze stanowiska dyrektora
her/my/your-sg. recalling from rank-gen. manager-gen.
'her/my/your-sg. recall from the rank of the manager'
- (15c) ich/nasze/wasze uniewinnienie (przez sąd apelacyjny)
their/our/your-pl acquittal (by court appellate)
'the acquittal of them/us/you (by the Court of Appeal)'

It is interesting to note that object possessives premodifying *-nie/-cie* passive nominals in (15) denote Experiencers or participants which must be interpreted as crucially affected by the agent's action. In contrast, the pronominal elements in (14) can denote affected as well as non-affected entities. The third person object possessives in (14) can bear ANY thematic role possible for objects of transitive predicates.⁷

Noun phrases such as those in (16a-c), which I find very clumsy but marginally acceptable (in particular in a highly rhetorical, elevated style, e.g. that of a sermon), confirm further the hypothesis of surface movement of object pronouns in *-nie/-cie* nominals. The nominals in (16a-c) contain both subject possessives and object possessives. Double possessives are generally disallowed in Polish, as shown in (17). The data in (16-17) implies that the second (pre-head) possessives in verbal nominals in (16a-c) have a different syntactic status than the object possessives in (17).

- (16a) ??wasze codzienne ich wzbogacanie
your-pl daily them/their enriching
'your enriching them every day'
- (16b) ??wasze głębokie jej przeżywanie
your-pl deep her/its experiencing
'your experiencing it in a profound way'
- (16c) ??wasze nieustanne ich ulepszanie
your-pl incessant them/their improving
'your improving them incessantly'
- (17a) *twój mój portret
your-sg. my portrait
'a portrait of me that belongs to you or that has been painted by you'

⁷ Rozwadowska (1991) postulates a thematic constraint in Polish nominals prohibiting the syntactic realization of non-Experiencer objects by pronominal possessives, as in **wasze zobaczenie* 'the seeing of you (lit. your seeing)'. Verbal nominals with the third person possessives appear to regularly violate this constraint, unless the pre-head pronominals are analyzed as "misplaced" genitive pronouns.

- (17b) *wasze nasze aresztowanie
 your-pl. our arresting
 'your arresting us'
- (17c) ?*wasza ich przesyłka
 your-pl them/their despatch
 'your despatching them'

If object possessives in (16a-c) are analyzed as "misplaced" (preposed) object pronouns, an analogous analysis seems plausible for object possessives in verbal nominals which lack overtly expressed subjects, such as *codzienne ich wzbogacanie* 'enriching them daily'.

The hypothesis of a post-syntactic nature of the shift of object pronouns to the pre-head position predicts the infelicity of the first or the second person object possessives in verbal event nominals, as shown in (14), and a relatively higher acceptability of (18b) than (18c).

- (18a) wcześniejsze odesłanie nas do domu
 earlier sending-back-perf us-gen. to home
- (18b) ??wcześniejsze nas odesłanie do domu
 earlier us-gen. sending-back-perf. to home
- (18c) *wcześniejsze nasze odesłanie do domu
 earlier our sending-back-perf to home
 'sending us back home earlier'

Syntactic constraints which diminish the acceptability of preposed first person and second person object pronouns will be discussed in section 5. In the next section I will illustrate very briefly prosodic conditioning of pronominal object shift.

4. Prosodic constraints on pronominal argument placement

If one postulates a post-syntactic rule applying in the Phonological Form component, the prediction is that the application of such a rule is triggered mainly by phonological factors. Weak object pronouns are phonologically deficient since they cannot carry the primary word stress (unless they constitute the contrastive focus of a clause). As shown in Cetnarowska (1996), in the overwhelming majority of instances when a verbal nominal occurs with a pre-head internal argument in a text, it is found at the end of the intonational phrase, i.e. at the end of a clause or in front of some parenthetical material. (19a) is possible in colloquial Polish but less felicitous in literary Polish than (19b).

- (19a) Dziękujemy za przyniesienie ich
 thank-1st.pl for bringing-perf. them-gen.
- (19b) Dziękujemy za ich przyniesienie.
 thank-1st.pl for their/them bringing-perf.
 'We thank (you) for bringing them.'

The data in (19) suggests that requirements of prosodic structure are more important in literary than in colloquial Polish. When verbal nominals occur as titles or headings in books or newspaper articles, as in (20), the linearization option with post-head genitive pronouns is not available (stylistically inappropriate).

- (20a) Rozmrażanie produktów w kuchence mikrofalowej i ich ogrzewanie
 defrosting products in oven microwave and their reheating
 'The defrosting of food products in the microwave oven and the reheating of them'.
- (20b) !Rozmrażanie produktów w kuchence mikrofalowej
 defrosting-imperf. products-gen. in oven microwave
 i ogrzewanie ich (=20a)
 and reheating their/them
- (20c) Przechowywanie srebrnych sztućców i ich czyszczenie
 storing-imperf. silver cutlery-gen. and their/them cleaning
 'The storing of silver cutlery and the cleaning of it.'
- (20d) !Przechowywanie srebrnych sztućców i czyszczenie ich (=20e)
 storing silver cutlery and cleaning them

(20) indicates that prosodic well-formedness is essential in block language. In this stylistic variety of Polish, phonology appears to outrank syntax (see Golston 1996 on the relative ranking of grammar components).

5. Syntactic constraints on post-syntactic pronominal object shift in verbal nominals

The rule of pronominal object shift in verbal nominals, postulated in the present paper to apply after the Spell-out, is undoubtedly constrained by syntactic factors.

Firstly, weak pronouns in oblique cases (e.g. dative, instrumental) are shifted leftwards in clausal structures but cannot be moved in such a way in verbal nominals, even if the shift could result in improving the prosodic structure of the nominal (as in 21c, e).

- (21a) Nie chciałam im wybaczyć.
 not wanted-1st.sg.fem. them-dat. forgive
 'I did not want to forgive them.'
- (21b) wybaczenie im
 forgiving them-dat
- (21c) *im wybaczenie
 them-dat. forgiving
- (21d) Dobrze nim malowałam.
 well him-instr. painted-1st.sg.fem.
 'I painted well with it. (i.e. It was good for painting.)'
- (21e) dobre malowanie nim
 good painting him-instr.
 'good painting with it'

- (21f) ?*dobre nim malowanie
good him-instr. painting

Secondly, weak genitive forms of the first and the second person pronouns undergo leftward movement in clauses but seem not to shift in nominals as (22b) is only marginally possible.

- (22a) Wczoraj nas ukarali.
yesterday us-acc. punish-past.3rd.pl.masc.
'They punished us yesterday.'
- (22b) ??wczorajsze nas ukaranie
yesterday's us-gen. punishing
'the punishing of us yesterday'
- (22c) wczorajsze ukaranie nas
yesterday's punishing us-gen.

Thirdly, the third person object pronouns in nominals cannot occur in the pre-head position when the nominals contain adverbial modifiers, such as *szybko* 'quickly', *długo* 'for a long time':

- (23a) przechowywanie ich długo w zamrażalniku
storing-imperf. them-gen. long-adv. in freezer
'storing them in the freezer for a long time'
- (23b) ?*ich przechowywanie długo w zamrażalniku
their/them storing-imperf. long-adv. in freezer
- (23c) ich długie przechowywanie w zamrażalniku
their/them long-adj. storing-imperf. in freezer
- (23d) zreperowanie ich szybko
repairing-perf. them-gen. quickly
- (23e) ?*ich zreperowanie szybko
them/their repairing-perf. quickly
- (23f) szybkie ich zreperowanie
quick them/their repairing-perf.

The solution adopted here is to postulate the existence of a surface filter⁸ which degrades the acceptability of the output of PF Pronominal Object Shift in nominals if it does not conform to the schema in (24):

⁸ The stipulation of the surface filter is an undesirable – but it seems unavoidable – complication of the account proposed here, assuming some version of the Minimalist Program. Let us note that Holmberg (1997) postulates a surface (PF) filter in order to ensure an appropriate application of a PF rule of Pronominal Object Shift in Swedish.

In a constraint-based grammar (e.g. in the framework espoused in Golston 1996) there is no need to have a surface filter since no rules of pronoun movement are postulated.

(24) Possessive – Head Noun – Genitive Complement

The schema in (24) represents the unmarked order of constituents in Polish result or simple event nominals, such as *urodziny Piotra* 'lit. birthday Peter-gen.' and *twoje urodziny* 'your birthday'. *Szybkie ich zreperowanie* 'lit. quick their repairing (i.e. the repairing of them quickly) in (23c) is not rejected by the filter since the pronominal *ich* 'them/their' is classified (reinterpreted) as occupying the 'possessive slot'. The pronominal *was* 'us-gen.' cannot be interpreted as occurring in the 'possessive slot' hence the low acceptability of the phrase ??wczorajsze nas ukaranie 'the punishing of us yesterday' in (22c). The presence of the adverb in (23b), which is a hypothetical product of pronominal object shift, violates the expected syntactic pattern of result nominals and stems in the unacceptability of (23b). The filter in (24) is linked to the pronominal object shift and does not evaluate the structure of verbal nominals in which no pronoun movement took place, e.g. *zreperowanie ich szybko* 'repairing them quickly' in (23d). Neither does it assess the well-formedness of phrases such as *ojciec nasz* 'father our' or *Piotra urodziny* 'lit. Peter-gen. birthday', which exhibit marked word order.⁹

6. Concluding remarks

The article has investigated the distribution of the third person pronominals in Polish verbal nominals. It has been proposed that prosodic deficiency of pronouns forces their movement leftwards after the Spell-out (i.e. in the Phonological Form component). The hypothesis is supported by the phonological identity of the third person object pronouns and the third person possessives in Polish as well as by syntactic differences between the third person object pronouns in verbal nominals and between object possessives in result nouns, passive nominals and deverbal event nominals. It appears necessary to stipulate the existence of a surface filter which diminishes the acceptability of the output of the PF rule of pronominal object movement if it does not conform to the syntactic pattern of noun phrases exemplified by result nominals.

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⁹ As suggested in Cetnarowska (1998), such a "marked" word order may be derived by adjoining the head N to a hierarchically higher head (e.g. D) in overt syntax.

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