Thematic adjectives with unaccusative nominals in Polish  
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The aim of this paper is to demonstrate that thematic relational adjectives in Polish can occur with selected types of unaccusative nominals denoting events. This is contrary to the common assumption (cf. Kayne 1984, Alexiadou and Stavrou 2011) that thematic adjectives cross-linguistically require the agentive interpretation and correspond to external arguments. Relational adjectives with the Patient/Theme interpretation are reported to be unacceptable with nominalizations of unaccusative nominals in English and Spanish, as confirmed by the ill-formedness of the phrases *the Austrio-Hungarian disappearance from the political scene (Alexiadou and Stavrou 2011), and *la salida real de palacio ‘the royal leaving from the palace’ (Bosque and Picallo 1996).

Yet, unaccusative nominals in Polish are acceptable with with thematic adjectives in (1).

(1) a. królewski przyjazd i odjazd  
royal arrival.nom and leaving.nom  
‘the arrival and departure of the king’

b. książęcy upadek  
princely fall.nom  
‘the prince’s fall’

Thematic adjectives syntactically correspond to genitive phrases and are reported to have the semantics of plural genitive DPs (cf. Moreno 2015 for Romanian). Genitive phrases and possessive pronouns (or pronominal adjectives) can be used to express single arguments of one-participant events, as stated by the Possessivization Principle (Rozwadowska 2005). It will be postulated here that the acceptability of the phrases in (1) follows indirectly from the Possessivization Principle: single arguments of unaccusative verbs can be realized syntactically as relational adjectives (which can be treated, as argued by Moreno 2015, as underlyingly underspecified nouns).

It must be admitted that this indirect prediction stemming from the Possessivization Principle is not fully confirmed by data from the National Corpus or Polish or by native speakers. Judgments concerning the acceptability of unaccusative nominals vary (depending, among others, on the head of the nominal). The comparison of the Polish data in (2) and (3) indicates that thematic adjectives are felicitous with the countable aspectually neutral unaccusative nominals in (2) but infelicitous with the corresponding uncountable verbal unaccusative nominals in (3).

(2) a. poselskie powroty do Sejmu  
parliamentary returning.pfv.nom to Sejm  
‘the MPs’s having returned to the Sejm (i.e. to the Polish Parliament)’

b. prezydencka ucieczka przed wyborcami  
presidential escaping.pfv.nom from voters.ins  
‘the President’s having escaped from (his/her) voters’

(3) a. *poselskie powrócenie do Sejmu  
parliamentary returning.pfv.nom to Sejm  
‘the MPs’s having returned to the Sejm’

b. *prezydenckie ucieknięcie przed wyborcami  
presidential escaping.pfv.nom from voters.ins  
‘the President’s having escaped from (his/her) voters’

Grimshaw (1990:122) assumes that English thematic adjectives can accompany unaccusative nominals with the result reading only. The Polish nominals in (1) and (2) are countable, yet they exhibit the event reading and can be treated as names of bounded (hence countable)
events. This is shown by the possibility of using them with the predicate trwać ‘last’, mieć miejsce ‘take place’, or powtarzać się ‘repeat (itself)’. Additionally, the replacement of the perfective verbal nominals in (3) by the imperfective verbal nominals in (4) increases the acceptability of the resulting unaccusative nominals (due to the compatibility of thematic adjectives with the iterative or habitual interpretation in 4).

(4) a. poselskie uporczywe powracanie do spraw z przeszłości parliamentary persistent returning.ipfv.nom to matters from past
   ‘the MPs’ persistently returning to issues from the past’

b. prezydenckie uciekanie przed odpowiedzialnością presidential escaping.ipfv.nom from responsibility
   ‘the president’s (habit of) escaping from responsibility’

Furthermore, variability of judgments in Polish concerning the well-formedness of event nominals with thematic adjectives is related to the difference between subtypes of unaccusative nominals (as observed for European Portuguese by Brito 2008). The deverbal nouns in (1) and (2), accompanied by thematic adjectives, are derived from unaccusative verbs denoting inherently directed motion (Levin and Rappaport-Hovav 1995). Event nouns derived from unaccusative verbs of appearance, disappearance and existence are, in contrast, infelicitous with thematic adjectives (as indicated in 5).

(5) a. *prezydenckie bycie rozjemcą
   presidential being.nom conciliator.ins
   ‘the president’s being a conciliator’

b. *aborygeńskie wymarcie
   Aborigene.adj extinction.pfv.nom
   ‘the extinction of the Aborigenes’

c. *senatorskie pojawienie się na miejscu przestępstwa
   senatorial.adj appearing.nom refl on scene crime.gen
   ‘the appearance of (the) senator(s) at the scene of the crime’

It is argued that the difference between (1-2) and (5) stems from the semantic interpretation of single arguments of verbs of existence, appearance and disappearance as non-volitional Undergoers. On the other hand, the single argument of verbs of inherently directed motion has a composite role since it is both the Undergoer as well as the Initiator of movement (cf. Ramchand 2008). Consequently, the argument with the composite Undergoer-Initiator is more felicitous than the Undergoer in the position of a thematic adjective (which is the position typically associated with the thematic role of Agent).

References