

Definiteness and word order in Polish

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North Slavic languages lack the lexical category of an article. More broadly, they are sometimes considered to lack overt definiteness marking altogether. Polish does not break ranks: the definiteness distinctions are taken to be inferred by Polish speakers, on the whole, from the context. When pressed to make a distinction, one can avail oneself of an optional determiner, e.g. *jakiś* “some” or *pewien* “certain” to indicate indefiniteness; *ten* “this” to indicate definiteness.

Yet, putting aside the frequent resorts to the above determiners, definiteness has been shown to enter the syntax of North Slavic languages through a number of back doors. It figures, for example, in the notoriously puzzling accusative-genitive alternations of Russian. In negative polarity context, both accusative and genitive noun phrases can be licenced, but with differing interpretations (Harves, 2013):

- (1) Anna ne kupila žurnal.
Anna not bought magazine.ACC.
“Anna did not buy the magazine.” (Harves, 2013) [Russian]
- (2) Anna ne kupila žurnal-a.
Anna not bought magazine-GEN.
“Anna did not buy a / any magazine.” (Harves, 2013) [Russian]

The Russian aspect system can serve as another determinant of noun phrase interpretations. Dahl and Karlsson (1976) and Dahl (1985) report plural objects of perfective verbs to generally receive definite readings:

- (3) On na-pisa-l pis'm-a.
He PERF-write-PST letter-PL.ACC.
He wrote *(the) letters. (Kiparsky, 1998) [Russian]

The accusative-genitive alternations, though present, do not interact with definiteness in Polish. In negative polarity contexts, only genitive noun phrases are deemed grammatical; they can have definite and indefinite interpretations:

- (4) *Anna nie kupiła magazyn.
Anna not bought magazine.ACC.
intended: “Anna did not buy a / the magazine.” [Polish]
- (5) Anna nie kupiła magazyn-u.
Anna not bought magazine-GEN.
“Anna did not buy a / the magazine.” [Polish]

The Russian aspect-definiteness interactions, on the other hand, generally hold in Polish:

- (6) On na-pisa-ł list-y.
He PERF-write-PST letter-PL.ACC.
He wrote *(the) letters. [Polish]

The Polish aspectual system, though rife with intricacies deserving many a paper, will not be a focus of this one. Instead, we will direct our attention to a facet of Polish syntax less commonly associated with questions of definiteness: word order. Szwedek (1973a) demonstrates that word order plays a crucial role in restricting definiteness interpretations in Polish. Furthermore, he shows that certain word order configurations make the otherwise optional *ten* mandatory. Our goal will be to understand what light can be shed on the matters of Polish (in)definiteness by information-structural considerations, classification of definiteness uses as advanced by Hawkins (1978), and the most recent discoveries in the domain of definiteness typology (Schwarz, 2013).

First, we will present some basic Polish data and consider the strengths and weaknesses of one previous account of Polish definiteness marking written with word order permutations in mind: Szwedek (1973a), to the best of my knowledge, provides the only such account. The observations and conclusions contained in it, especially those suggestive of a link between the sentence-final position and indefinite interpretation, while imprecise, intimate the principles we will later state.

Second, we will characterize a general preference for definite interpretations of noun phrases in non-discourse-initial contexts. We will formulate a Principle of Co-referential Match, which says that given no reasons to the contrary, two identical descriptions pick out one referent.

Third, we will refine our theorizing by looking at the four uses of definites as proposed by Hawkins (1978) and investigate the interactions between constituent postposing and definite interpretations. We will then propose a Principle of Indefinite Postposing to the effect that a postposed noun phrase is anaphoric-definite only if explicitly so.

Fourth, we will extend our account to different descriptions, characterized by a pattern opposite to that of point two. We will posit a Principle of Co-referential Mismatch saying that a description is not co-referential with a different description previous in the discourse unless it is explicitly so.

Lastly, we will review Schwarz (2013)'s recent typological discoveries and try to position Polish therewithin. The linguistic literature has seen a long-lived split, with some authors arguing that definiteness is best understood in terms of uniqueness, and others — in terms of familiarity. Schwarz (2013) posits that definiteness might be a disjunctive phenomenon characterizable as a union of both, as he points to the existence of languages which employ two different sets of determiners to fulfill these two functions. Simplifying, the Polish demonstrative will be found to also cover a proper subset of the familiarity uses, which places the language outside of the heretofore proposed typological frameworks. The so-called bridging anaphora in Polish will be shown to challenge the current typology, too.

First things first, we have to see how it is that the Polish demonstrative *ten* PROX.MASC (*ta* PROX.FEM, *to* PROX.NEUT) can be said to play the role of a definite article. Broadly, *ten* is comparable to the English “this.” It functions mainly as a proximal pronoun or determiner.¹ *Ten*'s other uses encompass the indefinite *this* as in example (7), and definite-like uses as in example (8). This paper will focus only on the latter.

- (7) Idę sobie ulicą, nie szukam guza, a ten typ do mnie podbija
I.walk self.DAT street.INST, not I.look.for bump, and.DS PROX type to me hits.up
i prosi o szluga.
and.SS asks about cig.

“I’m just walking down the street minding my own business and this dude walks up to me up and asks for a cig.”

¹Polish “proximity” is a looser notion than the English one: *ten* has both proximal and medial functions, perhaps akin to Middle English *this* and *that*; the distal *tamten* is closer to the very distal Middle English *yon*.

- (8) [Reporting to one’s supervisor after a long day of professional spying:]
 O dziesiątej wszedł chłopak. Pięć minut później wyszedł ten chłopak.
 At ten.o’clock entered boy. Five minutes later left PROX boy.
 “At 10:00, a boy entered. Five minutes later the boy left.”

Ten in example (8) is not a straightforward demonstrative, translatable as “this” or “that.” Omitting the determiner results in an indefinite reading. Thus, *ten* is necessary to establish a co-referentiality with an entity from earlier in the discourse, not unlike a definite article:

- (8’) O dziesiątej wszedł chłopak. Pięć minut później wyszedł chłopak.
 At ten.o’clock entered boy. Five minutes later left boy.
 “At 10:00, a boy entered. Five minutes later a boy left.” (i.e. “a different boy”)

One single lexical item sharing the function of a definite article and a demonstrative is by no means linguistically unusual. Recently, Maldonado et al. (2018) argued that *le . . . -o’* in Yucatec Maya, commonly analyzed as a demonstrative, should be analyzed (also) as a definite article. Out of 620 languages surveyed in Dryer (2013), 69 have a “demonstrative word used as marker of definiteness.” I propose that Polish is a 70th, though as always the devil is in the details: the Polish demonstrative as a marker of definiteness has a typologically idiosyncratic distribution.

In reflecting on the syntactic status of the Yucatecan *le . . . -o’*, Maldonado et al. (2018) write: “[t]his raises the question of whether we are dealing with two homophonous determiners (a definite article and a demonstrative) or if *le . . . o’* belongs to a third category that can fulfill all functions at the same time” (p. 240). They settle for the former analysis, but with no strong conviction. Since demonstratives are a common diachronic source of definite articles, it is conceivable one can find intermediate-stage languages with one lexical item playing both roles, too (Dryer, 2013). Either way, the question of syntactic status is orthogonal to the issues discussed in this paper. We will leave this issue open for future research.

We owe previous work on the Polish word order-definiteness interactions to Szwedek (1973a). He claims that word order variations can fill the semantic gap left open by a lack of articles and intimates that word order in Polish is a grammaticalized way of indicating definiteness. He “tentatively concludes” that “nouns with indefinite interpretation appear in sentence final position only (unless explicitly marked indefinite in some other way)” (Szwedek, 1973a).

Counter-examples to this claim are easily found. A modifier of the VP or even the sentence as whole might appear sentence finally. Even so, it will fail to force a definite reading onto the now-penultimate constituent:

- (9) Zjadłem bułkę.
I.ate bread.roll.
“I ate a bread roll.”
- (10) Zjadłem bułkę na śniadanie.
I.ate bread.roll onto breakfast.
“I had a bread roll for breakfast.”
- (11) Zjadłem bułkę, na szczęście!
I.ate bread.roll, onto happiness!
“Fortunately, I ate a bread roll!”

But there is no reason to be snide about Szwedek (1973a)’s formulation—the spirit of his observation is alive and well. As example (8) demonstrates, there is a real correspondence between clause-initial positions and definiteness in Polish, as is there between clause-final positions and indefiniteness. No surprises here; old information tends to be presented first (perhaps to facilitate processing) and new information second. Old information is that which is known to the hearer or previously mentioned, either way: definite. New information might be a discourse-new non-unique entity, and thus indefinite (Birner, 2013). Old information being presented before new information—in defiance of the ordinary Polish word order SVO, but in conformance with typical narrative practices—is demonstrated in example (12):

- (12) Zobaczyłem kruka, bociana i wronę. Kruka zjadł lew,
I.saw raven.ACC, stork.ACC and.SS jackdaw.ACC. Raven.ACC ate lion.NOM,
bociana wąż, a wronę pantera.
stork.ACC serpent.NOM, and.DS jackdaw.ACC panther.NOM.
“I saw a raven, a stork, and a jackdaw. A lion ate the raven, a serpent — the stork, and a panther — the jackdaw.”

Thus, the broad-stroke semantic-pragmatic-syntactic correspondences can be sketched as follows:

definite	≅	old information	≅	clause-initial
indefinite	≅	new information	≅	clause-final

Still, even though example (8) suggests that this correspondence is categorical, it is not so. It might entirely fail to obtain, as demonstrated by example (13). It might only skew the space of

interpretations in one direction with very little in the way of disambiguation, as demonstrated by example (15). Finally, it might resolve the ambiguity only partially as in example (12).

Now, let us consider a case where the correspondence fails to obtain:

- (13) Książka leżała na kołdrze.
Book lay on quilt.
“A/the book lay on a/the quilt.”

One can manufacture contexts to demonstrate that all four combinations of indefinite and definite are viable interpretations of example (13), with (13) an answer to questions in (14):

- (14) a. INDEFINITE / INDEFINITE
I co tam było?
And what there was?
“And what was there?” (answer: “A book lay on a quilt.”)
- b. INDEFINITE / DEFINITE
A co z kołdrą?
And what with quilt?
“And what about the quilt?” (answer: “A book lay on the quilt.”)
- c. DEFINITE / INDEFINITE
A co z książką?
And what with book?
“And what about the książką?” (answer: “The book lay on a quilt.”)
- d. DEFINITE / DEFINITE
Jak położone względem siebie były książka i kołdra?
How positioned relative.to self were book and quilt?
“How were the book and the quilt positioned relative to each other?”
(answer: “The book lay on the quilt.”)

Finally, almost all combinations of definiteness and indefiniteness are found to work even for sentences like (15), granted enough effort put into imagining scenarios with varying number books and quilts to ensure or preclude uniqueness:

- (15) Książka leżała na kołdrze a kołdra leżała na książce.
Book lay on quilt and.DS quilt lay on book.
“A/the book lay on a/the quilt and a quilt lay on a/the book.” or
“A/the book lay on a/the quilt and a/the quilt lay on a book.”

The only impossible interpretations are those in which the second clause’s NPs are both definite. The explanation is simple: Such sentences would require the book to be both simultaneously above

and below the quilt; a physical impossibility. As long as there is at least one indefinite in the second clause, interpretations in which there are two different books or two different quilts are open to us and the sentence is salvaged.

Nonetheless, example (15) is a non-categorical instance of the correspondence laid out on page 5. Even though it has twelve different possible interpretations (four for the first clause and three for the second one), discourse-initially (however weird that discourse be) the most natural one is this one-quilt/two-books interpretation of example (15').

(15') "A book lay on a quilt and the quilt lay on a book."

The first two NPs, both hearer- and discourse-new, are interpreted indefinitely. The second occurrence of "quilt" in the subject position is interpreted definitely. The very general principle operating here might be formulated as follows:

Principle of Co-referential Match. Given no reasons to the contrary, two identical descriptions pick out one referent.

The nebulous "reasons to the contrary" can be lexical, e.g. the optional determiners mentioned earlier, the adjectives *inny* "other," *drugi* "second," etc., or deduced from the combination of the discourse and world knowledge. In the course of interpreting the last noun in example (15), the latter takes place: since the "quilt" is definite and one object can't be both on and under another at the same time, the second instance of "book" is interpreted indefinitely.²

* * *

Let us switch things up a bit, replace books and quilts with keys and tables, and tinker some more with the new toy examples to arrive at our first word-order generalization.

²There is a very similar sentence which admits the double-definite interpretation:

- (A) Książka leżała na kołdrze, kołdra leżała na książce...
 H* H* H-H% H* H* H-H%
 Book lay on quilt, quilt lay on book...
 "A book lay on the quilt, the quilt lay on the book..."

Here, the high phrase-final pitch constitutes a distinctive continuation pattern. The two clauses are being listed (with a possibility of continuation left open), giving rise to a sense of "messy room" (i.e. the room was so messy that first a book lay on the quilt, and then the quilt lay on the book, and so on and so forth).

- (16) Klucze leżały na stole.
 Keys lay on table.
 “(The) keys lay on a/the table.”
- (17) Leżały klucze na stole.
 Lay keys on table.
 “Keys lay on a/the table.”
- (18) Leżały na stole klucze.
 Lay on table keys.
 “Keys lay on a/the table.”

We can now observe that certain word orders admit a narrower range of interpretations than others. Moving the subject NP past the verb renders definite interpretations impossible. Hence only example (16) is an appropriate response to the question in (19):³

- (19) Gdzie są moje klucze?
 Where are my keys?
 “Where are my keys?”

A more elaborate example like (20) might be needed to demonstrate that the Principle of Co-referential Match holds of all discourse, including longer stretches of monologue. Polish eschews all NPs if inferable from the context. If the referent is not sufficiently activated, pronouns are chosen. If that is insufficient still, one turns to “trimmed” NPs (e.g. “white-clad woman” subsequently replaced with “woman,” a strategy well known to English speakers as well). Thus, some contortions are inevitable to get the right kind of example.⁴

³Given a very promiscuous notion of “appropriateness,” examples (17) and (18) might also count as “appropriate.” Even if, they would be at best very uncooperative ways of saying “there lay *some* keys on the table, but I don’t know if they were yours.”

⁴To ponder the questions of his paper, Szwedek (1973a) considers the following example:

- (B) Wykradł milicjantowi reвольver. Siedział za to milicjant.
 Stole.away militiaman.DAT handgun. Was.sitting for it militiaman.
 “He stole a militiaman’s handgun. A?/the? militiaman went to jail for it.”

I chose not to use it for two reasons. First, it is stylistically, if not pragmatically, imperfect. If the two uses of “militiaman” refer to the same person, I would be loath to repeat the NP. (Having to choose from among many equally activated referents, as in example 20, makes the repetition of a full noun phrase more digestible.) If the two uses do not refer to one man, I would try to make the sentence more perspicuous, by adding *inny* “different” before the second *milicjant*, for example. Second, I fret that with roles such as the stereotyped “thief” and “militiaman” (or to facelife the communist era’s newspeak: “policeman”), there is a risk of archotyping the characters and giving the nouns a proper-noun-like reading, that is:

- (B’) He stole Militiaman’s handgun. Militiaman went to jail for it.

- (20) Miałem kiedyś powracający sen o bocianie, kuku i kobiecie w bieli.
 I.had once returning dream about stork, raven and woman in white.
- a. (Ta) kobieta w bieli nawiedzała mnie potem przez długie lata.
 (PROX) woman in white was.haunting me later through long years.
- b. Nawiedzała mnie potem przez długie lata #(ta) kobieta w bieli.
 Was.haunting me later through long years #(PROX) woman in white.

“Once I had a recurring dream about a stork, a raven, and a white-clad woman. The white-clad woman would haunt me for many years to come.”

The discourse-initial (20) might be followed by either (20a) or (20b). If the noun occupies its due subject position, as it does in (20a), the use of the determiner is optional, but if the NP moved to the end of the sentence, as is the case in (20b), is to receive a definite interpretation, it must be “forced” to by the definite determiner *ta*. Without the determiner, it is interpreted indefinitely, i.e. infelicitously in the context.

* * *

So far, we have only explicitly considered one use of the definite determiner: the anaphoric use. The *anaphoric* use of a determiner takes place when the referent can be identified with some other referent from earlier in the discourse. The versatile Polish *ten* is required in some anaphoric situations. In some cases, it appears subject to word order consideration, while in others whether to use it is open to the discretion of the speaker.

That is yet only one of the four uses of definites as proposed by Hawkins (1978). The other three are: the immediate situation, the larger situation, and bridging. *Immediate situation* uses are appropriate when the referent is unique in a discourse situation, e.g. *the table* when there is only one table in a living room, *the car* when the family owns only one, *the dog* in a household with one canine pet only. *Larger situation* uses are appropriate when the referent is unique globally, e.g. *the sun*, *the Lord*, *the king*. *Bridging* uses are soon to be discussed. Now consider the first two of these three, examples (21-22) presenting an immediate situation, and example (23) — a larger one.⁵

⁵In example (21), *tym* is an singular masculine instrumental form of *ten*. Other forms appearing in the paper include *ta*, *ta*, *tej*. For readability purposes, I have generally not glossed case marking, gender, and fine-grained aspectual and temporal distinctions where they don’t bear on questions at hand.

- (21) [Uttered in a household with only one dog:]
 Wyjdź z (tym) psem, mówię Ci po raz enty!
 Go.out.IMP with (PROX) dog, I.tell you for time nth!
 “I’ve told you umpteen times: walk the (this) dog already!”
- (22) [Same household; antecedent dog-walking exhortations absent:]
 Wyjdź z (#tym) psem, proszę.
 Go.out.IMP with (#PROX) dog, please.
 “Walk the dog, please.”
- (23) Przybył (#ten) król!
 Arrived (#PROX) king!
 “The king arrived!”

As we can see, in neither the presence of a determiner is necessary. In example (21) it is permitted for a colloquial effect or to emphasize the non-discourse-initial status of the “dog,” and hence the utterance (i.e. the dog that *I’ve already told you umpteen times to walk!*). By contrast, one cannot felicitously use *tym* (a declension of *ten*) in example (22) if the request is made for the first time.

In example (23), the determiner is entirely prohibited. In this context, *ten król* would have an interpretation akin to *this king*, raising both eyebrows and questions: *What other king could you possibly mean?* Of all the uses considered so far, the Polish *ten* has only anaphoric-definite uses.

We have already observed that word order plays a crucial role in the interpretation of Polish noun phrases. Logically then, to close off this part of our definite investigations, one last question must be asked: What word orders exactly demand the indefinite readings? We have already concluded that a clause final position is insufficient a condition. In search of a theory more apt at capturing our data, we then turn to Birner (2013) and adapt the notion of postposing.

Polish canonical word order is SVO, but many of our examples do little to conform with it. A well-known fact: Polish word order is largely unconstrained except pragmatic principles and cognitive considerations. In all the sentences we have seen, only the indefinite reading is available if the subject NP appears in a postverbal position, i.e. if it is postposed. We can thus formulate one pragmatic principle constraining the word order:

Principle of Indefinite Postposing. A postposed NP is anaphoric-definite only if explicitly so.

The Principle of Indefinite Postposing takes precedence over the Principle of Co-referential Match, i.e. the Principle of Indefinite Postposing is one of the “reasons to the contrary” of two identical descriptions picking out one referent.

Now we have to contend with what “being explicitly anaphoric-definite” means. For one, the definite-like determiner *ten* most surely counts as such. The distal *tamten* does too. A more complex question is the one of how prosody interacts with reference resolution. Szwedek (1973a) suggest that placing contrastive stress on the postposed constituent renders it ambiguous between several readings, one of which is that of coreference with a previous noun phrase. Examples (24) and (25) are trying to bring out this distinction:

(24) Dziewczynka uderzyła chłopca. Płakała dziewczynka.
 H* H* L-L% H* H* L-L%
 Girl hit boy. Cried girl.
 “A girl hit a boy. A girl cried.”

(25) Dziewczynka uderzyła chłopca. Płakała dziewczynka.
 H* H* L-L% H* L+H* L-L%
 Girl hit boy. Cried girl.
 “A boy hit the girl. *The girl* cried.”

I am not sure to what extent I agree with his intuition; example (25) sounds somewhat odd to me. Nor am I sure what to make of it—maybe marked prosody makes for marked pragmatics, with the Principle of Co-referential Match somehow overriding the Principle of Indefinite Postposing; maybe the nouns here are forced into proper-noun-like interpretations; or maybe the above facts fall out quite nicely from a fully fleshed out theory of discourse structure and prosody, and so we need not worry. Whatever the answer is, I will not be able to provide it here.

The reader might wonder if the Principle of Indefinite Postposing has a counterpart, a Principle of Definite Preposing, let’s say. The answer is: no, at least not as far as I can tell. The most common cases of preposing involve contrastive focus, irrespective of definiteness distinctions, but neither the question of preposing nor that of contrastive focus will be pursued here.

(26) A: Zobaczyłeś lisa?
 You.saw fox?
 “Did you see a fox?”

B: Dzika zobaczyłem.
Boar I.saw.
“I saw *a boar*.”

* * *

Until now, we have focused exclusively on examples containing identical descriptions of one referent (in the anaphoric-definite case) or of two different referents (in the indefinite case). A curious case is that when the antecedent description does not match the consequent one. As illustrated by (27), (28), and (29), the determiner is then mandatory, even if no postposing takes place:

- (27) Mówiłam mu jak to naprawić, ale #(ten) idiota przecież nie słucha.
I.told him how this to.fix, but #(PROX) idiot indeed not listens.
“I told him how to fix it, but the idiot never listens to me.”
- (28) Maria zaprosiła ornitologa na seminarium. Nie mam o #(tym) człowieku zbyt
Mary invited ornithologist onto seminar. Not I.have about #(PROX) man too
dobrego zdania.
good opinion.
“Maria has invited an ornithologist to the seminar. I don’t think very highly of the man.”
(adapted from Schwarz, 2013, ex. 10)
- (29) Z dyplomem z wychowania fizycznego, Terry mogłaby trenować licealną
With diploma from upbringing physical, Terry could coach high.school
drużynę siatkarską. Zamiast tego, #(ta) ranczerka i matka spędziła ostatnie
team volleyball. Instead of.this, #(PROX) rancher.FEM and mother spent last
trzy lata na jeździectwie.
three years on horseback.riding.
“With a degree in Physical Education, Terry could be coaching a high school volleyball
team. Instead, the ranch wife and mother has spent the last three years horseback riding.”
(adapted from Birner, 2013, ex. 142)

At the beginning of our investigations, we posited the Principle of Co-referential Match. It struck us as intuitive that two occurrences of one description are *ceteris paribus* taken to have one referent. I suspect that many languages without overt definiteness marking obey it. The new data also have an intuitive explanation: different descriptions prototypically pick out *different* referents. If it is not so, *vide* examples (27-29), the anaphoric-definite determiner is used to convey co-reference. Hence, a corollary to the Principle of Co-referential Match:

Principle of Co-referential Mismatch. Unless explicitly so, a description is not co-referential with a different description previous in the discourse.

* * *

To tie up the loose ends, we finally return to the phenomenon of bridging. Bridging takes place when a definite noun phrase is licensed by a previous occurrence of a referent related to it in a way which makes it unique or at least salient. For example, in (30), the use of the definite is not licensed by the uniqueness of the engine (in fact, there are many engines in the world), nor by previous discourse (assuming the engine was not previously mentioned), nor by the presence of a contextually salient engine—except for the one just made salient by the reference to a car.

- (30) A: What's wrong with your car?
B: The engine's broken.

Of all four uses of definites, bridging is the most peculiar one: it combines anaphoric and immediate-situation characteristics. Bridging is anaphoric since it requires another entity in the discourse to resolve its reference. It is immediate-situation-like since it does not refer to that entity, but rather to something else which stands in a salient relation to it.

As was prefigured, the literature on definiteness has long argued if the phenomenon is best understood in terms of *uniqueness* or *familiarity* (including *anaphora*). Schwarz (2013) observes that there are languages with two sets of definite determiners: the *weak* set, corresponding to the uniqueness uses, and the *strong* set, corresponding to the familiarity ones. Some bridging cases, notably part-whole relations, fall into the former category; others, notably producer-product relations, — into the latter.

Polish does not have a definite which corresponds to the uniqueness uses, and the anaphoric-definite *ten* extends only to a subset of anaphoric-definite uses. It should therefore come as no surprise that in part-whole relations, where other languages (e.g. German, Fering) use the *weak* uniqueness determiners, Polish uses none (Schwarz, 2013).

- (31) Lodówka była tak duża, że dynię można było spokojnie zmieścić w (#tej) Fridge was so big, that pumpkin.ACC one.could calmly fit in (#PROX) dolnej szufladzie. bottom drawer.

“The fridge was so big that the pumpkin could easily be stowed in the crisper.”

(adopted from Schwarz, 2013, ex. 16a)

- (32) Przeczytałbym tą książkę, ale (#ta) okładka mi się nie podoba. I.would.read PROX book, but (#PROX) cover to.me self.acc not pleases.

“I would read this book, but I don’t like the cover.”

The surprise lurks in the cases of producer-product bridging. Cross-linguistically, this type of bridging involves the *strong* anaphoric determiners. In Polish, it involves a possessive phrase. Omitting the possessive is not an option, nor is replacing it with the proximal/definite *ten*.

- (33) Ta sztuka tak zgorszyła krytyka, że nie zostawił w swojej recenzji na THIS play.FEM such displeased critic, that not he.left in self’s review on {je/ #tym/ #∅} autorze suchej nitki. {her/ #PROX/ #∅} author dry thread.

“The play displeased the critic so much that he tore the author to pieces in his review.” (lit. “didn’t leave a dry thread on its author”)

(adopted from Schwarz, 2013, ex. 16b)

- (34) Piotr kupił w Harburgu obraz. Zrobił z {jego/ #tym/ #∅} autorem Peter bought in Hamburg painting.MASC. He.made with {his/ #PROX/ #∅} author dobry interes. good business.

“Peter bought a painting in Hamburg. The painter made him a good deal.”

(adopted from Schwarz, 2013, ex. 17b)

The above is only a pretheoretical observation, but in conjunction with other facts discussed earlier in the paper, it paints a picture of Polish language outside the typological frame of Schwarz (2013) or Jenks (2015). Bridging definites are a rich and poorly understood category. Different types of relations licence different linguistic solutions. On the whole, bridging—both descriptively and theoretically—remains an open question which we will not attempt to answer here.

In summary, we have seen that Polish definiteness marking strategies include contextual inference, the aspectual system, lexical determination, word order, and perhaps prosody. We focused on the penultimate one of these five factors.

Polish has been shown to have a determiner whose anaphoric-definite functions are governed mainly by two principles. The Principle of Indefinite Postposing says that postposed noun phrases are interpreted as indefinite (or unique-definite) by default and as anaphoric-definite only if marked as such, for example by *ten*. The Principle of Co-referential Mismatch says that two different descriptions prototypically pick out to different referents, unless their identity is made overt by marking the second one as definite (again, by *ten* among others). As such, the Polish determiner *ten* has an anaphoric-definite function, but its use is obligatory only in specific environments, where the anaphoric-definite reading is the non-default one.

Finally, we discovered that Polish breaks out of the heretofore proposed typologies in more than one way: the bridging anaphora sometimes forbids the use of the determiner; other times it requires a possessive phrase. The first case corresponds to the weak determiners of German and Fering; the second case — to the strong ones. Thus, the part-time definite article *ten* plays no part in the bridging anaphoric situations. Instead, we are confronted again with a split unobserved—to the best of my knowledge—in previous research.

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