

# **Compound nouns and phrasal nouns in English and Polish**

Prace Naukowe



Uniwersytetu Śląskiego  
w Katowicach  
nr 3823

# Compound nouns and phrasal nouns in English and Polish

Bożena Cetnarowska

Editor of the Series: Językoznawstwo Neofilologiczne  
Bożena Cetnarowska

Referee:  
Maria Bloch-Trojnar

# Table of contents

Acknowledgements . . . . .	7
List of abbreviations . . . . .	9
Introduction . . . . .	11
Chapter 1	
Compounds and phrasal nouns in a cross-linguistic perspective:	
Introductory remarks . . . . .	15
1.1 Defining compounds. Heads of compounds . . . . .	15
1.2 Criteria for identifying morphological compounds (and setting them apart from syntactic phrases) . . . . .	25
1.3 “Improper compounds,” “syntactic compounds,” “phrasal lexemes”: Transition zone between compounds proper and syntactic phrases . . . . .	30
1.4 Phrasal lexemes and Construction Morphology . . . . .	37
1.5 Summary . . . . .	43
Chapter 2	
Compound nouns and compound-like multi-word units in English . . . . .	45
2.1 Types of compounds in English (a general overview). . . . .	45
2.2 NN compounds in English: Semantic classes . . . . .	50
2.3 How to identify compounds in English? Equivocal results of diagnostic tests . . . . .	57
2.4 Relational Adjective (RA)+Noun combinations. . . . .	64
2.5 Genitive compounds ( <i>X</i> 's <i>X</i> construction) . . . . .	70
2.6 Competition between NN compounds and phrasal nouns in English . . . . .	75
2.7 Summary . . . . .	86
Chapter 3	
Polish compounds and compound-like multi-word units . . . . .	88
3.1 Morphological compounds in Polish (compounds proper and solid compounds) . . . . .	88
3.2 Types of juxtapositions in Polish . . . . .	101
3.3 Summary . . . . .	112

## 6 *Table of contents*

### Chapter 4

<b>Polish multi-word units as phrasal nouns</b> . . . . .	114
4.1 AN and NA phrasal nouns in Polish . . . . .	114
4.2 Noun-Noun.GEN combinations as phrasal lexemes . . . . .	132
4.3 NN phrasal lexemes whose constituents agree in case . . . . .	137
4.4 Summary . . . . .	156

### Chapter 5

<b>Competition between morphological compound nouns and phrasal nouns in Polish</b> . . . . .	158
5.1 Subordinate compounds and phrasal nouns . . . . .	158
5.2 Attributive compounds and phrasal nouns . . . . .	173
5.3 Coordinate compounds and phrasal nouns. . . . .	179
5.4 Summary . . . . .	188

### Chapter 6

<b>Construction schemas for compound nouns and phrasal nouns in English and Polish</b> . . . . .	190
6.1 Construction schemas for English compound nouns and phrasal nouns . . . . .	190
6.2 Construction schemas for Polish compounds and phrasal nouns . . . . .	197
6.3 Second order schemas and univerbation in Polish. . . . .	207
6.4 Summary . . . . .	211

<b>Conclusion</b> . . . . .	213
-----------------------------	-----

<b>Appendix</b> . . . . .	221
---------------------------	-----

<b>References</b> . . . . .	229
-----------------------------	-----

<b>Summary</b> . . . . .	244
--------------------------	-----

<b>Streszczenie</b> . . . . .	245
-------------------------------	-----

## Acknowledgements

I express my sincere gratitude to Professor Maria Bloch-Trojnar, who reviewed this monograph. She read my manuscript very carefully and offered valuable advice (concerning both crucial linguistic points as well as editorial matters).

I am indebted to my colleague, the late Dr Helen Trugman, who convinced me that classifying adjectives and noun+adjective combinations in Polish make a fascinating research topic. I enjoyed my collaboration with Helen and with Dr Agnieszka Pysz, even though our joint work on adjectives was cast in a different theoretical framework from the one assumed in the present monograph.

I am grateful to Professor Geert Booij for encouraging me to apply the model of Construction Morphology to the analysis of data from Polish, and for sharing his recent papers with me.

I received many helpful and thought-provoking comments on my work from organisers and participants of several linguistic conferences, including the 50th meeting of *Societas Linguistica Europea* in Zurich, the 11th Mediterranean Morphology Meeting in Nicosia, several editions of *Olino* (Olomouc Linguistics Colloquium), *Word-Formation Theories & Typology and Universals in Word-Formation* (in Košice), *LingBaW* (Linguistics Beyond and Within), *PLM* (Poznań Linguistic Meeting), *FDSL* (Formal Description of Slavic Languages), *LISLAC* (Linguistic Snapshots: Language and Cognition), and *VDOCS* (Various Dimensions of Contrastive Studies). I had an opportunity to present some of the issues that are dealt with in this book during my Erasmus visits to the University of Bamberg, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and the University of Patras.

I wish to thank fellow morphologists and syntacticians from Polish universities (including Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin and the University of Wrocław) for inspiring ideas and encouragement during the writing of the monograph.

I am grateful to Professor Krystyna Warchał, my copy editor, for suggesting some improvements in the manuscript.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to my family.

# List of abbreviations<sup>1</sup>

A (or ADJ)	– adjective
ADVZ	– adverbialiser
ADJZ	– adjectiviser
AN	– adjective+noun (combination)
ATAP	– attributive-appositive (compounds)
BNC	– British National Corpus
COCA	– Corpus of Contemporary American English
CONJ	– conjunction
CA	– classifying (i.e., classificatory) adjective
COP	– copula
DAT	– dative
DIM	– diminutive
DP	– determiner phrase
F	– feminine
FUT	– future tense
GEN	– genitive
H	– head
IMPRS	– impersonal
INF	– infinitive
INS	– instrumental
LOC	– locative
LV	– linking vowel
M	– masculine
MOD	– modifier
N	– noun
N	– neuter

---

<sup>1</sup> The majority of the abbreviations given below have been adopted from the Leipzig Glossing Rules, developed jointly by members of the Department of Linguistics of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology and the Department of Linguistics of the University of Leipzig. The Leipzig Glossing Rules are available at: <https://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php>.



10 *List of abbreviations*

NA	– noun+adjective (combination)
NKJP	– Narodowy Korpus Języka Polskiego (National Corpus of Polish)
NMLZ	– nominaliser
NN	– noun+noun (combination)
NN.GEN	– noun followed by a genitive attribute
NOM	– nominative
NP	– noun phrase
N+RA	– noun+relational adjective (combination)
P (or PREP)	– preposition
PASS	– passive
PF	– proper function
PL	– plural
PP	– prepositional phrase
PRS	– present tense
PST	– past tense
PTCP	– participle
RA	– relational adjective
RA+N	– relational adjective+noun (combination)
RDP	– recoverably deletable predicate
QA	– qualitative (i.e., qualifying) adjective
SEM	– semantic representation
SG	– singular
SUFF	– suffix
TH	– theme vowel
V	– verb
VP	– verb phrase

## Introduction

This monograph investigates morphological compounds and multi-word units in English and Polish. I will restrict my attention to compound nouns and compound-like phrasal nouns.

When analysing the latter group in English, I consider so-called genitive compounds (e.g., *bull's eye* and *doll's house*) and combinations consisting of relational adjectives and nouns (e.g., *presidential election*, *racial problem*, *parental consent*). Relational adjectives are denominal adjectives which can be paraphrased as 'relating to N, concerning N' (where N is the base noun). The group of phrasal nouns in Polish to be discussed here includes NN units in which two nouns agree in case, for instance, *człowiek instytucja* (man.NOM.SG institution.NOM.SG) 'one-man-institution' or *szpital-pomnik* (hospital.NOM.SG monument.NOM.SG) 'memorial hospital,' as well as NN units in which the right-hand noun is the genitive attribute of the head, as in *mąż stanu* (man.NOM.SG state.GEN.SG) 'statesman' and *dawca licencji* (giver.NOM.SG licence.GEN.SG) 'licensor.' I will also look at Polish multi-word expressions which consist of a noun and an adjective in any order, for example, *ekran dotykowy* (screen.NOM.SG touch.RA.NOM.SG) 'touch screen' (N+A) and *zimowe opony* (winter.RA.NOM.PL tyre.NOM.PL) 'winter tyres.'

It is interesting to ask the question how the typological and genetic differences between English and Polish are reflected in the system of compounds and compound-like units. English is said to have inherited the Germanic tendency for coining morphologically complex nouns by compounding (Bauer et al. 2013: 625). In contrast, Slavonic diachronic studies suggest that compounding was not a very productive process in Proto-Slavonic and in Old Polish (see Długosz-Kurczabowa and Dubisz 1999: 62–65). Some morphological compounds attested in Old Polish were coined as loan translations, for instance, *mił-o-sierdzy-e* (fond+LV+heart+NOM.SG) 'mercy' from Latin *misericordia* and *wszech-mogąc-y* (all+able+NOM.SG) 'almighty' from Latin *omnipotens*. There are compounds proper in contemporary Polish which are calques of German compounds, such as *list-o-nosz* (letter+LV+carry) 'postman' (from *Briefträger*) and *dusz-pasterz* (soul+shepherd) 'priest, pastor' (from *Seelsorger*), or calques of Russian compounds, for example, *brak-o-rób-stw-o* (dud+LV+do+NMLZ+NOM.SG) 'wastage' (from

*brakodielstwo*) (see Nagórko 2016). Studies of Polish composite expressions (e.g., Damborský 1966) also note the influence of French on Polish (either directly or through the medium of Russian), which is responsible for the formation of compound-like multi-word units with the coordinate interpretation, such as *wagon-restauracja* (wagon.NOM.SG restaurant.NOM.SG) ‘dining car,’ *zegarek-bransoletka* (watch.NOM.SG bracelet.NOM.SG) ‘watch with a bracelet, watch and bracelet set,’ and *miasto-bohater* (city.NOM.SG hero.NOM.SG) ‘hero city.’ Nevertheless, it is pointed out by Polish diachronic linguists (e.g., Handke 1976: 35–50 and Długosz-Kurczabowa and Dubisz 1999: 62–63, 75) that compounding should be regarded as a native pattern of forming morphologically complex words in Polish. This is confirmed by the existence of Old Slavonic compound personal nouns in contemporary Polish, such as *Bogumił* (god.DAT+dear) ‘(lit.) someone dear to God,’ and by the occurrence of compound common nouns which can be traced back to Old Polish, for instance, *listopad* (leaf+LV+fall) ‘November’ and *świniopas* (pig+LV+graze) ‘swineherd.’ A growth in the productivity of compounding in Polish has been observed recently. Jadacka (2001: 113) compares Polish neologisms coined during two periods in the second half of the 20th century. During the first period, that is, 1945–1964, compounds constitute 12.33% of all neologisms belonging to the syntactic category of nouns. In the second period, that is, 1989–2000, compound nouns account for 34.36% of all novel morphologically complex nouns. Consequently, the study of composite expressions in contemporary Polish promises to be a fruitful area for further inquiry.

There are several goals which I intend to achieve in my monograph. I intend to highlight the existence of the “transition zone” between morphological compounds and canonical syntactic phrases. I will demonstrate that multi-word expressions which belong to such a transition zone (and which are referred to here as “phrasal lexemes”) exhibit a mixture of word-like and phrase-like properties. I also aim to investigate the co-existence of morphological compounds and phrasal lexemes which consist of the same stems, for instance, English *atomic bomb* vs. *atom bomb*, or Polish *bajkopisarz* (fable+LV+writer) vs. *pisarz bajek* (writer.NOM.SG fable.GEN.PL) and *krem-żel* (cream.NOM.SG gel.NOM.SG) ‘gel cream’ vs. *kremożel* (cream+LV+gel) ‘gel cream.’

I disagree with the treatment of NN combinations or AN/NA combinations in Polish as canonical noun phrases since, as will be shown here, they exhibit a naming function and are syntactically restricted. I will also argue against the assumption that multi-word expressions, such as *medical building* and *criminal policy* in English, or *pióro świetlne* (pen light.RA) ‘light pen,’ *miernik promieniowania* (meter.NOM radiation.GEN) ‘radiation meter,’ and *kierowca-dostawca* (driver.NOM supplier.NOM) ‘delivery driver’

in Polish, should be regarded as lexicalised noun phrases. Such an assumption implies that expressions under analysis are semantically opaque and relatively rare. I will attempt to prove that patterns for coining phrasal nouns are employed productively (especially in Polish) and are used to “fill the gaps” when there is a need for coining a name of a person, object, or abstract notion.

Therefore, I will adopt here the theoretical underpinnings and the apparatus of Construction Morphology, as developed by, among others, Booij (2009, 2010, 2019), Masini (2009, 2019), Hüning (2010), Booij and Audring (2015), and Booij and Masini (2015). Construction Morphology argues in favour of a continuum between lexical and syntactic expressions. It postulates schemas which account for the internal structure of existing phrasal nouns and which can serve as models for coining new phrasal lexemes. I intend to demonstrate the usefulness of second order schemas (for the analysis of univertation in Polish) and schema unification.

When discussing types of multi-word units in Polish and English I will employ the typology proposed by Bisetto and Scalise (2005), and later modified by Scalise and Bisetto (2009). This typology has been shown (e.g., by Masini and Benigni 2012) to be applicable both to morphological compounds and to compound-like units. Moreover, it is not Anglocentric and is designed to be appropriate for a description of languages belonging to various language families (e.g., Romance languages and Slavonic languages).

Theoretical considerations will be supported by data culled from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the National Corpus of Polish (NKJP). The PELCRA search engine devised for NKJP by Pezik (2012) makes it possible to retrieve all word forms of a given lexical item and to obtain information on token frequency, collocation, and register.

Although the empirical material to be considered here includes both examples from English and Polish, the focus will be laid on data from Polish, since it shows greater richness of patterns which can be used to form multi-word units. It illustrates many interesting cases of competition between morphological compounds and multi-word units, which have received little attention in the literature on the subject although they lead to important theoretical implications. Data from Polish will hopefully shed more light on the interaction between morphology and syntax.

The layout of this monograph is as follows. It consists of a brief introduction (preceded by a list of abbreviations and acknowledgements), six main chapters, a concluding chapter, references, and an appendix. Chapter 1 offers a brief discussion of some crucial issues concerning morphological compounds from a cross-linguistic perspective. The notion of the

head is elaborated upon, selected compound typologies are mentioned, and some diagnostic tests are described which are used (in various languages) to distinguish between morphological compounds and syntactic phrases. The existence of a transition zone between compounds proper and free syntactic combinations is demonstrated. Chapter 1 closes with a concise introduction to some assumptions of Construction Morphology. Chapter 2 discusses morphological compounds and compound-like multi-word units in the English language. It exemplifies difficulties in drawing the boundary between English compound nouns proper and phrasal nouns. Syntactic behaviour of compounds and phrasal nouns is compared. RA+N combinations (e.g., *polar bear*, *postal service*, *solar panel*) and genitive compounds (such as *dog's ear* and *men's shoes*) are shown to exhibit word-like properties. Cases are discussed when NN compounds coexist with similar genitive compounds or with RA+N combinations. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 deal with the data from the Polish language. An overview is given of basic types of composite expressions in Polish in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 investigates word-like and phrase-like properties of several types of phrasal nouns which are traditionally referred to as “juxtapositions” (Pol. *zestawienia*). Chapter 5 discusses competition between Polish compounds proper and juxtapositions. It is argued that patterns for phrasal nouns are used productively in Polish to coin multi-word expressions which can “fill the gap” when a morphological compound is not available. In Chapter 6, an attempt is made to apply the theoretical apparatus of Construction Morphology to the analysis of compound nouns and phrasal nouns in both languages. Conclusions are formulated in the final chapter.

Bożena Cetnarowska

## Compound nouns and phrasal nouns in English and Polish

### S u m m a r y

The present monograph discusses compound nouns and juxtapositions (i.e., phrasal nouns) in Polish and English, focusing on the interaction and competition between the processes of coining both types of linguistic units. The phrasal nouns under analysis include combinations of classifying adjectives and nouns in any order, for instance, English *electrical engineer*, *hard disk*, Polish *inżynier budowlany* ‘construction engineer,’ *zimowe opony* ‘winter tyres’; coordinate noun-noun juxtapositions, such as Polish *torba-worek* ‘holdall bag,’ *kelner-barman* ‘waiter and bartender’; and combinations of nouns and genitive attributes (English *women’s college*, Polish *dom studenta* ‘student hall of residence’). Constraints on forming compound nouns in Polish are illustrated. Compound nouns and phrasal nouns are divided into classes according to the typology of composite expressions postulated by S. Scalise and A. Bisetto. Emphasis is placed on demonstrating that phrasal nouns exhibit a mixture of phrasal and word-like properties. Difficulties are pointed out in drawing a strict and non-arbitrary border between morphological compounds and syntactic phrases, and in identifying subtypes of phrasal nouns which differ in their degree of similarity to regular noun phrases. The phenomenon of univerbation (i.e., morphological condensation) in the Polish language is discussed. The framework adopted in this monograph is the theory of Construction Morphology, formulated by G. Booij, who shows that principles of Construction Grammar can be applied felicitously in the analysis of morphologically complex words. Construction Morphology has been adopted mainly by researchers who study Germanic and Romance languages. In the present monograph construction schemas are proposed for selected types of compound nouns and phrasal nouns in Polish and English. The mechanism of schema unification is employed in order to represent the internal structure of interfixal-suffixal formations in Polish. It is demonstrated that the model of Construction Morphology is particularly felicitous in the study of phenomena at the border of syntax and word-formation, such as interaction and competition between morphological compounds and phrasal lexemes. Although the linguistic data under analysis come mainly from Polish and English, multi-word units from other Indo-European languages are mentioned where appropriate. Theoretical considerations are supported by numerous examples culled from on-line corpora, such as the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the National Corpus of Polish (NKJP).

**Key words:** compound nouns, juxtapositions, classifying adjectives, Construction Grammar, Construction Morphology

Bożena Cetnarowska

## Rzeczowniki złożone i rzeczowniki frazowe w języku angielskim i polskim

### Streszczenie

Niniejsza monografia omawia procesy tworzenia rzeczowników złożonych oraz zestawień, koncentrując się na zjawiskach współdziałania oraz rywalizacji pomiędzy tymi procesami w języku polskim i angielskim. Zestawienia analizowane w pracy składają się z połączeń rzeczownika z przymiotnikiem klasyfikującym (np. ang. *electrical engineer, hard disk*, pol. *inżynier budowlany, zimowe opony*), zestawień rzeczownikowych o strukturze współrzędnej (np. *torba-worek, kelner-barman*) oraz połączeń rzeczownikowych o strukturze podrzędno-nadrzędnej (ang. *women's college*, pol. *dom studenta*). Przedstawiono ograniczenia dotyczące tworzenia złożów właściwych w języku polskim. Do podziału złożów oraz zestawień na podklasy zastosowano klasyfikację *compositów*, którą zaproponowali włoscy językoznawcy S. Scalise i A. Bisetto. Główny nacisk położono na podkreślenie hybrydowego charakteru zestawień, wykazujących zarówno cechy konstrukcji składniowych, jak też jednostek leksykalnych. Przedstawiono trudności w ścisłym odgraniczeniu złożów właściwych od leksemów frazowych (tj. zestawień) oraz w rozróżnianiu podtypów leksemów frazowych (wykazujących mniejsze lub większe podobieństwo do regularnych struktur składniowych). Omówiono zwięźle zjawisko uniwerbizacji w języku polskim. Analizy teoretyczne zostały przeprowadzone w ramach teorii morfologii konstrukcji (ang. *Construction Morphology*) sformułowanej przez G. Booija. Teoria ta, w której zaadoptowano założenia gramatyki konstrukcji (ang. *Construction Grammar*) do analizy struktury wewnętrznej wyrazów, była stosowana do tej pory głównie w opisie morfologii języków germańskich oraz romańskich. W niniejszej pracy zaproponowano schematy konstrukcyjne dla wybranych typów złożów i zestawień w polszczyźnie i angielszczyźnie. Zastosowano mechanizm zjednoczenia schematów konstrukcyjnych (ang. *schema unification*) dla przedstawienia wewnętrznej struktury formacji interfiksalnie-sufiksalnych. Wykazano, że model morfologii konstrukcji jest szczególnie przydatny w badaniu zjawisk z pogranicza składni i słowotwórstwa, takich jak rywalizacja pomiędzy złożeniami i zestawieniami. Choć materiał językowy analizowany w pracy pochodzi głównie z języka polskiego oraz angielskiego, uwzględniono dane z innych języków indoeuropejskich. Rozważania teoretyczne zostały poparte licznymi przykładami wybranymi z obszernych korpusów językowych, takich jak Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) oraz Narodowy Korpus Języka Polskiego (NKJP).

**Słowa kluczowe:** rzeczowniki złożone, zestawienia, przymiotniki klasyfikujące, gramatyka konstrukcji, morfologia konstrukcji

Copy editor: Krystyna Warchał  
Cover designer: Agata Augustynik  
Technical editor: Małgorzata Pleśniar  
Proofreader: Krystian Wojcieszuk  
Typesetting: Grzegorz Bociek

Copyright © 2019 by  
Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego  
All rights reserved

ISSN 0208-6336  
ISBN 978-83-226-3639-8  
(print edition)  
ISBN 978-83-226-3640-4  
(electronic edition)

Publisher  
Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego  
ul. Bankowa 12B, 40-007 Katowice  
[www.wydawnictwo.us.edu.pl](http://www.wydawnictwo.us.edu.pl)  
e-mail: [wydawus@us.edu.pl](mailto:wydawus@us.edu.pl)

First impression. Printed sheets: 15.5. Publishing sheets: 16.5.  
Offset paper grade III 90 g/m<sup>2</sup>. Price 24 zł (+VAT)  
Printing and binding: Volumina.pl Daniel Krzanowski  
ul. Księcia Witolda 7–9, 71-063 Szczecin