

International Symposium on Polyadjectival Nominals in Crosslinguistic Perspective

30-31 August 2017, Edge Hill University, Ormskirk, Lancashire, UK.

**Organisers: Professor Anthony Grant, Edge Hill University
Dr Paul Flanagan, University of Chester**

Call for papers

It has been suggested by a number of theorists that there exist universal structures which govern the order in which adjectives are placed - which explain why English says *the big brown guard dog* with the adjectives only possible in that order - and that these structures are salient across a number of languages.

This claim needs to be tested against empirical evidence from a wide geographical and structural range of languages in order to test its validity. The adjectival category exhibits considerable variation in form from one language to another, taking as it does structural features typical of nouns and/or verbs, but sometimes being fairly distinctive from either category. This symposium will investigate the extent to which adjective order ('adjective stacking') reflects (or deviates from) that of English in a sample of languages which is representative of the morphosyntactic diversity exhibited by the adjective class. We intend to gather together people investigating this topic in a range of languages and in relevant co-disciplines in order to develop a comprehensive account and a cogent narrative about polyadjectival nominal ordering and its implications for understanding cognition and language.

We invite contributions on languages from a wide variety of language families, particularly from languages (including those of East and Southeast Asia, West Africa and native languages of the Americas) in which the adjective class is often considered as a subgroup of verbs. Furthermore the phenomenon of adjective stacking, as a process which adds incrementally to the sense of the adjectival phrase, is one which is syntactically distinctive from the behaviour of other word classes in most languages.

It is therefore hoped that by bringing together in-depth studies of adjective ordering in a broad range of languages we can see the extent to which there are universal structures which govern the syntax of adjectival phrases and noun phrases with complex modification strings. The importance of this for our understanding of human cognition, prototype theory and conceptual ordering is very considerable. Studies based on work with tagged corpora for various languages, which facilitate speedy collection and analysis of polyadjectival nominals, are especially robust methodologically and will be especially welcome, as will papers which examine these issues within the psycholinguistic spectrum.

Keynote speaker: Prof Michael Ramscar, University of Tübingen:

Such a difficult problem: Gendered insights into the syntax and semantics of English adjectives.

Please send abstracts (up to 500 words) to Prof Anthony Grant, granta@edgehill.ac.uk

Date for submission of abstracts (200-500 words): 7 June 2017

Date for responses to submission: 22 June 2017

Conference fee (lunch, refreshments, conference pack) 30GBP.