Some “Non-intersective” Adjectives are Genuinely Noun-taking
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Some adjectives (e.g., *good, beautiful*) have an “intersective” as well as a “non-intersective” reading. We argue that suppletive comparative and superlative forms of some corresponding Serbo-Croatian (SC) adjectives favor a “blame-the-adjective” account of this fact, rather than a “blame-the-noun” account.

**What are “non-intersective” adjectives?** A standard diagnostic for identifying “intersective” adjectives (I-adjectives) is (1), which checks whether applying a predicate formed of an adjective-noun complex to an individual intuitively entails applying the adjective to that individual and applying the noun to that individual. *Italian* is an I-adjective (see (2a)), and *former* is a NI-adjective (i.e., “non-intersective” adjective, see (2b)). Some adjectives are ambiguous (see (3)). We can try to account for the distribution of NI-readings by blaming the adjective (e.g., Siegel 1976) or by blaming the noun (e.g., Larson 1998). Here we use formal tools in the style of Heim&Kratzer 1998 illustrate how these approaches work.

**Blame ADJ.** The extensions of *DA* and *Italian* are of type `<s,t>`, and they combine by Predicate Modification yielding an I-reading (4a). The extension of *former* is of type `<s,t>, <s,t>, <e,t>`: it combines with the intension of *DA* by (Intensional) Functional Application yielding a NI-reading (4b).

*Good* takes a degree argument (type d) and is ambiguous: *good*-d is *Italian*-like (see (5)) and *good*-d is *former*-like (see (6)). Both *good*-d and *good*-d′ depend on a contextually supplied scale (Chierchia&McConnell-Ginet 2000; Larson 1983, 1998; Siegel 1976 a.o.). Thus, (3a) has in fact more than one I-reading: John can be morally good for a thief, or for a man (*GOOD(C2,w)* vs. *GOOD(C2,w) in (5b)).

*Good*-d is special in that its contextually supplied scale is semantically restricted by the noun.

**Blame NOUN.** *Good*-d is lexically unambiguous and *Italian*-like (see (7a)): it is like *good*-d in (5a), except that the domain is DUE (individuals or events). The noun takes an individual argument and an event argument (see (7b)) and *good*-d can, in principle, apply to the individual (yielding an I-reading; e.g., (8a)), or to the event (yielding a NI-reading; e.g., (8b)). Not all adjectives are like that: only individuals can be Italian (hence the non-ambiguity of (2a), with *Italian*) and only events can be “former” (hence the non-ambiguity of (2b), with *former*). That the NI-reading is an event reading is suggested by the behavior of adverbs that correspond to the adjectives that support NI-readings (see (9), which entails what the NI-reading of (3b) entails). These adverbs presumably take events as arguments (Davidson 1967).

**How do we choose?** A small class of SC adjectives have the following peculiar property (see (10)). They have suppletive comparative and superlative forms, and although they are ambiguous between an I- and a NI-reading when they appear alone, they lose the I-reading in comparative/superlative constructions (unlike adjectives which do not have suppletive forms, see (11)). This suggests that at least in SC suppletive forms the adjective must be blamed for the NI-reading. This, in turn, suggests (contra Larson) that we cannot completely do away with a *former*-like semantics for adjectives such as *good*. We propose, then, that English *good* (and SC *dobar*<sub>NONSUPLETIVE</sub>, which doesn’t have a comparative or superlative variant) have the *Italian*-like semantics of *good*- and the *former*-like semantics of *good**-. An NI-reading of (3a) arises with *good*<sup><i>+</i></sup> if the contextually supplied scale happens to compare thieves according to their stealing skills (see (12): *GOOD(C3,w)* yields a NI-reading for (3a) when the adjective is *good*<sup><i>+</i></sup>). Support for this analysis comes from (13), where *good* and *incredible* do seem to pass the test in (1) on their NI-reading. English *former* has only the semantics in (4b), and SC ‘better’ and ‘best’ (or their root *dobar*<sub>SUPLETIVE</sub>) have only the *former*-like semantics of *good** (and (14) is the only meaning of (10b)).

**Further issues.** Larson notes that the intuitive meaning of (3a) (on its NI-reading) doesn’t involve checking whether John is a thief in alternative world-time pairs. We agree with Larson’s observation, but not with his suggestion that this fact renders a *former*-like semantics of *good* unjustified: the semantics of *good** in (6) is justified on the basis of (10) (and doesn’t check membership in ‘N’ in alternative world-time pairs). As for the case of *former-N*, *alleged-N*, and *imaginary-N*, we argue that their intuitive meanings do indeed justify a semantics that requires that their actual extensions contain individuals who are in ‘N’ in alternative world-time pairs. We conclude by addressing: (A) the problem of predicting the disappearance of the I-reading, rather than the NI-reading, in SC suppletive forms; and (B) the problem of couching our analysis in an adequate morphological framework.
Mary dances amazingly. $\Rightarrow$ Mary's dancing is amazing.

'a' is [A N] $\Rightarrow$ 'a' is A' and 'a' is N'

(2) a. John is an Italian D[istrict] A[torney]. $\Rightarrow$ John is Italian and John is a DA.
   b. John is a former DA. $\Rightarrow$ John is former. ($\Rightarrow$ John is a DA.)

(3) a. John is a good thief. I-reading: Might be true when John is evil, as long as his stealing skills are good.
   b. Mary is an amazing dancer. I-reading: False when Mary is not an amazing individual.

NI-reading: Might be true when Mary herself is dull, as long as her dancing is amazing.

(4) a. $[\text{Italian}]^w = [\lambda x \in D. x \text{ is Italian in } w]$ (D is the domain of individuals; w is a world-time pair)
   $[DA]^w = [\lambda x \in D. x \text{ is a DA in } w]$
   $\llbracket \text{John is an } [\lambda A \text{ Italian }] \llbracket N DA \rrbracket \rrbracket = [\lambda x \in D. [\llbracket \text{Italian} \rrbracket^w(x) = 1 \& [DA]^w(x) = 1])}\text{(John)}$
   b. $[\text{former}]^w = [\lambda P \in D_{\llbracket \text{coded}, \llbracket \text{good-thief} \rrbracket > \lambda x \in D. \text{ there is a past } w' \in W \text{ (past relative to } w) \text{ such that } P(w') (x) = 1 ]$
   (W is the domain of world-time pairs; $D_{\llbracket \text{coded}, \llbracket \text{good-thief} \rrbracket }$ is the domain of properties)
   $\llbracket \text{John is a } [\lambda A \text{ former }] \llbracket N DA \rrbracket \rrbracket = [\lambda x \in D. \text{ there is a past } w' \in W \text{ (past relative to } w) \text{ such that } [DA]^w(x) = 1)\text{(John)}$

(5) a. $[\text{good}-d^w_2]^C = [\lambda x \in D; \text{context } C \text{ supplies an assignment, } g^C, \text{ and a scale of moral "goodness", GOOD}^C_{\llbracket \text{coded}, \llbracket \text{potential} \rrbracket \text{, } x \text{'s ranking on GOOD}^C_{\llbracket \text{coded}, \llbracket \text{potential} \rrbracket \text{ is at least } g^C(2).} \text{(When free, } [d^w_2]^C \text{ = Standard(GOOD}^C_{\llbracket \text{coded}, \llbracket \text{potential} \rrbracket }\text{))}$.)
   b. GOOD_{C, w} = A scale that ranks men according to moral “goodness” in w.
   GOOD_{C, w} = A scale that ranks thieves according to moral “goodness” in w.

(6) a. $[\text{good}**-d^w_2]^C = [\lambda P \in D_{\llbracket \text{coded}, \llbracket \text{potential} \rrbracket \text{, } \lambda x \in D. C \text{ supplies an assignment, } g^C, \text{ and a scale, } S^C_{\llbracket \text{coded}, \llbracket \text{potential} \rrbracket \text{, that ranks individuals by the “goodness” of their P-skills in w. } x \text{'s ranking in w on } S^C_{\llbracket \text{coded}, \llbracket \text{potential} \rrbracket \text{ is at least } g^C(2)]}$
   b. $\llbracket \text{John is a } [\lambda A \text{ good}**-d^w_2] \llbracket N \text{ thief} \rrbracket \rrbracket^C = \text{ is defined only if } C \text{ supplies a scale, } S^C_{\llbracket \text{coded}, \llbracket \text{potential} \rrbracket \text{, which ranks individuals according to their stealing skills in w.}}$

(7) a. $[\text{good}-d^w_2]^C = [\lambda x \in D; \text{C supplies an assignment, } g^C, \text{ and a scale, GOOD}^C_{\llbracket \text{coded}, \llbracket \text{potential} \rrbracket \text{, the ranking of } x \text{ on GOOD}^C_{\llbracket \text{coded}, \llbracket \text{potential} \rrbracket \text{ is at least } g^C(2)].}$
   b. $\llbracket \text{thief} \rrbracket^C = [x e E. \lambda x \in D. e \text{ is an event of } x \text{ being a thief in } w]$

(8) a. $\llbracket [3 \llbracket [1 \lambda \text{ good}-d^w_2-pro]\rrbracket \llbracket 4 \llbracket N \text{ thief}-e^w_2-pro\rrbracket \rrbracket \rrbracket^C = [\lambda e \in E. \lambda x \in D. [\text{good}-d^w_2]^C(x) = 1 \& \llbracket \text{thief} \rrbracket^C(e)(x) = 1]$
   b. $\llbracket [4 \llbracket [1 \lambda \text{ good}-d^w_2-e]\rrbracket \llbracket 3 \llbracket N \text{ thief}-e^w_2-pro\rrbracket \rrbracket \rrbracket^C = [\lambda x \in D. \lambda e \in E. [\text{good}-d^w_2]^C(e)(x) = 1 \& \llbracket \text{thief} \rrbracket^C(e)(x) = 1]$

(9) Mary dances amazingly. $\Rightarrow$ Mary’s dancing is amazing.

(10) a. On je dobar lopov. $\Rightarrow$ On je bolji/najbolji lopov.
   b. $\text{He is good thief.} \Rightarrow \text{He is better/best thief.}$

(11) a. Petar je inteligentan teniser. $\Rightarrow$ Petar je inteligentniji teniser.
   b. $\text{Peter is intelligent tennis player} \Rightarrow \text{Peter is more-intelligent tennis player}$

(12) GOOD_{C, w} = A scale that ranks thieves according to their “goodness” at stealing in w.

(13) a. Did you hear about the robbery last night? Boy! Those thieves were really good!
   b. I saw Mary dance last night at the theater. Let me tell you: she was incredible.

(14) When defined, $[\text{on je najbolji lopov}]^C = [\text{he is the most [2 \llbracket [\text{dobar-suppletive}-d^w_2], thief\rrbracket \rrbracket\rrbracket] in w}]^C = 1$