Polish honorific markers as a window into person-feature valuation

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The goal

- present novel evidence for Polish nominals being phases
- the logic of the argument:
  - DP-size but not nP-size nominal structure exhibits feature interactions with the interfaces
  => If a D-head interacts with the interfaces, it must be a phase-head and trigger spell-out
- empirical focus: syntactic variation in the domain of honorific markers (Pan/Pani)
Polish nominal *Pan/Pani*

- translated as: ‘Mr’/‘Mrs’, ‘sir’/‘lady’, 2nd/3rd person pronoun

  => 3 distinct syntactic environments
  - a regular R-expression
  - a pronominal
  - an adjective-like modifier (honorific)
Pan/Pani as an R-expression

Nie znam tej Pani, ale wiem, że ona tu nie pracuje
not know this Mrs, but know that she here not work
‘I do not know this lady but I know she does not work here.’

- root nominal, forming NP/DP
- inflected for phi-features and case => intrinsically valued phi-features
- can be modified by an adjective
- can serve as an antecedent to a pronoun
R-expression => DP

a. Jan jak i ten Pan kichnęli głośno
Jan as and that Sir sneezed loud
‘John as well as this gentleman here sneezed out loud’

b. Pani, która poszła spać jest młoda
Mrs who went to sleep is young
‘Lady who went to sleep is young’

• can be coordinated with a proper name (a)
• modifiable by a relative clause (b)

=> regular R-expression => DP-type of nominal
Pan/Pani as an NP-modifier

Nasza wspaniała Pani Dyrektorka poszła na emeryturę
Our wonderful Mrs Director (fem) went on retirement
‘Our wonderful director retired’

• adjectival-like behavior
• number, gender, case concord with the root nominal => unvalued phi-features
• honorific meaning
Adjacency requirement

(*pani) ta (*pani) nasza (*pani) wsparciała (pani) dyrektor (pani) generalna
Mrs that Mrs our Mrs wonderful Mrs director Mrs general

‘That our wonderful Madame director General’

• must be adjacent to the nominal NP complex it modifies
Pan/Pani as a name/DP-modifier

Pan Kowalski
Mr Kowalski

Pani Maria kichnęła
Mrs Mary sneezed.

- adjectival-like behavior
- number, gender, case concord with the root nominal
- honorific meaning
Adjacency requirement

a. * Pani, która poszła spać, Genowefa jest młoda
   
   Mrs, who went to sleep Genevieve is young

b. Pani Genowefa, która poszła spać, jest młoda

Mrs Genevieve, who is young, went to sleep

• when Pan/Pani used as DP modifier, a relative clause must modify the complete DP (the head-nominal and the modifier)
Pan/Pani as a pronoun

Wie Pan co
know Mr what
‘You know what’

• contextually-determined phi-features (addressee, gender, number)
Pan/Pani as a vocative

Panie, masz pania papierosa
Mr. vocat.sg. 2nd.masc. have.masc.sg. 2nd Mr. nom.masc.sg. 2nd. cigarette

‘Mister, do you have a cigarette?’

• pronominal-like but perhaps not quite...
Dual feature behavior

Panie, masz pan papierosa
Mr. vocat.sg.2nd.masc. have masc.sg. 2nd Mr. nom.masc.sg.2nd. cigarette
Panie, ma pan papierosa
Mr. vocat.sg.2nd.masc. have masc.sg. 3rd Mr. nom.masc.sg.3rd. cigarette
‘Hey Mister, do you have a cigarette?’

- the same nominal => variable agreement
  - a nominal-like 3\textsuperscript{rd} person,
  - a pronominal-like 2\textsuperscript{nd} person
Szanowny Panie, Szanowna Pani
a. macie szanowni państwo papierosa  
   have$_{2\text{nd.pl.}}$ respected Mr’s$_{2\text{nd.pl.}}$ cigarette  
b. mają szanowni państwo papierosa  
   have$_{3\text{rd.pl.}}$ respected Mr’s$_{3\text{rd.pl.}}$ cigarette
   ‘Hey dear Sir, dear Madam, do respected you/Sirs & Madams have a cigarette?’

• number, gender agreement constant
• person only varies
Questions arising

- One or more representations stored in the lexicon?
- What mechanism underlies variable agreement?
- Why variation only in person valuation, not gender/number valuation?
Proposal in a nutshell

- the same root (with gender, number from the lexicon)

$\Rightarrow$ up to $nP$ all uses share the same structure
Proposal in a nutshell

• difference emerges at the DP-level:
  – modifiers: no DP, just NP
  – R-expressions: D with unvalued person feature reset to default (3rd person) at the interface
  – pronouns/vocatives: person feature on D valued by the CI interface (at spell-out), otherwise reset to a morphological default => 2nd/3rd person
Why is it important?

- if a feature value (person) in the extended nominal projection gets valued at spell-out, the nominal must form a phase

=> a novel argument for phase-hood of Polish DPs, fundamentally distinct from arguments based on extraction properties (narrow-syntax locality)
Emphasis on person features

- person feature must be licensed by the syntax-semantics interface (CI) (Zubizarreta and Pancheva 2017, Pancheva and Zubizarreta 2017, Kučerová 2018)
- for person feature to interact with the CI interface the feature must be located on a phase head
- if person feature valuation is tied to D => D is a phase head
A note on the extent of the argument

• we make **no** claims regarding:
  - whether Slavic, and specifically Polish, has overt determiners
  - whether Polish has a Determiner head in the same sense as English or Italian

• we make a claim that:
  - Polish nominal expressions are phases
  - In our proposal, D stands for a nominal phase head (this could even be a non fixed head, Bošković 2014)
Preserving the Y model

• the architecture we adopt preserves the Y model and exploits the inherent assumption that Spell-out is a window for interface feature interaction with syntactic structure

• we hypothesize that phase heads are inherently endowed with the ability to license features that can interact with interface operations
Spell out and interfaces

• Spell-out: a window where interface operations can impact feature composition of heads
• nominals: interface interaction with the feature composition of the phase head
• our hypothesis is CI can manipulate features
• DM already does that by inserting root – its features go from zero to $n$
• despite the syntactic variability, pan/pani syntactically identical to any other regular lexical noun in Polish

=> honorific uses strictly based on a regular nominal structure
Modifier structure

=> a truncated nominal that terminates at the $n\mathbf{P}$ level and is located at Spec-$n\mathbf{P}$ of head noun:

- this accounts for:
  - cannot be modified
  - obligatorily interpreted as a modifier
  - optional
  - adjacency requirement
R-expression vs pronominal

• => variation in the composition of the nominal projection’s phase head (D)
• D => interaction with C-I interface => impacts the [+/- Person] feature on D
D hosts +/- Person feature

• person feature not an intrinsic property of a nominal representation stored in the lexicon (Ritter 1995; Béjar and Rezac 2003)

• instead, person only comes to the derivation as part of D
Simplified nominal structure: root

- root => Late Inserted
  - gender: indexical information on the root, not a syntactic feature (Acquaviva 2014)
  - unvalued $n$ features projected in syntax
  - indexicalized gender mapped during late insertion of the root onto $n$
n merged as a bundle of unvalued φ-features (gender and number)

=> gender features matched via index on root
Simplified nominal structure: Num

- Num merged as a valued number-feature
  - => by agree, as matching and valuation, number on $n$ gets valued

[Gender indexicalized features]

$D \rightsquigarrow Num \{number\} \rightsquigarrow n \rightsquigarrow \emptyset \rightsquigarrow \sqrt{\emptyset}$

{\_gender \_number}
• D merged as a bundle of unvalued φ-features and an **unvalued person** feature
• D triggers agree with Num and n ⇒ the unvalued number and gender feature on D get matched and valued by the valued features on Num and n
Simplified nominal structure: person feature on D

- the C-I interface has access to the whole Phase
  => Spell out Domain & Phase head and its edge
- person requires syntax/semantics interface licensing
  (Zubizarreta & Pancheva 2017; Pancheva & Zubizarreta 2017)
  => the C-I interface can manipulate PERSON features
at spell-out, the person feature on D remains unvalued

=> the interfaces can supply a value
CI-interface valuation

=> an unvalued φ-feature on a phase head D can obtain its value via labeling of the phase by CI (Kučerová 2018)

=> CI valuation for unvalued person: [+/- participant]
• the morphology module then either realizes the syntactically unvalued feature as:
  • as the CI-informed value (+/-Participant → +/-Speaker, or +/-Hearer)
  • **morphological default** for person ➔ **3rd person**
    (pronominal/vocative usage)
Person feature on D => DP duality Pan/Pani

• CI-valuation of person features determines the type of expression a full DP Pan/Pani is:
  • [− Participant] => R-expression
  • [+ Participant] => pronominal-like usage and the 2\textsuperscript{nd}/3\textsuperscript{rd} person alternation
    • 3\textsuperscript{rd} person: default; C-I uninformed valuation
    • 2\textsuperscript{nd} person: marked; C-I informed valuation
Nie znam tej Pani, ale wiem, że ona tu nie pracuje
not know this Mrs, but know that she here not work
‘I do not know this lady but I know she does not work here.’

• unvalued person feature on D
• => CI value: [−participant] and the morphological default converge on 3rd person
• demonstrative in Spec-DP => concord with valued D
Pan/Pani as an R-expression

- Tej Pani
  this lady
• 3rd person default when C-I uninformed value
• 2nd person when C-I informed value
=> pronominal-like properties
=> no demonstratives
R-expressions such as *pan/pani* => can be in the 3rd or 2nd person

- Vocative
- 3rd vs 2nd person agreement alternation

\[\begin{align*}
\text{a. (Panie}_{j}), & \quad \text{masz} \quad \text{pan}_{j} \quad \text{papierosa} \\
& \quad \text{Mr. vocat.sg.2nd.masc.} \quad \text{have.masc.sg. 2nd} \quad \text{Mr. nom.masc.sg.2nd.} \quad \text{cigarette} \\
\text{b. (Panie}_{j}), & \quad \text{ma} \quad \text{pan}_{j} \quad \text{papierosa} \\
& \quad \text{Mr. vocat.sg.2nd.masc.} \quad \text{have.masc.sg. 3rd} \quad \text{Mr. nom.masc.sg.3rd.} \quad \text{cigarette}
\end{align*}\]

‘Hey Mister, do you have a cigarette?’
Pan/Pani 2\textsuperscript{nd}/3\textsuperscript{rd} person alternation

- **Panie** masz pan vs **Panie** ma pan
  - Mr (2nd) have (2nd) you vs. Mr (2nd) have (3rd) you
Prediction: if DP is a phase, CI-valuation independent of the position in the clause

if DP itself is a phase, it does no matter where in the structure such a DP is merged => CI valuation always possible

Szanowny Panie, chciałbym przedstawić Pana mojemu znajomemu respected Mr.voc.m. sg wouldlike 1.m.sg introduce Mr. acc.2.m.sg. my friend.dat ‘Sir I would like to introduce you to a friend of mine’
No speaker/hearer head needed

• the proposal thus differs from proposals that require a syntactic association with some form of a speaker/hearer head in the left periphery of a clause (e.g., Sigurðsson 2004)
Not every use of Pan/Pani involves a full phase

- *Pan/pani* can be a truncated **nominal nP**
  - => not a phase
  - no +/- Participant alternation
  - no independent reference
  - used as a modifier
  - distribution limited to vicinity of head noun
Non-phase nominals

Nasza wspaniała Pani dyrektorka
our wonderful Mrs   director
‘our wonderful madame director’

• Pan/Pani marker as a modifier
adjacency restriction

• when used as a modifier the $nP$ Pan/Pani has to be preceded by all modifiers but attributive adjectives:

$(*\text{pani})$ ta $(*\text{pani})$ nasza $(*\text{pani})$ wsparciała $\text{(pani)}$ dyrektorka generalna

that\_fem\_sg\_3rd our\_fem\_sg\_3rd wonderful\_fem\_sg\_3rd Mrs\_sg\_fem\_3rd headmaster\_fem\_sg\_3rd general\_em\_sg\_3rd

• attributive adjectives: NP adjacent

$=> \text{pan/pani}$ as Spec-$nP$
Pan/Pani as an nP modifier

Pani Dyrektorka
Madame Director
Summary

- *Pan/Pani* => 3 distinct syntactic structures based on the same root and *nP*:
  - full DP [-person] → R expression
  - full DP [+person] → 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} person pronominal type
  - *nP* → nominal modifier/honorific
Consequences

- phase heads subject to interface feature manipulation
- novel methodology for determining a phase-status of a syntactic head, based on interactions with the CI module
- at least some Polish nominals are phases