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POLISH AND ENGLISH LOCATIVE EXPRESSIONS: AN OVERVIEW

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Space is the most tangible and the most basic domain of human experience. Moreover, the experience of space and movement in space is shared by all human beings, who are equipped with similar perception mechanisms. Yet, there are various, sometimes completely different ways of conceptualizing space, which is reflected in various languages of the world. Thus, there are languages like English or Polish which describe the position of trajectors in relation to other objects, or in relation to the observer. Such languages belong to the relative system of conceptualization of space. There are also languages like Mixtec which use the metaphorical projection of body part terms. To illustrate, in Mixtec the top of a mountain would be lexicalized as "mountain's head" [see Dąbrowska 2004: 92]. Finally, languages like Tzeltal describe the microlocations in terms of the absolute system, which means that the trajector is usually located by means of geographic notions.

Polish and English not only belong to the same system of the conceptualization of space but, similarly to the majority of European languages, spatial relations in these languages are expressed mainly by prepositions. Although the system of spatial relations is quite complex and the process of conceptualization of space and motion events is also highly complicated, both Polish and English use a relatively small set of prepositions for coding these relations. Prepositions constitute a closed class of lexical terms and their description is usually carried out on three levels.

Let us now have a closer look at specific prepositions in Polish and English and the way they code spatial relations. Günter Radden and René Dirven [see 2007: 358] notice that the majority of English prepositions are not by themselves locative or directional since most of them can be used to express both static and dynamic relations. To illustrate, in English the preposition *in* codes both the path of movement – as in (1a) and the static location of an object which is the endpoint of the path (cf. 1b):

(1a) *Ann put the book **in** the drawer*.
(1b) *The book is **in** the drawer*.

There exists a metonymic relation between the static and the dynamic senses of the preposition *in* since the linguistic form designates the notion of path and place. As the end-point of a path is particularly salient, a linguistic form frequently codes a place construed as the final position of an object on the path [see Taylor 1989: 127–128].

The same phenomenon of the dynamic and static use of most of the prepositions in Polish has been described by Renata Przybylska [2002], the difference being that in Polish, in contrast to English, the dynamic and static senses of the prepositions are generally differentiated by the use of accusative or locative cases of the ground nominals, the cases of which the prepositions govern. However, in Polish there is a major exception to the rule that the same prepositions denote static and dynamic relations. To illustrate, let me consider coding of movement towards a goal and the static location of an object. The preposition *do* 'to', 'into' codes movement towards a goal while and the endpoint of the path is usually designated by means of other prepositions, such as *w* 'in' or *u* 'at'.

Apart from the type of relations that are coded by prepositions, Radden and Dirven [see 2007: 356–357] distinguish two basic strategies for locating entities in space. First of all, there are spatial dimensions which are coded by dimensional (or topological) prepositions. In the case of these prepositions we specify the dimension of the landmark where the trajector is to be found while the dimension of the trajector is irrelevant. Thus, there are four types of landmark dimensions that may be expressed by English prepositions: zero-dimension (e.g. *at the corner*), one-dimension (e.g. *on the border*), two-dimension (e.g. *on the table*) and three-dimension (e.g. *in the bottle*). Table 1 presents the arrangement of basic dimensional prepositions according to their dimensionality and their normal use as locative or directional.

Table 1

Basic dimensional prepositions of English [after Radden and Dirven 2007: 358]

Dimensions	Location	Direction		
	PLACE	SOURCE	GOAL	PATH
0-dimensional POINT	***at***, *by*, *near*, *close to*, *with*	***from***, *away from*	***to***, *at*, *for*, *towards*	***by***, *past*, *via*
1- and 2-dimensional LINE/SURFACE	***on***, *on top of*	***off*** *(of)*	***on(to)***, *against*	***along***, *abort*, *around*
3-dimensional CONTAINMENT	***in***, *within*, *inside*, *between*, *among*	***out of***, *outside of*	***in(to)***	***through***, *throughout*

As we can see, the two basic prepositions which code movement in English, namely *to* – coding movement towards the goal and *from*, which codes movement from the source, are zero-dimensional. Radden and Dirven [see 2007: 359] notice that in motion events the source and goal of a trajector's motion are normally indeterminate with respect to their shape. They also note that we are generally more concerned with the goal than with the source, which is reflected in the finer distinctions made by goal prepositions: *to*, *at*, *for* and *towards*. The perceptual goal bias is also confirmed by the process of language acquisition.

Due to the scope of this article, the analysis will be mainly restricted to the dynamic senses of *to*, *in*, *on* and their Polish equivalents. I will compare the use of the goal prepositions *to* and *do* 'to', 'into', two prepositions expressing the relation of containment *in* and *w* 'in' and two denoting the relation of support *on* and *na* 'on'. In Polish the most common goal preposition *do* 'to', 'into' seems to have double meaning. First, it may designate motion towards a landmark, indiscriminately with respect to its shape or dimensionality. Thus, all the following prepositional phrases are possible: *podejdź do domu* 'come up to the house' (a three-dimensional landmark), *podejdź do drzwi* 'come up to the door' (a two-dimensional landmark), or *podejdź do lampy* 'come up to the lamp' (a one-dimensional landmark). This meaning of the preposition *do* is consistent with the meaning of the preposition *to* described by Radden and Dirven [see 2007: 359]. On the other hand, when the border of a three-dimensional landmark is crossed by the trajector, the Polish preposition *do* 'to', 'into' takes over the dynamic meaning of the preposition *w* 'in' 'into'. As Przybylska [see 2002: 243] notes, in contemporary Polish the dynamic relations, the static equivalents of which are typically expressed by *w* + LOC, are mostly expressed by *do* 'to', 'into', for example see (2):

(2) LM – a three-dimensional container
*Ptak wleciał *w klatkę/do klatki.*
bird flew *in cage-ACC/to cage-GEN

As far as the above context are concerned, the dynamic sense of the preposition *w* (*w* + ACC) has been limited only to marginal uses. As Przybylska [see 2002: 244–250] notes, if the dynamic uses of this preposition appear such the contexts such as above, they are mainly regional (see e.g. phrases *wsiąść w tramwaj* 'in-sit in tram-ACC') or *wejść w cień* 'in-go in shade-ACC' (typical of the Warsaw region) or old-fashioned (e.g. *wejść w dom* 'in-go in house-ACC') [cf. Przybylska 2002: 245–250].

In English, it is the preposition *in* that codes movement into all kinds of three-dimensional containments. Radden and Dirven [see 2007: 361] hint at the fact that in English motion into a container allows for two construals, exemplified in sentences (3) and (4), respectively:

(3) *Mark jumped in the water.*
(4) *Mark jumped into the water.*

The preposition *in* expresses a closer goal and the preposition *into* a more distant one[1].

The dynamic sense of the Polish preposition *na* (*na* + ACC) 'on' 'onto' implies motion of the trajector which ends with the contact of the trajector with the surface of the two-dimensional landmark. Przybylska [see 2002: 304–309] differentiates a number of image schemas for the dynamic spatial use of the preposition *na* 'on' 'onto', such as for example (5):

(5) TR – an object which has covered the path
LM – upper, horizontal, outer surface
Książka upadła na stół.
book fell on table-ACC
'A book fell on the table'

In English, two prepositions *on*, *onto* code movement which brings about the contact of a trajector with the surface of a two-dimensional landmark. The preposition *onto* is not only morphologically more complex, but also gives rise to a different implicature. When *on* is used, the goal is taken to be within an easy reach, while the compound preposition *onto* makes the goal to appear as more distant, less easy to reach, and requiring more effort, as exemplified in sentences (6) and (7):

(6) *James put the Bible on the table.*
(7) *James put the Bible onto the highest shelf.*
[after Radden and Dirven 2007: 360]

Alan J. Cienki [see 1995: 142] notes that in Polish the same semantic distinction is marked: *na* + LOC is used when the goal of the path could be easily anticipated from the context (e.g. *położyć chleb na stole* 'to put the bread on the table'), and *na* + ACC codes the spatial relation more emphatically, to underscore that the relation of contact is to be established (e.g. *Postaw talerz na półkę!* 'Put the plate on the shelf!'). Thus, in English two different prepositions are used to mark the neutral and the emphatic meaning. In Polish it is the same preposition, however followed by a different case marking.

Other ways of expressing spatial relations in Polish

In Polish, similarly to English, prepositions contribute more significantly than other classes of lexical items to conveying spatial information. However, besides prepositions, which play a major role in building spatial construals, the Polish language makes use of three other subsystems for structuring space: noun cases, verb prefixes and direction nouns. Let me describe briefly how these forms provide spatial information.

[1] The preposition *into* is not used in the first stages of language acquisition (during the studied period – the first four years of life) probably due to its morphological complexity.

John R. Taylor [see 1989: 127] notices that there is a natural metonymic relationship between the path followed by a moving entity, and any of the points located on the path. Since the end-point is particularly salient, a linguistic form designating a path frequently also designates a place understood as the end-point of a path, which is shown in (8)[2]:

(8a) *He walked **over** the hill.* (path)
(8b) *He lives **over** the hill.* (place, construed as end-point of a path)
[after Taylor 1989: 127]

The polysemy of goal and place is similar: one sense has to do with a dynamic relation construed as the final point of movement and the other with the static situation, as shown in (9) and (10) respectively:

(9) *We hung the picture **over** the sofa*. (goal)
(10) *The picture hangs **over** the sofa*. (place)
[after Taylor 1989: 127]

Slavic languages, on the other hand, lexicalize the difference between location and goal much more distinctly, usually with different surface case forms. Thus, in Polish the same prepositions tends to mark the static and dynamic situations, the difference being that, when marking the goal Polish prepositions are followed by the accusative, and when coding a purely static relation – by the locative, which is illustrated in (11):

(11a) *Wyszliśmy na pole.*
we went on field-ACC
'We went onto the field'

(11b) *Jesteśmy na polu.*
we are on field-LOC
'We are on the field'

Thus, in Polish the same preposition may be used in two different construals and the case marking on the noun following it hints at the right interpretation [see Dancyngier 2000: 31]. In Michael B. Smith's terminology [1987, 1993], prepositions which can be followed by the accusative or the locative are called "two-way prepositions". The accusative denotes that the trajector moves along a path. In the course of this movement the trajector is brought into the search domain of the preposition at some point along a path [see Smith 1993: 534][3], which is illustrated in sentences (12b), (13b) and (14b). In turn, the instrumental – as in (12a) or (13a) – denotes the fact that the trajector is confined to the search domain of the preposition and that the described spatial relation is dynamic. Sentence (14a) also

[2] In his discussion, Taylor relies on Brugman [1981, after Lakoff 1987], who was the first to analyse the complex network of senses of the preposition *over*.

[3] The notion of search domain of a locative predication is defined as "the region to which it confines the trajector, i.e. the set of points such that the location of the trajector at that point is compatible with its specifications" [Langacker 1987: 286].

denotes a dynamic spatial relationship since the preposition *na* 'on', 'onto' refers to the goal of movement entailed by its relation to the motion verb *postawić* 'put':

(12a) (*siedzieć*) *za drzewem*
(to sit) behind tree-INST
'(to sit) behind a tree'
(12b) (*iść*) *za drzewo*
(go) behind tree-ACC
'(to go) behind a tree'
[after Tabakowska 2003: 160]

(13a) *Samolot jest nad miastem*.
plane is over city-INST
'A plane is over the city'
(13b) *Samolot wzbił się nad miasto.*
plane rose over city-ACC
'A plane rose over the city'

(14a) *Talerz stoi na stole.*
plate is standing on table-LOC
'A plate is on the table'
(14b) *Postawił talerz na stole.*
he put plate on table-ACC
'He put a plate on the table'

Due to the different case marker on the nominal following the preposition the pairs of sentences in (12), (13) and (14) differ crucially. Sentences (12a) (13a) and (14a) express static locations while sentences (12b), (13b) and (14b) denote motion of trajectors to locations and describe dynamic relations.

Prefixes to verbs are typical of Slavic languages. Although their primary function is to provide aspectual information, they also contribute to expressing spatial information. By way of illustration, let me refer to Ewa Dąbrowska's [see 1996: 482] analysis of sentence (15):

(15) *Zakryliśmy plamę papierem.*
behind-we covered spot-ACC paper-INSTR
'We covered the dirty spot with a piece of paper'

In sentence (15) not only does the prefix *za-* ('behind') denote completed action of covering the trajector ('the dirty spot') by the landmark ('the paper') but also the fact that the trajector becomes invisible [see Dąbrowska 1996: 482]. Table 2 shows the rich system of Polish prefixes. The fact that they are used with a number of verbs indicates their high productivity (apart from the relatively non-productive complex prefix *wz-*) in combination with selected verbs.

Direction nouns constitute the last set of lexical items which express spatial information in Polish as well as in other languages (e.g. in English and French). They belong to the category of relational nouns. Although the main function of nouns, by definition, is to profile things, in the case of relational nouns the profiled

Table 2

Combination of prefixes and verbs of deplacement in Polish
[after Kopecka 2004: 148, my translation – J.Ł.]

Verbs / Prefixes	iść '*to walk*'	biec '*to run*'	płynąć '*to swim*'	stawiać '*to stand*'	ciągnąć '*to draw*'	sypać '*to sprinkle*'
do- '*to*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
na- '*on*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
nad(e)- '*over*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
o(b)- '*around*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
od- '*starting from*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
po- '*on*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
pod- '*under*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
prze- '*across*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
przy- '*to*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
roz- '*separate*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
u- '*from this point*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
w- '*in*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
wy- '*out*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
wz- '*up*'	✓	–	–	–	–	–
z- '*away from*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
z- '*assemble*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
za- '*behind*'	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

thing also participates in an unprofiled relation to another entity. For example, *top* is a relational noun as it exists only as a part of a larger whole which has the top [see Taylor 2002: 209].

Direction nouns express the most basic spatial notions, namely, the directions along major orientation axes, for example *góra* and *dół* ('up' and 'down') or *przód* and *tył* ('front' and 'back'). In interaction with prepositions and case markings, they may denote either direction of movement as in (16), location of objects (17), or parts of objects (18) [see Dancyngier 2000: 28–29].

(16) *Poszliśmy w górę/w dół*
we-walked in up-ACC/in down-ACC
'We walked up/down'

(17) *Miasto zostało w tyle.*
city stayed in back-LOC
'I left the city behind'

(18) *Kino jest na dole*
cinema is on down-LOC
'The cinema is on the ground level/downstairs'

The use of the direction nouns in (16) and (17) does not require any further specification as the space has been divided into two complementary regions, the boundary between which is delineated by the position of the moving object. In sentence (18), a bounded object – the cinema – imposes its inherent organization on the region within it.

Both direction nouns *góra* and *dół* have their primary meanings: 'a mountain' and 'a ditch' respectively. However, in interaction with the preposition *na* 'on' they acquire spatial meanings [see Dancyngier 2000: 30–31]. Thus, the described subsystems of forms mostly interact with each other to convey spatial information in Polish. Prepositions interact with case or with direction nouns, and direction nouns interact with case [see Dancyngier 2000: 28].

In English direction nouns, which are regarded as a kind of relational nouns by Ronald Langacker [1987], include, for example: *top*, *side*, *inside*, *edge*, *corner*. These nouns mainly designate an entity which is a part of a larger whole and they frequently interact with the preposition *of* (cf. Górska's [1999] discussion of part-whole relations).

From the perspective of Cognitive Linguistics it is relatively easy to describe diverse aspects of spatial relations as well as to grasp cross-linguistic similarities and differences in the conceptualization of space. The description of locative expressions in various languages is possible mainly due to the key concepts of Cognitive Linguistics: "conceptual substrate" and "construal". Conceptual substrate includes such matters as background knowledge as well as apprehension of the physical, social, and linguistic context. Construal, on the other hand, reflects just one of many ways of conceiving and portraying one spatial situation [Langacker 2008: 4]. Thus, acquiring a particular language may lead a certain group of people to construe a given spatial situation in their own individual way.

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Summary

Polish and English Locative Expressions: An Overview

The aim of the article is to outline the main differences and similarities in the ways spatial relations are expressed by means of prepositions in English and in Polish. The discussion starts with classifying the two languages within the same system of space conceptualization. Then, a description of prepositions is presented. The article concludes with the comparison of the dynamic aspects of the Polish prepositions *do* 'to', 'into', *w* 'in', 'into' and *na* 'on', 'onto' and their English equivalents *to*, *in* and *on*. Next, the main emphasis will be put on the way space is structured in Polish by means of other spatial terms, which include prefixes to the verbs, direction nouns and noun cases.