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“X, not Y” construction, copular clauses and expressive NN juxtapositions in Polish

Abstract

This paper examines expressive sentences in Polish, such as *Idiota, nie kierowca!* (lit. idiot, not driver) ‘an idiot of a driver’ and *Potwór, nie matka!* (lit. monster, not mother) ‘a monster of a mother’. Variants of the “X, not Y” construction, its optional and obligatory elements are identified. Differences are emphasised between the emphatic “X, not Y construction” and non-emphatic negative copular clauses. Moreover, relatedness is discussed between expressive NN juxtapositions, such as *kierowca idiota* (lit. driver idiot) ‘an idiot of a driver’ or *matka potwór* (lit. mother monster) ‘a monster of a mother’, and the “X, not Y” construction. Semantic-structural types of expressive NN juxtapositions are considered, following the cross-linguistic classification of multiword units proposed by Scalise and Bisetto (2009). The reversibility of NN juxtapositions is taken into account as well. The question is addressed which types of juxtapositions allow their constituents to appear in the “X, not Y” construction.

Key words

N+N expressive juxtapositions, emphatic constructions, copular clauses

Streszczenie

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest analiza zdań ekspresywnych w języku polskim, których przykładami są zdania: *Idiota, nie kierowca!* oraz *Potwór, nie matka!* Omówiono wariantowość konstrukcji „X, nie Y”. Przedstawiono jej obligatoryjne oraz fakultatywne elementy. Podkreślono różnicę między emfaticzną konstrukcją „X, nie Y” a nie-emfaticznymi zdaniami przeczącymi kopulatywnymi (łącznymi). Ponadto omówiono związek pomiędzy analizowaną konstrukcją a rzeczownikowymi zestawieniami ekspresywnymi, takimi jak *kierowca idiota* oraz *matka potwór*. Uwzględniono semantyczno-składniową klasyfikację wyrazów złożonych (por. Scalise i Bisetto 2009) oraz odwracalność szyku leksemów wielowrazowych. Wykazano, że w przypadku wybranych typów zestawień rzeczownikowych ich elementy składniowe mogą się pojawić w konstrukcji „X, nie Y”.

Słowa kluczowe

rzeczownikowe zestawienia ekspresywne, konstrukcje emfaticzne, zdania kopulatywne

1. Introduction

The present paper discusses the “X, not Y” construction in Polish, as exemplified in (1) below.¹ The sentences in (1) have been culled from the National Corpus of Polish (NKJP) or extracted from various websites.²

- (1) a. *Co ja się wtedy nasłuchiwałem wiązaneek od przechodniów: „Idiota nie kierowca!”*
 ‘I heard many insults from passers-by: „An idiot of a driver!” (lit. idiot not driver).³
 (<https://film.wp.pl> › wieslaw-michnikowski-jego-popisy-za-kolkiem-nie-)
- b. *Anioł nie dziecko, płakało może ze dwa razy w życiu (...)*
 ‘An angel of a child (lit. angel, not child), it cried maybe twice in his/her life.’ (NKJP)
- c. *Koszmar, nie budowa – zgodni są wszyscy. Jeden wielki bałagan.*
 ‘(It’s) a nightmare of a construction (site) (lit. nightmare, not construction) – everybody agrees. One big mess.’ (NKJP)
- d. *Potwór nie matka! Chłopiec jest półprzytomny z gorączki, jęczy, bredzi ...*
 ‘A monster of a mother (lit. monster not mother)! The boy is semi-conscious from fever. He’s moaning and babbling.’ (NKJP)
- e. *Renault Megane Coupe ... ah marzenie nie maszyna*
 ‘Renault Megan Coupe ... oh, a dream car (lit. dream not car)’ (NKJP)
- f. *Skarb, nie człowiek – pomyślałem.*
 ‘A treasure of a man (lit. treasure, not man) – I thought.’ (NKJP)

To my knowledge, no study is available which focuses specifically on the Polish “X, not Y” construction. The existence of sentences such as those in (1) is mentioned by Kallas (1980: 133), who regards them as (more) emphatic equivalents of the noun phrases given in (2).

- (2) a. *kierowca idiota* (driver.NOM.SG idiot.NOM.SG) ‘an idiot of a driver’
 b. *dziecko anioł* (child.NOM.SG angel.NOM.SG) ‘an angel of a child’
 c. *budowa koszmar* (construction.NOM.SG nightmare.NOM.SG)
 ‘a nightmare of a construction (site); a nightmarish construction (site)’
 d. *matka potwór* (mother.NOM.SG monster.NOM.SG) ‘a monster of a mother’

¹ I am grateful to two anonymous reviewers for their constructive critique and useful advice.

² Examples for which no source is indicated in this paper, e.g. sentences in (3), have been constructed by the author.

³ I use the English NP of NP construction (e.g. *an idiot of a driver* in 1a or *a nightmare of a construction site* in 1c) as a translation equivalent of the Polish “X, not Y construction” since both exhibit strong expressive force. Alternative English renderings contain A+N phrases (e.g. *a nightmarish construction site*), NN combinations (e.g. *an idiot driver*) or comparative phrases (*like a spark*). They are employed here in particular when the corresponding NP of NP construction is rare or sounds awkward, e.g. *a dream car* in (1e) (cf. *a dream of a car*), *a boorish boss* in (5b) (cf. *?a boor of a boss*) and *a girl like a spark* in (14a) (cf. *?a spark of a girl*).

- e. *maszyna marzenie* (car.NOM.SG dream.NOM.SG) ‘a dream of a car’
 f. *człowiek skarb* (man.NOM.SG treasure.NOM.SG) ‘a treasure of a man’

The aim of this paper is to investigate morphosyntactic⁴ properties of the “X, not Y” construction and its correspondence to NN combinations in Polish. Moreover, an attempt is made at comparing the instances of “X, not Y” construction with copular clauses. The layout of the paper is as follows. Section 2 raises the issue of the controversial (lexical or syntactic) status of Polish NN expressive complexes. In section 3 selected syntactic tests are applied to demonstrate that NN complexes as well as the “X, not Y” construction exhibit an evaluative meaning and contain negatively or positively loaded lexemes. In section 4 some features of the emphatic “X, not Y” construction are discussed, e.g. the possibility of extending it with optional constituents, and the ways in which the “X, not Y” construction differs from negative non-emphatic copular clauses. Section 5 examines the relationship between the semantic-structural classification of N1+N2 juxtapositions and the occurrence of N1 and N2 as components of the “X, not Y” construction. Conclusions are stated in section 6.

2. NN combinations: syntactic units or composite expressions?

According to Kallas (1980), the NN expressions in (2) consist of two noun phrases in apposition. Similar combinations, e.g. *kobieta demon* (lit. woman demon) ‘devilish woman’ and *pisarz legenda* (lit. writer legend) ‘cult writer’, are regarded as N+N complexes by Willim (2001), who analyses them as syntactic units which contain two nouns (and not two noun phrases). In the literature on Polish word-formation (e.g. Grzegorzczkowska and Puzynina 1998; Szymański 2010; Nagórko 2010), the combinations in (2) are treated as a subtype of composite expressions, i.e. as so-called juxtapositions (Pol. *zestawienia*). This will be the position taken in the present paper.

Juxtapositions differ from compounds proper (Pol. *złożenia właściwe*), such as *półkotapczan* ‘wall bed, pull down bed’, in their morphological structure, prosodic properties, orthographic shape, and inflectional properties. Compounds proper characteristically contain a linking vowel (LV), usually *-o-*, which connects two stems. Such compounds constitute single prosodic words and single orthographic words. The inflectional endings are attached to the right-hand element, which functions as the morphological head of the whole

⁴ Reviewer 2 points out that it would be desirable to discuss semantic and pragmatic aspects of the “X, not Y” construction. While some remarks on the semantic interpretation of the construction can be found below (e.g. in sections 4 and 5), an in-depth analysis of the semantico-pragmatic issues concerning the “X, not Y” constructions is beyond the scope of this paper.

compound. The compound *półkotapczan* ‘wall bed’ in (3) is headed by the masculine gender noun *tapczan* ‘sofa-bed, couch’.

- (3) *Nie kupiliśmy półkotapczanu.*
 not buy.PST.1PL shelf+LV+sofa.GEN.SG
 ‘We didn’t buy a wall bed.’

Juxtapositions, such as *matka potwór* (lit. mother monster) ‘a monster of a mother’, consist of independent orthographic words. Each constituent carries a lexical stress (on the penultimate syllable) and each is inflected separately. The left-hand noun functions as the morphological head, since it determines the grammatical gender of the whole N+N combination. This is visible in (4), where the head *matka* ‘mother’ is of feminine gender while the modifying noun *potwór* ‘monster’ is a masculine personal noun.

- (4) *Matka potwór zrobiła z syna kalekę.*
 mother.NOM.SG monster.NOM.SG make.PST.3SG from son.GEN.SG
 cripple.ACC.SG
 ‘A monster of a mother made her son a cripple.’ (<https://wiadomosci.onet.pl/kiosk/>)

It will be demonstrated in the immediately following section that the NN sequences in (2) or (4) and the examples of the “X, not Y” in (1) have an expressive content.

3. Expressive juxtapositions and expressive utterances

NN juxtapositions discussed in the present paper contain an element which has an evaluative meaning. It is usually the right-hand constituent, as shown in (2) and (5). For some NN combinations, e.g. those in (6), the evaluative lexeme appears as the first (i.e. left-hand) constituent.

- (5) a. *krytyk idiota* (lit. critic idiot) ‘an idiot of a critic’ (NKJP)
 b. *Co zrobić z szefem chamem?* ‘What to do with a boorish boss (lit. with boss.INS.SG boor.INS.SG)?’ (<https://gospodarka.dziennik.pl> › Gospodarka › Praca)
- (6) a. *Ten idiota dryblas zamachał prostacko łapę.* ‘This idiot of a tall guy (lit. idiot tall_guy) waved his hand boorishly.’ (NKJP)
 b. *w międzyczasie cham administrator odcina wszystkich od netu.*
 ‘In the meantime the boorish administrator (lit. boor administrator) cuts everybody off from the Internet.’ (NKJP)

The expressive content of the right-hand constituents in (2) and (5), or the left-hand constituents in (6), is manifested by their suitability in insults

or compliments. Meibauer (2013) demonstrates that expressively loaded lexemes can appear in German sentences such as *Du ...!* (e.g. *Du Idiot!*) or in English sentences such as *You ...!* (e.g. *You fool!*).⁵ In Polish, the relevant construction which shows the expressive value of the lexeme in question is the construction *Ty...!* exemplified in (7a-b). Polish expressive terms can also appear, as in (7c), in the exclamative sentences *Co za ...!* and *Ale ...!* ‘What a/an ...!’ (see Bolinger 1972 on *wh*-exclamatives in English).

- (7) a. *Ty idioto! Jak mogłeś zrobić z siebie takiego błazna?*
 ‘You idiot! How could you have made such a clown of yourself?’ (NKJP)
- b. *Co za geniusz. Doprawdy wybitny!*
 ‘What a genius! Truly outstanding one!’ (NKJP)
- c. *Pomyśl sobie, ale idiota, trzeba przecież iść za ciosem.*
 ‘They’ll think: ‘What an idiot! You have to strike while the iron is hot.’ (NKJP)

Furthermore, positively or negatively loaded lexemes can follow the demonstrative *ten* ‘this’⁶ in expressive sentences, such as those in (8).

- (8) a. *Ten idiota nie rozumie tego co pisze.*
 ‘This idiot doesn’t understand what he writes. (NKJP)
- b. *Patrząc rano w lustro myślę, cóż ten geniusz dziś wymyśli.*
 ‘When I look in the mirror in the morning I think: ‘What will this genius come up with today?’ (NKJP)

Polish polysemous nouns occur in the construction *Ty...!* ‘You ...!’ and in *wh*-exclamatives only in their expressive reading. This is demonstrated in (9) below for the nouns *gad* ‘reptile; contemptible person’ and *piła* ‘saw; demanding teacher’.

- (9) a. *Kobiet się nie bije ty gadzie!*
 ‘One should not beat women, you reptile!’ (NKJP)
- b. *Ale z niej piła!* ‘What a demanding teacher she is!’

The next section deals with one specific expressive construction, i.e. “X, not Y”, which will be compared to various types of copular sentences. Some characteristics and variants of the “X, not Y” construction will be described below as well.

⁵ Properties of expressives are discussed in Potts (2007) on the basis of data from English, German and Japanese.

⁶ Meibauer (2013:33) points out that expressive compounds in German can appear after the demonstrative *dieser* ‘this’, e.g. *Dieser Politikerarsch!* ‘This politician arse!’

4. Morphosyntactic properties of the negative emphatic construction

Sentences which exemplify the emphatic “X, not Y” construction are not understood in a literal manner. The literal reading of sentence (10a) is that the person in question is not a (football) referee but a crook. The intended reading of (10a) is that he is a referee who does not show the feature required of a referee (i.e. he is dishonest).⁷ What (10b) says literally is that a particular individual is not a driver. In contrast, the intended interpretation of (10b) is that this individual is both a driver and a boorish person. Although the lack of rudeness is not a criterial characteristic of the concept of DRIVER (which can be defined as ‘a person whose job is to drive a vehicle’ or ‘someone who drives a vehicle’), drivers are expected to be mindful and polite to avoid conflicts on the road.⁸ Consequently, a boorish driver is not an ideal exemplar⁹ of the category of drivers.

- (10) a. *oszust, a nie sędzia, cały mecz drukował*
 ‘a crooked referee (lit. crook, and not referee), he was fixing the match results’
 (NKJP)
- b. *cham nie kierowca*
 ‘a boorish driver (lit. boor, not driver)’

The sentences in (11) do not exemplify the “X, not Y” construction. They are negative copular sentences which are used when the speaker corrects the previous interlocutor’s utterance. They do not need to contain expressively loaded nouns, although (11b) does contain the evaluative term *idiota* ‘idiot’.

- (11) a. *Ta dziewczyna to Ania, a nie Basia.*
 ‘This girl is (called) Ann, not Barbara.’
- b. *Bo to jest prawdziwy idiota, a nie taki, co udaje głupiego.*
 ‘Because he’s a real idiot and not someone who is acting stupid.’ (NKJP)

Bondaruk (2013, 2014) divides Polish copular sentences into predicational, specificational and equative ones (adapting the taxonomy of copular clauses proposed for English by Higgins 1979). The copular sentences in (11) can be

⁷ See, among others, Buttler (1982), Pajdzińska (1982, 1988) and Chlebda (2003) for a discussion of differences between the structural (i.e. the literal) and the actual readings of phraseological units, e.g. the Polish idiom *robić z igły widły* (lit. to make a pitchfork out of a needle) ‘to make a mountain out of a molehill’.

⁸ Pajdzińska (1988) demonstrates that not only defining features but also connotations of constituent lexemes play a role in establishing the semantic interpretation of a given phraseological unit.

⁹ Lakoff (1987) points out that typicality effects and social stereotypes can arise through metonymy when an exemplar stands for the entire category. Such metonymical models (for a given category) may be typical examples, ideals, paragons, generators, submodels, or salient examples.

regarded as predicational sentences since they ascribe a property to a subject. Bondaruk (2013, 2014) identifies three types of predicational sentences in Polish. In Type 1 sentences the copula verb *być* ‘to be’ is followed by a noun phrase (NP)¹⁰ in the instrumental case. In Type 2 sentences the verb *być* ‘to be’ is followed by a noun phrase in the nominative case. Type 3 sentences contain the pronominal copula *to*, the copula verb *być* ‘to be’ and the NP in the nominative case.¹¹ As observed by Bondaruk (2014: 64), the copula verb can be omitted in Type 3 sentences if it is in the present tense (but not if it is in the past or future tense).

- (12) a. *Marek jest skończonym idiotą.* (Type 1)
 Marek be.PRS.3SG complete.INS.SG idiot.INS.SG
 ‘Mark is a complete idiot.’
- b. *A ty jesteś idiota.* (Type 2)
 and you.NOM.SG be.PRS.2SG idiot.NOM.SG
 ‘And you are an idiot.’
- c. *Marek to (jest) skończony idiota.* (Type 3)
 Marek COP be.PRS.3SG complete.NOM.SG idiot.NOM.SG
 ‘Mark is a complete idiot.’

The negative copular sentences in (11) contain the coordinating conjunction *a* ‘and, but’ which joins two contrasted noun phrases, the second of which is negated. Alternatively, the negated noun phrase can precede the other noun phrase, as in (13), where the coordinating conjunction is either *a* ‘and, but’ or *ale* ‘but’.

- (13) a. *to nie miłość, ale instynkt*
 COP/PRON¹² not love.NOM.SG but instinct.NOM.SG
 ‘It’s not love but instinct.’ (NKJP)
- b. *To nie miłość, a zauroczenie.*
 COP/PRON not love.NOM.SG but infatuation.NOM.SG
 ‘It’s not love but infatuation.’ (NKJP)

In contrast to the negative copular sentences in (11) and (13), most utterances with the emphatic “X, not Y” construction in the NKJP corpus contain no pronominal copula *to*, no copula verb *być* ‘to be’ and no coordinating conjunction *a* ‘and, but’ joining two contrasted items. This is also true of the

¹⁰ Noun phrases in Polish are analysed by Bondaruk (2013, 2014) as Determiner Phrases (DPs).

¹¹ Pereltsvaig (2001: 183) regards the Russian copular sentence *Oleg był durak* (Oleg.NOM.SG be.PST.3SG fool.NOM.SG) ‘Oleg was a fool.’ as an equative sentence. Bondaruk (2014: 79) argues that the corresponding Polish sentence, i.e. *Oleg był dureń* (Oleg.NOM.SG be.PST.3SG fool.NOM.SG) should be regarded as predicational.

¹² In the sentences in (13) the word *to* can be analysed as a pronominal copula (as in 12c), or as a pronoun which occupies the subject position. See Hentschel (2001), Bondaruk (2013: 220–224), and the references mentioned therein for more discussion of *to być* copular clauses.

examples of the emphatic construction provided by Kallas¹³ (1980: 133), and given below in (14), where they are juxtaposed with the corresponding NN combinations.

- (14) a. *Zosia, iskra – nie kobieta*
 Zosia.NOM.SG spark.NOM.SG not woman.NOM.SG
 ‘Zosia – a girl like a spark’
- a’ *Zosia, kobieta-iskra* (=14a)
 Zosia.NOM.SG woman.NOM.SG spark.NOM.SG
- b. *kocica, szatan – nie kobieta*
 she_cat.NOM.SG devil.NOM.SG not woman.NOM.SG
 ‘a cougar, a devilish woman’
- b’ *kocica, kobieta-szatan* (=14b)
 she_cat.NOM.SG woman.NOM.SG devil.NOM.SG

It needs to be added, though, that it is possible to find (in the NKJP corpus) emphatic sentences with the copula verb *być* ‘to be’, the pronominal element *to* and/or the coordinating conjunction *a* ‘and, but’, as shown in (15).

- (15) a. *Pan Fryderyk to anioł, a nie.*
 Mr Fryderyk.NOM.SG COP angel.NOM.SG and not
człowiek.
 man.NOM.SG
 ‘Fryderyk is an angel of a man.’ (NKJP)
- b. *To szatan, nie kobieta!*
 COP/PRON devil.NOM.SG not woman.NOM.SG
 ‘She’s a devil woman!’ (NKJP)
- c. *To jest szatan, nie dziecko!*
 COP/PRON be.PRS.3SG devil.NOM.SG not child.NOM.SG
Wrzeszczy, a minę ma taką,
 scream.PRS.3SG but expression.ACC.SG have.PRS.3SG such.ACC.SG
jakby się śmiał!
 as_if REFL laugh.PST.3SG
 ‘This is a fiend, not a child! He is screaming and his face is as if he were laughing!’ (NKJP)

Lewicki (1976), Bąba (1989), Chlebda (2003) and Andrejecz (2015), among others, argue that it is useful to examine variability¹⁴ in the form of a given phraseological unit. With respect to sentences containing the “X, not Y”

¹³ There are some differences between the punctuation marks in the examples found in the NKJP corpus and in Kallas (1980: 133). Kallas employs hyphens in front of the negated phrases. Sentences with the “X, not Y” construction culled from the corpus tend to employ few commas and no hyphens in front of the negated nouns or noun phrases.

¹⁴ I would like to thank Reviewer 2 for directing my attention to the work of the above-mentioned Polish linguists and to their discussion of the issue of potential instability of the shape of phraseological units.

construction discussed here, it can be observed that though the copula verb usually occurs in the present tense form (as in 15d), it can also be used in the past tense or the future tense form (as in 16).

- (16) a. *To był koszmar, a nie życie.*
 COP/PRON be.PST.3SG nightmare.NOM.SG and not life.NOM.SG
 ‘It was a nightmarish life.’ (NKJP)
- b. *To będzie koszmar, a nie wesele.*
 COP/PRON be.FUT.3SG nightmare.NOM.SG and not wedding.NOM.SG
 ‘It will be a nightmare wedding.’

The “X, not Y” construction characteristically appears as an elliptical (exclamative) clause (see 1a–f) or as an appositive phrase (as in 14a–b). It functions as a subject complement in Type 2 predicational sentences (as in 18a) or in Type 3 predicational sentences (see 15a). Less commonly it occurs as a noun phrase in the subject position (17a), in the direct object position (17b) or as a prepositional complement (17c).

- (17) a. *Wybacz, ale tak postępuje oszust, a nie lekarz.*
 ‘I’m sorry but that’s what a crook, and not a physician, does.’ (NKJP)
- b. *Spotkałeś chama, a nie kierowcę.*
 ‘You’ve met a boor, and not a driver.’
- c. *Trafiałeś na oszusta, a nie doradcę.*
 ‘You’ve come across a crook, and not an adviser.’

Sentences (18a–b) show that the expressively loaded constituent in the “X, not Y” construction can be modified by intensifying adjectives, such as *skończony* ‘complete’ and *kompletny* ‘utter, total’.

- (18) a. *Pan jest skończony gnój, a nie marynarz!*
 ‘You are a complete bastard (lit. a complete piece of shit) and not a sailor!’
 (NKJP)
- b. *Kompletny dureń, a nie polityk!*
 ‘A total fool, and not a politician!’

Examples of the emphatic “not X, but Y” construction in which the negated noun precedes the other noun are difficult to find in the NKJP corpus.¹⁵ The constructed examples in (19) either illustrate the “X, not Y” construction, or they can be treated as sentences with the corrective function (depending on their situational context).

- (19) a. *To nie lekarz, ale oszust!*
 ‘It’s not a physician but a crook!’

¹⁵ In the case of the sentence *Nagle okazuje się, że poszukiwany to nie człowiek, ale małpa* ‘Suddenly it turns out that the wanted fugitive is not a human being but an ape,’ culled from the NKJP, the intended interpretation is that of a sentence with the corrective function.

- b. *To nie polityk, ale idiota!*
 ‘It’s not a politician but an idiot!’

Both nouns appearing in the emphatic “X, not Y” construction agree in case. They usually occur in the nominative case, unless the whole expression functions as a direct object or a prepositional complement (as in 17b–c). They exhibit the same (20a) or different (20b) grammatical gender. They usually agree in number (as in 20a–b), but this is not an obligatory requirement (see 20c–d).

- | | | | | | |
|---------|--|--|-------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| (20) a. | <i>idiota,</i>
idiot.M.NOM.SG
‘an idiot of a politician’ | | <i>nie</i>
not | | <i>polityk</i>
politician.M.NOM.SG |
| b. | <i>anioł,</i>
angel.M.NOM.SG
‘an angel of a child’ | | <i>nie</i>
not | | <i>dziecko</i>
child.N.NOM.SG |
| c. | <i>Koszmar,</i>
nightmare.M.NOM.SG
‘nightmare holidays’ | | <i>nie</i>
not | | <i>wakacje!</i>
holiday.NOM.PL |
| d. | <i>Marzenie,</i>
dream.N.NOM.SG
‘dream earnings’ | | <i>nie</i>
not | | <i>zarobki</i>
earning.NOM.PL |

It is possible to use both constituents in the plural, as in (21).

- | | | | | | |
|---------|--|-----------------|-------------------|--|--|
| (21) a. | <i>chamy,</i>
boor.NOM.PL
‘boorish politicians’ (NKJP) | <i>a</i>
and | <i>nie</i>
not | | <i>politycy</i>
politician.NOM.PL |
| b. | <i>oszuści</i>
crook.NOM.PL
‘dishonest experts’ (NKJP) | <i>a</i>
and | <i>nie</i>
not | | <i>fachowcy</i>
professional.NOM.PL |

Some expressively loaded lexemes exhibit diminutive forms, e.g. *koszmarek* ‘nightmare.DIM’, *potworek* ‘monster.DIM’, *aniołek* ‘angel.DIM’, and *diabełek* ‘devil.DIM’. It is not easy to find examples of the “X, not Y” construction with the evaluative constituent being used in the diminutive form, but it is possible to construct them (as in 22).¹⁶

- | | | | | | |
|---------|---|-----------------|-------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| (22) a. | <i>potworek,</i>
monster.DIM.NOM.SG
‘a monstrous statue’ | <i>a</i>
and | <i>nie</i>
not | | <i>pomnik</i>
statue.NOM.SG |
| b. | <i>diabełek,</i>
devil.DIM.NOM.SG
‘a little devil of a child’ | <i>a</i>
and | <i>nie</i>
not | | <i>dziecko</i>
child.NOM.SG |

¹⁶ One can come across expressive NN combinations in which one or both nouns appear in the diminutive form, e.g. *hotelik koszmarek* (lit. hotel.DIM nightmare.DIM) ‘a little nightmare of a hotel’.

In the next section the relationship will be highlighted between the “X, not Y” construction and NN juxtapositions. The question will be considered which types of expressive NN juxtapositions give rise to (or are linked to) examples of “X, not Y” construction.

5. “X, not Y” construction, predicational sentences and types of NN juxtapositions

5.1. Coordinate or coordinate-like juxtapositions

Compounds can be divided into two large groups (cf. Grzegorzczkova and Puzynina 1998; Fabb 1998; Fradin 2009; Szymanek 2010). The first group consists of coordinate (or coordinative) compounds, in which both components are semantically equal and can be treated as semantic heads. The second group contains non-coordinate compounds (referred to as subordinate or subordinative), in which one constituent is semantically and structurally subordinate to the other.¹⁷

Scalise and Bisetto (2009) distinguish three types of compounds (and compound-like units): attributive, coordinate and subordinate ones. In the case of attributive compounds, one of the constituents is a modifier which expresses some property of the head (e.g. *blackboard*, *dogbed*, *snailmail*). There occurs a complement-head relationship between constituents of subordinate compounds, such as *taxi driver*, *dressmaker*, *table leg*, *chimney sweep*, *cookbook author*. Constituents of coordinate compounds, such as *sofa bed*, *scholar athlete*, or *poet-translator*, can be linked by means of the conjunction *and*, e.g. ‘sofa and bed’, ‘scholar and athlete’, ‘poet and translator’.

The tripartite classification of compounds proposed by Scalise and Bisetto (2009) can be applied to compound-like multiword expressions, as is shown for Russian by Masini and Benigni (2012). Consequently, it is applied here to Polish NN juxtapositions.

Coordinate compounds and juxtapositions with a multifunctional reading denote entities which belong to two categories simultaneously and can be paraphrased as ‘an X+Y is an X who/which is also a Y’ (see Renner and Fernández-Domínguez 2011). They denote an intersection of two sets (of Xs and Ys). They can be exemplified by the Polish NN juxtapositions in (23). As shown in

¹⁷ Apart from endocentric compounds, which contain either one or two semantic heads, Fabb (1998) identifies the group of exocentric compounds, in which the semantic head is not overtly expressed. Scalise and Bisetto (2009) apply their tripartite division both to endocentric and exocentric compounds. See Scalise and Bisetto (2009) for a comparison of classifications of compounds proposed by various morphologists.

(23a–b, c–d, e–f), the order of constituents in such juxtapositions is often reversible (though one order may be the prevailing¹⁸ one).

- (23) a. *barman-kelner* (lit. bartender waiter) ‘bartender and waiter’
 b. *kelner-barman* (lit. waiter bartender) ‘waiter and bartender’
 c. *piekarnia-cukiernia* (lit. bakery patisserie) ‘patisserie bakery’
 d. *cukiernia-piekarnia* (lit. patisserie bakery) ‘patisserie bakery’

The constituents of the coordinate juxtapositions in (23), i.e. N1 and N2, are not expressively marked lexemes. Consequently, the usage of N1 and N2 in the sentences in (24) does not give rise to the “X, not Y” emphatic construction. (24a–b) can be interpreted as copular sentences which negate (and correct) previous utterances.

- (24) a. *Pomyliłeś się. To jest barman, nie kelner.*
 ‘You’ve made a mistake. This is a bartender, not a waiter.’
 b. *Nie masz racji. To jest piekarnia, a nie cukiernia.*
 ‘You’re wrong. It’s a bakery, and not a patisserie.’

The NN combinations in (25) contain lexemes with the ameliorative or pejorative meaning, such as *anioł* ‘angel’ and *idiota* ‘idiot’. They behave like coordinate NN combinations in allowing the reversibility of their constituents (as shown in 26). Moreover, similarly to coordinate compounds, they denote intersections of sets denoted by N1 and N2 (e.g. a set of terrorists and a set of sadists). However, one of the constituents of the NN complexes in (25) is used attributively and can be replaced by a morphologically related adjective, e.g. *chamski kierowca* ‘boorish driver’, *sadystyczny terrorysta* ‘sadistic terrorist’ and *ofermowaty złodziej* ‘nebbish thief’. Consequently, the NN combinations in (25) can be regarded either as a subtype of coordinate, or coordinate-like,¹⁹ juxtapositions.

- (25) a. *Nie czytajcie opisów. Recenzent-idiota zdradza w najbardziej kretyński sposób jedną z kluczowych spraw.*
 ‘Don’t read the descriptions. An idiot reviewer (lit. reviewer idiot) reveals one of the key issues in the most idiotic way.’ (www.filmweb.pl › fora tematyczne › Wyspa zлочыńców)

¹⁸ A search in the NKJP corpus brings 38 hits for *piekarnia-cukiernia* (lit. bakery patisserie) and 9 hits for *cukiernia-piekarnia* (lit. patisserie bakery), both in the NOM.SG case. There are 72 occurrences of *barman-kelner* (lit. bartender waiter) as compared to 30 occurrences of *kelner-barman* (lit. waiter bartender) in the NOM.SG case.

¹⁹ Radimský (2015: 103–106, 124–126) discusses intersective and reversible NN compounds in Italian and regards some of them as belonging to the group of coordinate-like combinations. He draws the distinction between coordinate and attributive multi-word units differently from Scalise and Bisetto (2009), and from the position taken in this paper. For instance, Radimský (2015: 126) regards *studente-lavoratore* (student worker) ‘working student’ as a [+coordinate-like] compound, while *uomo peccatore* (man sinner) ‘sinful man’ is analysed as an attributive [-coordinate-like] compound.

- b. *Kierowca cham dostaje nauczkę zgodnie z prawem*
 ‘The boorish driver (lit. driver boor) is taught a lesson by the law.’ (<https://www.wykop.pl/link/.../kierowca-cham-dostaje-nauczke-zgodnie-z-prawem/>)
- c. *Terrorysta-sadysta, montując bombę, ustawił ją tak, że wybuchnie, jeśli autobus zwolni poniżej pięćdziesięciu mil na godzinę.*
 ‘A sadist of a terrorist (lit. terrorist sadist) mounted a bomb and set it so that it would explode if the bus slowed down below fifty miles per hour.’ (NKJP)
- d. *Ukradł alkohol, zostawił dokumenty. Złodziej-oferma zatrzymany w Janowie*
 ‘He stole the booze, left (his) ID behind. A wimp of a thief (lit. thief wimp) detained in Janów’ (<http://itvm.pl/2017/10/27/ukradl-alkohol-zostawil-dokumenty-zlodziej-oferma-zatrzymany-janowie/>)
- (26) a. *nauczyciel sadysta* (teacher.NOM.SG sadist.NOM.SG)
 ‘a sadist of a teacher’
- b. *sadysta nauczyciel* (sadist.NOM.SG teacher.NOM.SG)
 ‘a sadist of a teacher’
- c. *administrator cham* (administrator.NOM.SG boor.NOM.SG)
 ‘boorish administrator’
- d. *cham administrator* (boor.NOM.SG administrator.NOM.SG)
 ‘boorish administrator’
- e. *Idiota recenzent. Ale bystry ten pismak.*
 ‘An idiot of a reviewer (lit. idiot reviewer). But he’s a clever hack.’ (cf. 25a) (<https://www.forbes.pl/.../9-rzeczy-ktore-powinienes-zrobic-po-wygranej-w-lot,0,1311.>)

The examples of the “X, not Y” construction in (27) correspond to the juxtapositions in (26) and (25), or to similar reversible NN combinations.

- (27) a. *Idiota, nie recenzent* (lit. idiot not reviewer) ‘an idiot of a reviewer’
- b. *Cham, nie kierowca* (lit. boor not driver) ‘a boorish driver’
- c. *Oferma, nie złodziej* (lit. wimp not thief) ‘a wimp of a thief’
- d. *Przecież to jest oferma a nie polityk.*
 but COP/PRON be.PRS.3SG wimp.NOM.SG and not politician.NOM.SG
 ‘Surely it is a wimp of a politician.’ (NKJP)

While the order of N1 and N2 in coordinate, or coordinate-like, juxtapositions can vary, the order of N1 and N2 in the “X, not Y” construction is (farly)²⁰ fixed. The left-hand N constituent in the negated phrases in (27) is the lexeme with the evaluative meaning, while the right-hand constituent denotes a profession.²¹

²⁰ See (19) for the less frequent examples of the “not X, but Y” expressions.

²¹ Apart from denoting a sort of a profession, the noun *złodziej* ‘thief’ carries the evaluative meaning, e.g. in the combination *bankierzy złodzieje* (lit. bankers thieves). Consequently, the word *złodziej* ‘thief’ can appear at the beginning of the “X, not Y” construction such as *Złodzieje, nie bankierzy*. (lit. thieves, not bankers)

The sentences in (28), on the other hand, can be treated as correction sentences with the second noun being negated.

- (28) a. *Nie pozwolę nikomu obrażać mojego kolegi. To administrator, a nie cham.*
 ‘I won’t let anyone insult my friend. He’s an administrator, not a boor.’
 b. *To dobry i delikatny dentysta, a nie sadysta.*
 ‘He’s a good and gentle dentist, and he’s not a sadist.’

As was shown in (12) (in section 4 above), constituents of coordinate, or coordinate-like, reversible juxtapositions (such as those in 26), for instance the negatively loaded word *idiota* ‘idiot’, can occur in all the three types of predicational sentences. This can be demonstrated also for the positively loaded constituents of the coordinate (or coordinate-like) juxtapositions, e.g. *geniusz* ‘genius’, which is a part of the reversible NN combination *informatyk geniusz* (IT_specialist genius) – *geniusz informatyk* (genius IT_specialist) ‘a genius of an IT specialist’.

- (29) a. *Ten informatyk jest geniuszem.* (Type 1)
 this.NOM.SG IT_specialist.NOM.SG be.PRS.3SG genius.INS.SG
 b. *?Ten informatyk jest geniusz.* (Type 2)²²
 this.NOM.SG IT_specialist.NOM.SG be.PRS.3SG genius.NOM.SG
 c. *Ten informatyk to (jest) geniusz.* (Type 3)
 this.NOM.SG IT_specialist.NOM.SG COP be.PRS.3SG genius.NOM.SG
 ‘This IT specialist is a genius.’

The copular clauses in (29), as well as the possibility of inverting the order of N1 and N2 in them (e.g. *Ten geniusz jest informatykiem* ‘This genius is an IT specialist’) further indicate the coordinate, or coordinate-like, status of the NN combinations discussed in this section.

5.2. Attributive juxtapositions

Examples of attributive juxtapositions which lack related “X, not Y” sentences are given below in (30). The modifying noun *guma* ‘rubber’ in (30a) attributes metaphorically the property of flexibility to the head noun *kobieta* ‘woman’. The modifying noun *pila* ‘saw’ in (30b) denotes a tool which is similar in shape to the nose extension of the fish in question. The modifier *rzeka* ‘river’ in (30c) indicates the extended length of the interview.

In contrast to the coordinate and coordinate-like combinations discussed in the previous section, the word order of the two nouns in (30) cannot be changed, as is shown in (30d–f).

²² It can be added that Type 2 sentence (i.e. 29b) is awkward and sounds worse than (29a) and (29c). It would sound more natural if the subject position were occupied by a pronoun, e.g. *Ty jesteś (prawdziwy) geniusz.* ‘You are a (real) genius.’

The usage of the emphatic “X, not Y” construction in (31) results in unacceptable sentences.²³ Let us note that the constituents of the metaphoric NN juxtapositions in (30) cannot occur felicitously in the predicational (Type 1, 2 or 3) sentences in (32).

- (30) a. *kobieta-guma* (lit. woman rubber) ‘female contortionist’
 b. *ryba-piła* (lit. fish saw) ‘saw fish’
 c. *wywiad rzeka* (lit. interview river) ‘extended interview’
 d. **guma-kobieta* (lit. rubber woman)
 e. **piła-kobieta* (lit. saw fish)
 f. **rzeka-wywiad* (lit. river interview)
- (31) a. **Guma, nie kobieta* (lit. rubber, not woman)
 b. **Piła, nie ryba.* (lit. saw, not fish)
 c. **Rzeka, nie wywiad* (lit. river, not interview)
- (32) a. **Kobieta* *jest* *gumą.* (Type 1)
 woman.NOM.SG be.PRS.3SG rubber.INS.SG
 ‘The woman is rubber.’
 b. **Kobieta* *jest* *guma.* (Type 2)
 woman.NOM.SG be.PRS.3G rubber.NOM.SG
 c. **Kobieta* *to* (*jest*) *guma.* (Type 3)
 woman.NOM.SG COP be.PRS.3G rubber.nom.sg

A different subgroup of non-reversible attributive juxtapositions is exemplified in (33).

- (33) a. *ojciec potwór* (lit. father monster) ‘a monster of a father’ (cf. **potwór ojciec*)
 b. *żona anioł* (lit. wife angel) ‘an angel of a wife’ (cf. **anioł żona*)
 c. *samochód marzenie* (lit. car dream) ‘a dream of a car’
 (cf. **marzenie samochód*)
 d. *hotel ruina* (lit. hotel ruin) ‘a ruin of a hotel’ (cf. **ruina hotel*)
 e. *podróż koszmar* (lit. journey nightmare) ‘a nightmare of a journey’
 (cf. **koszmar podróż*)
 f. *teściowa skarb* (lit. mother-in-law treasure) ‘a mother-in-law who is a real treasure’ (cf. **skarb teściowa*)

The right-hand noun in (33) denotes a set of properties commonly attributed to a given entity (e.g. a monster, angel or ruin) and predicated of the left-hand element (which is interpreted as the semantic and formal head of the juxtaposition). The whole NN combination is given a metaphorical interpretation. Its metaphoricity is further highlighted by the availability of a paraphrase with a comparative structure (as demonstrated in 34).

²³ Incidentally, it is possible to use the noun *piła* in the “X, not Y” construction when it carries the evaluative meaning (as mentioned in the previous section) and occurs in the sense of ‘demanding teacher’, as in *Piła, nie nauczycielka!* (lit. saw not teacher) ‘A truly demanding teacher!’

- (34) a. *ojciec jak potwór* ‘a father like a monster’
 b. *żona jak anioł* ‘a wife like an angel’
 c. *samochód jak marzenie* ‘a car like a dream’
 d. *hotel jak ruina* ‘a hotel like a ruin’
 e. *podróż jak koszmar* ‘a journey like a nightmare’
 f. *teściowa jak skarb* ‘a mother-in-law like a treasure’

The N2 in the NN complexes in (33) is an expressively loaded lexeme. Therefore, the constituents of the juxtapositions in (33) can occur in the “X, not Y” emphatic construction, as in (35).

- (35) a. *potwór, nie ojciec* (lit. monster not father) ‘a monster of a father’
 b. *anioł, nie żona* (lit. angel not wife) ‘an angel of a wife’
 c. *marzenie, nie samochód* (lit. dream not car) ‘a dream of a car’
 d. *ruina, nie hotel* (lit. ruin not hotel) ‘a ruin of a hotel’
 e. *To był koszmar, nie podróż* (lit. it was nightmare not journey)
 ‘It was a nightmarish journey.’ (NKJP)
 f. *szybko przyjeżdża i szybko wyjeżdża to jest skarb a nie teściowa*
 ‘She comes and goes away quickly, it’s a mother-in-law who is a (real) treasure
 (lit. it’s a treasure, and not a mother-in-law)’ (NKJP)

As was observed by Pajdzińska (1988, 1991), connotations of constituent lexemes are crucial in arriving at the intended meaning of phraseological units. When interpreting the elliptical sentence *anioł, nie żona* in (35b), the speaker of Polish recalls the features implied by the lexeme *anioł* ‘angel’, such as kindness, gentleness, perfection and beauty. Moreover, the felicitous interpretation of the NN combinations in (33), the comparative phrases in (34), as well as the instances of “X, not Y” construction in (35), requires reference to be made to culture-bound stereotypical images of the entities denoted by N1 (i.e. a father, a wife, a car).²⁴ The relevance of stereotypes may be indicated by the larger syntactic context of the NN combinations or the “X, not Y” expressions. This is demonstrated in (35f), which appeals to the stereotypical image of a mother-in-law as an annoying, overbearing and inquisitive person, who takes too much interest in the life of her child and her son-in-law (or her daughter-in-law).

When discussing metaphor-based NN combinations in French, Fradin (2009) as well as Van Goethem and Amiot (2019) distinguish between those NN complexes in which the N2 has a classifying role, e.g. *requin-marteau* (lit. shark hammer) ‘hammerhead shark’ or *serpent-tigre* (lit. snake tiger) ‘tiger snake’, and those in which the N2 has a qualifying role, e.g. *livre-phare* (lit. book lighthouse) ‘landmark book’ and *film-culte* (lit. movie cult) ‘cult movie’. The NN combinations with a classifying N2 in French have a taxonomic function, e.g.

²⁴ Chlebda (2003: 68) argues that phraseological units may reflect, as well as create, popular opinions and national myths.

they denote biological species. The Polish NN juxtapositions in (30), such as *ryba-piła* ‘saw fish’ and *wywiad-rzeka* ‘extended interview’, have a taxonomic function and the N2 can be treated as exhibiting a classifying role.²⁵ The NN complexes in (33), on the other hand, contain N2 with a qualifying function.

The juxtaposition *ojciec potwór* (father monster) ‘a monster of a father’ in (33a) can be given an intersective interpretation (i.e. it can be interpreted as the intersection of sets of monsters and fathers) because the expressively loaded lexeme *potwór* ‘monster’, apart from denoting a large and ugly imaginary creature, can denote a cruel person. *Podróż koszmar* (lit. journey nightmare) in (33e) can be treated as denoting an intersection of the set of journeys and nightmares, since the expressive term *koszmar* ‘nightmare’ exhibits the extended sense ‘an extremely unpleasant event or experience’, in addition to the basic sense ‘a frightening dream’. Therefore, the predicational (Type 3) sentences in (36) are well-formed. This influences the acceptability of the “X, not Y” construction in (35).²⁶

- | | | | | |
|---------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|
| (36) a. | <i>Ten</i> | <i>ojciec</i> | <i>to</i> | <i>potwór.</i> |
| | this.NOM.SG | father.NOM.SG | COP | monster.NOM.SG |
| b. | <i>Taka</i> | <i>żona</i> | <i>to</i> | <i>anioł!</i> |
| | such.NOM.SG | wife.NOM.SG | COP | angel.NOM.SG |
| c. | <i>Taki</i> | <i>samochód</i> | <i>to</i> | <i>marzenie.</i> |
| | such.NOM.SG | car.NOM.SG | COP | dream.NOM.SG |
| d. | <i>Ten</i> | <i>hotel</i> | <i>to</i> | <i>ruina.</i> |
| | this.NOM.SG | hotel.NOM.SG | COP | ruin.NOM.SG |
| e. | <i>Taka</i> | <i>podróż</i> | <i>to</i> | <i>koszmar.</i> |
| | such.NOM.SG | journey.NOM.SG | COP | nightmare.NOM.SG |

Type 1 predicational sentences in (37) below are also acceptable.²⁷

²⁵ Van Goethem and Amiot (2019) treat *discours-fleuve* (lit. discourse river) ‘really lengthy discourse’ and *film-fleuve* (movie river) ‘lengthy movie’ as examples of French NN combinations in which the N2 has a qualifying function and allows degree modification, e.g. *un texte extrêmement fleuve* (lit. text extremely river) ‘an extremely lengthy text’. In contrast to their position, I regard the Polish NN combination *wywiad-rzeka* (lit. interview river) ‘extended interview’ as a juxtaposition with a classifying N2 since it denotes a literary genre, i.e. a subtype of an interview. Moreover, the N2 *rzeka* ‘river’ does not permit degree modifiers, as in **wywiad bardzo rzeka* (lit. interview very river).

²⁶ The intersective interpretation of NN combinations such as *ojciec potwór* (lit. father monster) ‘a monster of a father’ can also be shown by the possibility of inverting the order of N1 and N2 in copular clauses, e.g. *Ten potwór to ojciec* ‘This monster is a father’. However, doubts can be raised concerning the intersective semantics of such NN complexes as *kac potwór* (lit. hangover monster) ‘monstrous hangover’ (see Cetnarowska 2019).

²⁷ Type 2 predicational sentences, corresponding to those in (36) or (37), sound strange or are unacceptable to me, e.g. *?Ojciec jest potwór.* (father.NOM.SG be.PRS.3SG monster.NOM.SG) and **Twój samochód jest marzenie.* (your.NOM.SG car.NOM.SG be.PRS.3SG dream.NOM.SG). The acceptability of constituents of NN combinations in predicational sentences is further discussed by Cetnarowska (2019) since it is related to the issue of the identification of semantic heads in compounds and juxtapositions.

(37) a.	<i>Ten</i> this.NOM.SG	<i>ojciec</i> father.NOM.SG	<i>jest</i> be.PRS.3SG	<i>potworem.</i> monster.INS.SG
b.	<i>Taka</i> such.NOM.SG	<i>żona</i> wife.NOM.SG	<i>jest</i> be.PRS.3SG	<i>aniołem.</i> angel.INS.SG
c.	<i>Taki</i> such.NOM.SG	<i>samochód</i> car.NOM.SG	<i>jest</i> be.PRS.3SG	<i>marzeniem.</i> dream.INS.SG
d.	<i>Ten</i> this.NOM.SG	<i>hotel</i> hotel.NOM.SG	<i>jest</i> be.PRS.3SG	<i>ruiną.</i> ruin.INS.SG
e.	<i>Taka</i> such.NOM.SG	<i>podróż</i> journey.NOM.SG	<i>jest</i> be.PRS.3SG	<i>koszmarem.</i> nightmare.INS.SG

If both Type 1 and Type 3 predicational sentences contain overt copula verbs (e.g. in the past tense form), a difference is visible in the verbal agreement patterns. The copula verb agrees with the subject in Type 1 sentences (in 38 a) while in Type 3 sentences it agrees with the postverbal NP (in 38 b).

(38) a.	<i>Te</i> these.NOM.PL	<i>wakacje</i> holiday.NOM.PL	<i>były</i> be.PST.3PL	<i>koszmarem.</i> nightmare.M.INS.SG
b.	<i>Te</i> these.NOM.PL	<i>wakacje</i> holiday.NOM.PL	<i>to był</i> COP be.M.PST.3SG	<i>koszmar.</i> nightmare.M.NOM.SG

Some of the Type 1 sentences in (37) can be regarded as less common than their Type 3 equivalents in (36). There are 187 attestations of the clause *to ruina* (COP ruin.NOM.SG) ‘it’s a ruin’ in the NKJP corpus, as opposed to 74 hits for the verb phrase *jest ruiną* (be.PRS.3SG ruin.INS.SG) ‘is a ruin’. Similarly, the clause *to koszmar* (COP nightmare.NOM.SG) ‘it’s a nightmare’ is much more frequent in the NKJP corpus (720 hits) than the verb phrase *jest koszmarem* (be.PRS.3SG ruin.INS.SG) ‘is a nightmare’ (134 hits).²⁸

Bondaruk (2014: 63) observes that in Polish predicational sentences “the verbal copula is typically followed by an instrumental case marked nominal predicate”. Thus, Type 1 predicational sentences are generally more common than Type 2 or Type 3 predicational sentences. They are also stylistically neutral. In contrast, Type 2 sentences have an expressive function and signal informal Polish, as is confirmed by (18a).

The higher frequency and naturalness of (selected) Type 3 predicational sentences in (36), in comparison to Type 1 sentences in (37), may result from the expressive marking of such nouns as *koszmar* ‘nightmare’, *marzenie* ‘dream’ or *ruina* ‘ruin’.

The use of components of attributive NN combinations in predicational sentences, such as those in (36-38), further indicates that although the right-hand component (e.g. *potwór* ‘monster’ in *ojciec potwór* ‘a monster of a father’) is treated as a modifier, it behaves in some ways as a semantic co-head.

²⁸ The difference in the frequency between Type 1 and Type 3 predicational sentences is not visible in the NKJP corpus in the case of the nominal predicate *anioł* ‘angel’.

6. Conclusions

This paper provided some discussion of morphosyntactic properties of the “X, not Y” construction, which exhibits strong expressive force and is characteristic of informal Polish. It was shown that “X, not Y” expressions usually occur either as elliptical clauses, as appositive phrases or as subject complements. Sentences were culled from the NKJP corpus, or constructed by the author, to demonstrate that the “X, not Y” strings occasionally function as subjects or objects in a sentence.

Given that the “X, not Y” expressions can be treated as phraseological units, their variability in form was examined. They contain optional constituents, such as the conjunction *a* ‘and’ or intensifying adjectives, e.g. *skończony* ‘complete’. The optionality refers also to the presence of the copular verb *być* ‘to be’ and the pronominal copula *to* ‘this, it’ in sentences containing the “X, not Y” construction. X and Y components in the emphatic “X, not Y” construction are nouns which occur in the same case, yet they do not need to agree in gender or in number. They can be pluralized and can occur in the diminutive form.

Furthermore, various types of relationships were examined between the emphatic “X, not Y” construction, copular clauses and expressive NN combinations in Polish.

The comparison of sentences containing the “X, not Y” construction with copular clauses leads to two observations. The first observation is that a contrast obtains between the semantic interpretation of negative predicational sentences and of the instances of the “X, not Y” construction (occurring either as elliptical sentences or as constituents of predicational sentences). Negative copular sentences such as (28b), i.e. *To dobry i delikatny dentysta, a nie sadysta* ‘He’s a good and gentle dentist, and not a sadist’, function as sentences correcting the previous utterance. On the other hand, the actual reading of the “X, not Y” utterances, such as *Idiota nie kierowca* ‘an idiot of a driver’ in (1a), differs from their structural (i.e. the literal) reading. The second observation concerns the type of copular clauses in which the “X, not Y” construction occurs. They belong to Type 2 and Type 3 predicational sentences in the classification proposed by Bondaruk (2013, 2014).

Since Kallas (1980) treats “X, not Y” expressions as synonymous to NN appositive complexes, the question was addressed which semantic-structural types of NN combinations have corresponding emphatic “X, not Y” sentences. Constituents of coordinate NN combinations with the multifunctional reading, e.g. *kelner-barman* ‘bartender-waiter’, can occur in negative copular sentences with the corrective meaning (“It is X, it is not Y”). They do not appear in the emphatic “X, not Y” construction. The same observation holds for attributive NN juxtapositions whose right-hand constituents have a classifying

function, thus the whole NN juxtaposition denotes a taxonomic subtype (of what is denoted by the left-hand noun), e.g. *ryba-piła* (lit. fish saw) ‘sawfish’. Examples were given of emphatic “X, not Y” sentences related to NN juxtapositions whose constituents are reversible and stand in a coordinate, or coordinate-like, relation, yet one of the nouns shows a property reading, e.g. *kierowca idiota* (lit. driver idiot) ‘an idiot of a driver’ and *administrator cham* (lit. administrator boor) ‘boorish administrator’. “X, not Y” emphatic sentences can contain X and Y which occur as constituents of non-reversible attributive NN juxtapositions. Right-hand modifiers of such juxtapositions exhibit a qualifying (and a metaphorical) reading, e.g. *matka potwór* (lit. mother monster) ‘a monster of a mother’, *człowiek skarb* (lit. man treasure) ‘a treasure of a man’ and *żona anioł* (lit. wife angel) ‘an angel of a wife’. Both the defining features and attributes connoted by those expressively loaded lexemes (e.g. *anioł* ‘angel’, *skarb* ‘treasure’ and *potwór* ‘monster’) are crucial for computing the meaning of NN combinations as well as of the instances of the “X, not Y” construction. Moreover, their appropriate interpretation requires the knowledge of culture-bound stereotypes and may be facilitated by the larger linguistic context (as in 35f). It needs to be emphasised that the “X, not Y” construction as well as NN juxtapositions allow the speaker to convey a complex content in an elliptical form.²⁹

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²⁹ I am grateful to Reviewer 2 for pointing out to me that short utterances, such as those in (1) or (35), may convey rich and culture-motivated meanings.

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