
Expressive adjectives and variation at the syntax/semantics interface.

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Expressive adjectives (EAs) like English *fucking*, *damn*, or *shitty* have raised much interest as contributors to not at-issue meaning (Potts 2007). Yet, (Gutzmann & Turgay 2014; Gutzmann 2019) has shown that a finer-grained description of these elements is necessary in English and German, between pure EA (*fucking*), which are modifiers of a predicate ($\langle\langle e, t \rangle, \langle e, t \rangle\rangle$), and mixed ones (*shitty*), which are functions from degrees to properties ($\langle\langle d, \langle e, t \rangle \rangle\rangle$), just like any other intersective adjective. This semantic distinction has consequences at the syntactic level; for example, pure EAs cannot be graduated, nor appear in predicative position (1), unlike mixed EAs (1).

- (1) a. This is a {**very fucking/very bloody*} lie.
b. This lie is **fucking/bloody*.

This communication presents new data from Catalan and Spanish EAs challenging this distinction: regardless of their content, (i) all EAs allow degree modification (2), , and (ii) most EAs may appear in attributive uses (3).

- (2) el molt puto Gregori
the very *fucking* Gregory
(3) los funcionarios son pinches pero los funcionarios
the *civil.servants* are *fucking* but the *civil.servants*
mexicanos son pinchísimos.
Mexican are *most.fucking*

On the basis of these data, I will defend that the distinction between pure and mixed EAs is not a categorical one, but rather a gradual one, where pure EAs like English *fucking* stand in one extreme, and evaluative intersective adjectives in the other. In between, there is a rich gamut of EAs, like Cat. *puto* or (*re*)*fotut* and Sp. *puto*, *jodido* or *pinche*, which are obligatorily prenominal when used attributively.

All in all, the resultant picture suggests a more complex interaction between the semantics of EAs and their syntactic behavior than the one suggested by the groundbreaking work by Gutzmann.

References: • Gutzmann, D. (2019). *The Grammar of Expressivity*. OUP. • Gutzmann, D. & K. Turgay (2014). Expressive intensifiers and external degree modification. *The Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 17(3), 185–228. • Potts, C. (2007). The expressive dimension. *Theoretical Linguistics* 33(2), 165–198