

THE ADJECTIVAL PREDICATION OF 'INTELLECTION', OR THE RELATIONAL TYPE OF MEANING OF ADJECTIVES

JESÚS MARTÍNEZ DEL CASTILLO
Universidad de Almería

ABSTRACT. *We can distinguish two types of meaning in adjectives: the meaning adjectives convey with descriptive value, and the meaning adjectives convey relating the elements in the predication they form. These two aspects can be found in the same linguistic expression sometimes, but sometimes the relational type of meaning is found as the only meaning in adjectives. In the first case the relational type of meaning serves the linguistic expression together with the descriptive meaning, and in the second case the relational type of meaning of adjectives serves the descriptive meanings of other words. My intention in these papers is to analyse the relational type of meaning of adjectives.*

RESUMEN. *Podemos distinguir dos aspectos de significación en el significado léxico de los adjetivos: el significado descriptivo con el que ellos contribuyen en la predicación, y el significado que los adjetivos aportan relacionando los distintos elementos de la predicación que ellos mismos crean. Estos dos aspectos se pueden encontrar en una misma combinación, pero a veces el tipo relacional de significación de los adjetivos es el único aporte semántico de un determinado adjetivo. En el primer caso el aporte significativo del adjetivo es doble, pero en el segundo caso el tipo relacional constituye relaciones de significación que sirven al significado de las otras palabras de la combinación. Es mi intención en este artículo analizar el aporte relacional de los adjetivos.*

1. POSSIBILITIES OF EXPRESSION OF ADJECTIVES

Adjectives are lexematic words made up of {lexeme + catagoreme + morpheme}, that is, they are words provided with meaning and possibilities of creating meaning in accordance with the rules in the norm of the language, and the possibilities of expression in the system of the language¹. Adjectives are *lexemes*, that is, they convey meaning and keep different relationships of signification with other words, either paradigmatically in the axis of opposition or syntagmatically in the axis of

combination (Coseriu 1981: 89, 147, 169, 175). Adjectives are to be used and applied of particular semantic objects or *classemes*, elements determining the meaning of the adjective and contributing to specify the semantic content of the adjective. The meaning of adjectives belongs to the system of possibilities in the technique of speaking, that is, to the system of the language. As far as it has been performed historically and inserted in the tradition of the technique of speaking, that is, in the norm of the language, the meaning of adjectives represents series of possibilities of combination offered to speakers, something already performed and thus defined; and as far as it belongs to the system of the language, it represents new possibilities of expression and creation of signification, something dynamic and potential capable of free use by speakers in discourse (Coseriu 1992: 298).

In combination with other words adjectives are capable of establishing a predication, the expression of a state of affairs applicable to a number of referents or elements with capability of designation in any world (Dik 1979: 15). In fact, adjectives are the expression of a state of affairs in themselves. When adjectives get into combination with other words they manifest the relationships of signification in their own structure of meaning, thus constituting the base of the predication established by the noun phrase or the sentence where they appear. The new state of affairs in the combination is nothing but an extension of the structure of meaning in them.

The determining character of *classemes* is the base for the distinction of different types of meaning in adjectives. *Classemes* correspond to features of meaning, present in different lexical fields with very generic value. *Classemes* function as determinations of lexemes, so that the vocabulary of a language is determined in one way or another by the presence of this kind of features in lexemes (cf. Coseriu 1981: 135; Geckeler 1981: 395). They do not constitute lexical fields, but determine the lexical field (cf. Martín Mingorance 1987: 378) in two ways:

a) determining the meaning of the lexemes of a particular lexical field. For example, the feature /ABSTRACT/² determines the character of the meaning of adjectives, such as ‘comprehensive’, ‘total’, or ‘general’. They mean because they relate the meaning of the noun to the idea of inclusion or extension, thus making the expression more complex: *general rains*, (rains over a large area); *general information* (information known by everybody). The adjective relates what has been denoted in the noun; and

b) restricting the possibilities of intensification in them. Abstract adjectives are not usually descriptive but relational, thus limiting their possibilities of intensification.

Classemes are present in the structure of meaning of adjectives in different ways. Adjectives can be determined by more than one *classeme*. They can be characterized by the different types of lexical classes they predicate of, and, at the same time, by other *classemes* making up the structure of a lexical field. The pair ‘new’: ‘young’ is determined by the opposition /±HUMAN/, and they both, at the same time, are

determined by the character of concrete states of affairs (Dik 1979, chapter 3). In the structure of meaning of these adjectives the classeme /±HUMAN/ determines their applicability, and the classeme /±CONCRETE/ determines their descriptive character, and thus their capability of intensification.

1.1. *Two different meanings*

The adjectival predication as far as a state of affairs conveyed by adjectives performs two different functions: the description of linguistic objects with designation or capability of designation in the objects in the real world; and the creation of instruments for that description, that is, the creation of states of affairs, necessary for the intellection of the things described. This is perhaps the ultimate function of predications: to mean states of affairs necessary for the manipulation of the real world by means of the intellection of it. To manipulate the world by means of words, by means of language, it is necessary to perform other functions different from the mere description of things in the world. It is necessary to classify the things described, to separate them, put them together, to distinguish them, to relate them, to define the extension of them, to restrict them, or to intensify them. That is, it is necessary to invent a process of intellection, proper of humans, with different functions.

These two functions of intellection performed by adjectives are necessary for the manipulation of the world, and can be found in the same adjective. The expression, *he was hostile*, for example, is a description of a state of affairs, "someone was unfriendly and aggressive". It represents the first step in the purpose of dominating the world. But sometimes the point of interest is not merely to describe but to say something more. Sometimes it may be necessary to say that certain actions, attitudes or behaviour manifest that someone is hostile, a complex relationship of signification involving three points of interest: someone, their behaviour, and hostility. This can be expressed with the same adjective, (*he was in a*) *hostile mood*, or, *the law is clearly hostile to our interest*. That is, in these examples the adjective 'hostile' does not apply of persons but of human attributes (mood) and even of things in connection with humans (law). We can see two different meanings: a descriptive meaning, having to do with the primary meaning conveyed by the adjective 'hostile', and a relational relationship of signification, born in the combination. In the first case it is the lexical meaning of the adjective, in the second it is a relationship of signification having to do with the application of the adjective, that is, with the classeme³.

But otherwise, the two types of meaning in adjectives can be in different adjectives. The process of intellection is something in human intelligence, is manifest in meaning and has been constituted historically in the language. The process of intellection has determined the vocabulary of the language with the creation of meanings at different levels of abstraction⁴. This is something manifest in adjectives by the presence of the classeme /±CONCRETE/. Some adjectives denote a particular state of affairs with

descriptive meaning only, some adjectives convey descriptive and relational relationships of signification at the same time and in the same expression, and some adjectives convey instrumental and relational relationships of signification only.

1.2. *Different predications*

The presence of the classeme /±CONCRETE/ in adjectives makes the adjectival predication with different character. Some adjectival predications have a descriptive character, and some have an instrumental character; some contribute the primary purpose of describing things in order to manipulate the world, and some contribute to relate the things described; some are to be placed in a particular degree of abstraction, and some are at a higher degree of abstraction. The category of adjectives is structured in two groups: the adjectival *concrete predication*, a type of predication with descriptive character and with definite designation, and the adjectival *abstract predication*, a type of predication not merely descriptive, but instrumental, dealing with semantic objects previously created, and relating them to relationships of signification conveyed by them.

Concrete adjectives convey states of affairs which are concrete, that is, states of affairs with descriptive character, requiring one of the simplest functions in the process of intellection, whereas abstract adjectives denote states of affairs requiring further elaboration, that is, states of affairs in a higher degree of abstraction. For example, in the combinations *the high mountains*, or *a wet cloth*, or *one of those mischievous women*, *a beautiful and attractive siren*, *looked at us*, the state of affairs on the part of both the noun and the adjective denotes something as existing, and the result of the combination is the sum of both the meanings in the noun and the adjective; in the example, *deep differences*, or *high degree*, examples combining abstract nouns with concrete adjectives, the state of affairs denoted by the adjectives is something dimensional and, thus, descriptive as well, since the adjective is concrete. However, the meaning of the combination is not the sum of the meaning of both. The application of a concrete adjective to an abstract noun gives a dimensional character to the combination, extending the lexical meaning of the adjectives to abstract objects. On the other hand, in the examples, *a coherent theory*, *a logical argument*, *equal opportunities*, or even *they all looked alike to me*, or *assorted wild flowers*, the state of affairs conveyed is made up of the semantic object in the noun (theory in the first example is not described by the adjective) and the relationship of right composition in its component parts. There is not, thus, a description of the object created in the combination, but a relation to relationships of signification existing as meanings in the language (coherence), and given by the adjective. The state of affairs conveyed, thus, is more complicated, more elaborated, and requires a higher degree of abstraction. So, the question whether the designation of the combination is definite and thus has descriptive character or not is out of the scope of the predication. The aim of the predication is to relate, not to describe.

1.3. *Abstract and concrete: two different states of affairs*

The differences between them are to be seen in the different character of the type of linguistic objects they predicate of: concrete adjectives are dominated by the classeme/+CONCRETE/ whereas abstract adjectives are dominated by the feature/-CONCRETE/. For example, when we say *an old man*, or *a high mountain*, or *a river three fathoms deep*, we predicate of material objects with designation, which are or can be definite. 'Man', 'mountain' and 'river' are objects corresponding with the primary function of creation of meaning, that is, the predication involves the stating of a designation and the assigning to that designation the particular features which represent the systematization of a particular fact of experience. The object created, say, 'man', involves at the same time stating a designation (separating a particular object from the rest surrounding it), and creating a meaning (giving a particular systematization to the object already designated). But when we say, *high proportion*, the interest of the expression is not in the description of something but in the relating something already created (proportion) to certain consideration of intellection not merely descriptive (*high proportion* is the same as "proportion in a degree of amount"). Here the problem is not whether the semantic object predicated has designation or not (it is given for granted, since it must be existent), or descriptive or not (the description is not the point of signification here). Abstract adjectives⁵ do not describe but are used with the purpose of relating other meanings. Their meaning is abstract in so far as it is an operation of relation of the semantic object created in the combination by means of the noun to relationships of signification present in the language as meanings. In the example, 'proportion' is related to 'amount', although 'amount' does not appear in the combination, but is understood by speakers because that concept exists as meaning in the language. In this case the meaning created in the combination involves the same operations of abstraction as in the previous case (stating designation and creating meaning) plus the relation of the object created to another relationship of signification, existing or not in the language, but usually existing.

1.4. *The application of adjectives to nouns*

The application of abstract and concrete adjectives to abstract and concrete nouns is not uniform: abstract adjectives are usually applied to concrete nouns, and viceversa. The distinction between abstract and concrete adjectives is not absolute but idiosyncratic, and the result is that this device is a means for the creation of new meanings in discourse. The meaning of adjectives, the same as all types of meaning, belongs to the system of the language, or system of possibilities (Coseriu 1992: 298). We can find examples as *old ideas*, or *high degree*, or *deep differences*, and examples as, *the principal character*, or *absolute dimwit*, or *a beautiful and remarkably coherent church*, as typical uses in the norm of the language.

1.5. *Definite and indefinite designation*

As a consequence, concrete adjectives have definite designation whereas abstract adjectives merely deal with semantic objects as they are related, the designation of which is not of interest. Perhaps one of the original functions of intellection by means of language is to deal with semantic objects denoting and referring the objects in the real world in order to designate, to describe, to reproduce and, eventually, to manipulate them. This function could not be performed unless the language would not have invented at the same time the means necessary to distinguish, to define the extension of, to restrict, to relate, to intensify, the linguistic objects which conform the meanings of a particular language. Generally speaking adjectives of the concrete predication, together with nouns, give the means to describe and contemplate the world by means of language, but adjectives of the abstract predication give the means to separate, to put together, to distinguish, to say the extension of, to relate, to intensify, those semantic objects previously created, either existing in the language or created in the expression. The separation between abstract and concrete, especially in adjectives, is the manifestation of the process of intellection, present in the language in the existence of the classeme /±CONCRETE/. The lexical fields in the abstract predication have to do with meanings in which the designation of the object denoted is not the point of interest.

2. DESCRIPTIVE AND RELATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF SIGNIFICATION IN THE LEXICAL STRUCTURE OF ADJECTIVES

As stated above some adjectives can give the two types of meaning proper of adjectives. In these cases it is possible to separate the following aspects in the predication of adjectives: the meaning they are provided with in the lexicon⁶ of the language, that is their lexical meaning, and the relationship of signification they introduce by means or their lexical meaning. If every element in the noun-phrase performs a particular function, namely, the noun and the adjective convey their lexical meaning; the adjective, the structure of predication; and the determiner, the designation, the adjective is the element which, due to its predicative character, can alter and modify the whole structure of meaning introducing other relationships of signification. The adjective not only gives its lexical meaning, but, at the same time, provides the means to relate the structure of meaning in order to convey different relationships of signification in the semantic objects involved.

2.1. *Direct or indirect affection on the noun*

Adjectives, in principle, make up a direct affection on the noun, but with some uses the combination conveys relationships of signification present in the classeme of

the adjectives in question but as aspects in it. It is the case of noninherent adjectives⁷, adjectives which give additional information relating their lexical meaning to other relationships of signification. For example, if we say *this friend of mine is very old*, we apply the content given by the adjective to the content of the noun; but if we say *an old friend of mine*, the meaning conveyed by the adjective is different from the mere attribution of the content of the adjective to the content of the noun and from the definition of the noun by the content of the adjective. It forms a structure of predication giving relationships of signification different from the most usual ones in adjectives. The expression is to be interpreted as “a friend with whom I have a narrow relationship of friendship” or as “a friend I have had of old”. The adjective ‘old’, thus, conveys its lexical meaning, the state of affairs meant by ‘old’, bears designation, the reference born in the combination with the determiner, and denotes predicative relationships of relation with other states of affairs. The adjective has given both the descriptive meaning and a relational type of meaning.

2.2. *The criterion to define the adjectival dimension*

Sometimes the adjective is the element either specifying its own dimension, or conveying particular modal restrictions, or stressing a particular aspect of the members of the combination, or relating the predication conveyed by the noun to the superordinate noun dominating it, or restricting the content of the noun. That is, the relationships of signification conveyed by intensifying adjectives⁸ relate the meaning of the combination to relationships of signification different but implicit in the content of the members of the combination. Examples such as *a true scholar*, *a clear failure*, *pure fabrication*, relate the meaning of the combination to modal aspects in connection with the truth implicit in the statement; *a complete victory*, *total loss*, *a great destruction*, relate and stress the meaning of the noun to itself because they are dynamic and sometimes controlled, denoting an open dimension; *a firm friend*, *a fierce antagonist*, convey relationships of signification which stress particular aspects in the classeme thus remarking the meaning of the noun. On the other hand, these adjectives are proper of the superordinate abstract nouns dominating the nouns in the combination (‘firmness’, ‘antagonism’, ‘friendship’); *a slight error*, *a feeble joke*, *a weak link*, *a weak answer*, *a thin excuse*, convey relationships of signification transferred from the area of meaning of ‘concrete’ adjectives to abstract adjectives, with the implied effect of lessening the degree of the state of affairs denoted by the noun.

2.3. *Restriction of the designation*

Some adjectives restrict and particularize the designation of the combination they appear. It is the case of restrictive adjectives⁹. Some adjectives, most of them members of the abstract predication, due to the classematic restrictions they may get in the combination, and especially, to the presence of a determiner, usually the definite

article or the possessive, restrict the designation of the combination. Compare, for example, *I was an only child*, and ...*the only survivor; the battle was waged with particular ferocity*, and ...*that particular part*, or a *particular man; an exact replica*, and ...*his/ the exact answer*. In the former cases we have the attribution of the state of affairs denoted by the adjective to the state of affairs denoted by the noun with the result that the designation is an open dimension not particularized in a particular item but a group of them -singular or not-. *I was an only child*, means “I was a member of the class of children who have no brother or sister”, and this class of children may potentially refer to crowds of them, since it is the class of objects the thing denoted, not a particular item of that class of objects¹⁰; and ...*with particular ferocity*, means “with very intense ferocity”; whereas in *the only survivor*, and ...*that particular part*, the presence of the determiners (the definite article and the demonstrative determiner) makes the combination refer merely to one and only one of the possible survivors and parts. Combinations like these are different from *a survivor*, which means “any (singular) possible survivor”. That is, some adjectives have a particular content and when in combination they get a restrictive value.

But some adjectives are always restrictive, and this is due to character of their content, that is to say, to the meaning they are provided with by the language. It is the case of ‘chief’, ‘principal’, ‘same’, and ‘very’ (in *the very moment*). These adjectives belong to different lexical fields, but they cannot be used unless they are combined with a definite determiner: *his chief excuse*, *the principal objection*, *the same student*. In cases like these the semantic structure of the adjectives has made the predicative structure and the syntactic structure of the adjective be restricted to designate one and only one of the possible items they refer.

3. RELATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF SIGNIFICATION AS THE MEANING OF ADJECTIVES

And the third type of adjectives is constituted by those adjectives giving a relational type of meaning as their only meaning. The ‘abstract’ predication of adjectives in English is made up of three important groups, *adjectives of ‘society’*, adjectives predicating of certain semantic objects corresponding to creations of meaning made on the base of other meanings, that is, meanings made up of relationships of signification existing previously in the language. These adjectives may be descriptive and thus have definite designation but are abstract since they are not a primary creation of meaning, but have been formed using meanings previously created in the language¹¹; *adjectives of ‘occurrence’*, adjectives with no designation, dealing with certain semantic objects which denote something affecting other semantic objects, make up predications denoting the momentary appearance or disappearance of those objects; *adjectives of ‘valuation’*, determined by the

axiological classeme¹², are in a higher degree of abstraction since the purpose of the combination where they appear is to create a valuation by the speaker, the extent and degree of which ultimately depends on the speaker; and *adjectives of 'intellection'*, give a relational type of meaning putting together the lexical meaning of the noun they are combined with, considered as the base of the new state of affairs, with the relationship of signification in their lexical meaning, not describing the semantic object created but relating it to relationships of signification existing in the language as meanings. All these adjectives represent a creation of meaning subsequent to other previous creations of meaning. They are elaborations by the language, and have a type of instrumental character, since they help understand particular aspects in the meaning of a combination.

Adjectives of 'intellection' function as instruments for the classification, manipulation, intellection and understanding of the state of affairs of the combination where they appear. They represent the most characteristic abstract means of expression since they let speakers manipulate semantic objects, in accordance with parameters of meaning necessary to understand the world. The following instrumental and relational functions of meaning can be found:

3.1. *Extension of the content of the noun*

Adjectives of 'comprehension' state the range of things or the extension of the semantic objects denoted in the combination. They represent a mental elaboration of the semantic objects denoted. This can be seen in the fact of their application and combination with concrete nouns. In the example *component parts*, 'part' is considered, not in its material existence, but in relation to other semantic objects of the same class, in relation to other parts. The point of interest is not to describe part, something that is given for granted, but to relate part. This combination, thus, has not definite designation or is descriptive. Typically adjectives of 'comprehension' predicate of abstract nouns, semantic objects where the re-elaboration appears more clearly. Examples: *absolute loyalty, a bunch of assorted wild flowers, a complete change*, etc.

3.2. *Distinction of the things denoted*

Adjectives of 'distinction' state the connection between the semantic objects predicated in the combination with other of the same class. Typically they predicate of 'things and objects', that is, they have a classeme denoting semantic objects with designation in the real world. The instrumental character, thus, is clear since these semantic objects usually have designation in the real world. They represent, thus, a mental elaboration consisting in relating semantic objects to others of the same class or, sometimes, to others belonging to different classes. Examples: *all men are equal, equal opportunities, distinct ideas, a tree quite distinct from the European beech, even body temperature*.

3.3. *Expression of the states of affairs*

All linguistic expressions aim at stating something real or imaginary in this world or in any other world. *Adjectives of 'expression'* specifically deal with the expression of that linguistic aim. They are not metalinguistic, though. In standard language there exist expressions dealing with the expression of the states of affairs denoted by other words and utterances, with no scientific or technical purpose. Typically they predicate of classemes indicating the statement of a state of affairs, appearing sometimes directly or indirectly as a semantic restriction. This device manifest the re-elaboration made by this kind of adjectives, and by abstract adjectives in general. The thing denoted is denoted not as denoted, but as a statement added to the thing denoted. Examples: *...a vague reply, the terms of the agreement were left vague, ...vague instructions, ...a literal translation, ...explicit support, ...no formal declaration of war.*

3.4. *Relation of the states of affairs to reason*

Adjectives of 'reasoning' relate the states of affairs denoted to the adequacy or inadequacy with the laws and principles of reason, particularly with the truth of the statement. They are in close connection with adjectives of 'expression' and 'comprehension' since their typical classeme is re-elaborated as a statement. Examples: *most people have very little conceptual understanding of computers, let's talk about this like two rational people, ...intellectual stimulation, ...logical analysis, ...mental effort, ...logical conclusion.*

3.5. *Relation to an open dimension*

Adjectives of 'relationship' relate the states of affairs denoted to a dimension specified by context in every particular situation. Typically they predicate of 'things and objects', the most general classeme of adjectives. They represent the means given by the language to relate anything to anything. Examples: *the national average wage, a paper of average thickness, two complementary approaches, a fair price.* The predicative value of these adjectives, that is, the relationship of signification denoted in the combination, is so important that the noun appears as a restriction of the adjective. In the first example it is more important to know about 'average' than about 'wage'; 'wage' restricts the semantic contribution of 'average'.

3.6. *Composition or simplicity of the states of affairs*

Adjectives of 'simplicity' relate the states of affairs denoted to the composition or simplicity of them. They clearly manifest the re-elaboration made by the adjective in the combination. Examples: *elementary errors, the only survivor, a single bird, single cells.*

3.7. Adequacy to the parameters in the tradition of the technique of speaking

Very similar to adjectives of 'relationship', *adjectives of 'correction'* help linguistic expressions to be evaluated as to the adequacy of some parameters proper of the expression, admitted as fundamental in a particular system of values. Typically they predicate of the most general classeme, 'objects and things'. They represent a mental elaboration with the means proper of the language. Examples: *accurate picture of social history, the exact time, a perfect circle, a perfect photographic memory.*

Summing up, adjectives of 'intellection' deal with typical mental functions manifest in languages, representing the means according to which the meaning in the combination is related, thus creating meanings necessary for the intellection of the world. The meaning of a language, thus, appears, not as a uniform set of meanings, but as an operative set where we can distinguish meanings already definite and finished, on the one hand, and meanings not definite but to be definite in their use; meanings which can be considered as fixed, and meanings ready to be used and capable of adapting, either to the usual or normal modalities of performance in the norm of the language, or to the individual needs of expression in discourse. The meanings of a language belong to the system of the language, and the most usual performances of them appear in the norm of the language (cf. Coseriu 1992: 298), some as a base to designate the world, and some as a dimension; some performing the primary functions of the creation of meaning, and some using the meanings already created; some with definite designation, and some with indefinite designation.

These adjectives are not descriptive, or have definite designation, but are necessary for any type of linguistic expression. In these cases the relational relationships of signification constitute the lexical meaning of these adjectives. They constitute different lexical fields and show relationships of signification at the highest level of abstraction in the language.

The predication established by these adjectives presupposes two states of affairs: one, the semantic object denoted in the combination with the only contribution of the noun; and the other, the aspect or perspective under which the object denoted is considered. The former bears meaning and designation, the meaning and designation of the noun basically; the latter refers the combination to relationships of signification implicit but not manifest in the content of the adjective. With this the contribution of both the noun and the adjective are separated. For example, in *the comprehensive training she received*, the adjective has meaning ("including everything that is essential and necessary"); gets designation (the one given by the presence of the determiner with the context). The semantic object denoted in the combination has been created without the contribution of the adjective, since the adjective does not modify the state of affairs denoted by the noun applying its content or defining the content of the noun. The adjective adds the consideration of the extension of the noun, so that the state of affairs denoted is not altered. The relationship of signification under which the noun is considered is the peculiar meaning that these adjectives convey. The example is to be

interpreted as “the training she received extends to everything essential and necessary”. There is no addition of features to make up a new state of affairs, but merely the relation of the content of the noun to the consideration of its extension as a semantic object, two different relationships of signification appearing together in the combination, given by the two members of it.

4. CONCLUDING REMARK

Language has to do with human intelligence and human freedom. Human intelligence has created language, and human freedom has constituted the language historically (cf. Coseriu 1988). The footprints of these creations are manifest in meaning.

NOTES

1. In the technique of the activity of speaking Coseriu distinguishes four levels: the actual performance of the activity of speaking, *discourse*; the language performed and constituted in a tradition in the technique of speaking, *the norm of the language*; the set of functional oppositions or set of possibilities, *the system of the language*; and the set of oppositional tendencies in a language, *the type of the language* (cf. Coseriu 1952; 1992: 293-306).
2. The negation of [+CONCRETE] in the opposition [±CONCRETE], cf. Aarts & Calbert 1979, 2.1.1.
3. Aarts and Calbert 1979 call these relationships of signification “predicational relators” and Beatrice Warren 1984, 1988: 123, relational meaning.
4. In an article to be published in *Atlantis* I distinguish three steps in the process of intellection: stating designation, describing the thing designated or primary creation of meanings, and re-elaborating and putting together the meanings previously created. These three steps involve different operations in the process of intellection, different in complexity and involving different levels of abstraction.
5. “High” is a concrete adjective, but in the example it is applied to an abstract noun, constituting an abstract predication.
6. The lexicon of the language is conceived by Simon Dik as the set of predicates, predicate frames and all the restriction rules affecting them of a language (cf. Dik 1978: 23 and 46), roughly equivalent to Coseriu’s idiomatic background (Coseriu 1988: 308); concepts to be interpreted under the perspective of the language already performed and constituted in a tradition in the technique of speaking, that is, the norm of the language (Coseriu 1988: 293).
7. For a full explanation cf. Martínez del Castillo 1992.
8. For a full explanation cf. Martínez del Castillo 1991.
9. For a full explanation cf. Martínez del Castillo 1993.
10. To this respect cf. the theory of determination by Coseriu (Coseriu 1982: 282-323).
11. In the article of *Atlantis* referred in note 3 above I distinguish the following degrees of abstraction present in language because of the presence of the classeme /±CONCRETE/: the first degree of abstraction represented in the act of designation of things, previous to all; the second degree represented by the first creation of meaning, the creation of concrete nouns; the third degree of abstraction represented in the elaboration of relationships of meaning, the creation of concrete adjectives; and the fourth degree of abstraction, the creation of both abstract nouns and adjectives.
12. Cf. Felices Lago in his doctoral dissertation.

WORKS CITED

- Aarts, Jan M. G. & Joseph P. Calbert. 1979. *Metaphor and non-Metaphor: The Semantics of Adjective-Noun Combinations*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer.
- Coseriu, E. 1981 (1977). *Principios de semántica estructural*. Madrid: Gredos.
- Coseriu, E. 1982 (1962). *Teoría del lenguaje y lingüística general*. Madrid: Gredos.
- Coseriu, E. 1988 (1957). *Sincronía, diacronía e historia: el problema del cambio lingüístico*. Madrid: Gredos.
- Coseriu, E. 1992 (1988). *Competencia lingüística*. Madrid: Gredos.
- Dik, Simon C. 1979 (1978). *Functional Grammar*. North-Holland Publishing Company.
- Felices Lago, Angel. 1991. *El componente axiológico en el lenguaje. Su configuración en los adjetivos que expresan emociones y conducta en la lengua inglesa*. Unpublished Ph. D. University of Granada.
- Martín Mingorance, Leocadio. 1987. "Classematics in a Functional-lexematic grammar of English". *Actas del X Congreso de AEDEAN*. Zaragoza. 277-382.
- Martínez del Castillo, Jesús Gerardo. 1991. "La estructura de predicado de los adjetivos intensificativos". *Revista Española de Lingüística Aplicada* 7. 23-33.
- Martínez del Castillo, Jesús Gerardo. 1992. "The predicate structure of noninherent adjectives". *Actas del XIV Congreso Nacional de la Asociación Española de Estudios Anglonorteamericanos*. Bilbao. 149-154.
- Martínez del Castillo, Jesús Gerardo. 1993. "The predicate structure of restrictive adjectives". *Actas del XV Congreso de la Asociación Española de Estudios Anglonorteamericanos*. Logroño. 373-378.
- Martínez del Castillo, Jesús Gerardo (forthcoming). "The concept of "abstract" and "concrete" applied to the adjectival predication". *Atlantis*.
- Warren, Beatrice. 1984. *Classifying Adjectives*. Goteborg: Gothenburgensis Studies in English 56.
- Warren, Beatrice. 1988. "Ambiguity and vagueness in adjectives". *Studia Linguistica* 42, 2. 122-172.