PROPERTIES OF IDENTITY ADJECTIVES IN ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN

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Abstract: This paper discusses a group of nominal modifiers referred to as Functional Adjectives. The paper concentrates on one subset of functional adjectives, i.e. the English identity adjectives same, different and other, based on the literature. Thus, same and different belong to a functional category degree rather than the lexical category adjective while the unique properties of other are attributed to a more determiner-like functional category in the DP. The paper finds further evidence to support this approach in the syntax and semantics of Romanian constructions with diferit, același, and alt.

Keywords: functional adjectives, identity adjectives, similarity predicates, comparative adjective constructions, degree functional category, determiner functional category

1. THE EMPIRICAL FACTS

The empirical domain of this paper is a group of nominal modifiers referred to as FUNCTIONAL ADJECTIVES, such as same, other, first, last, mere, utter, main, and entire. These adjectives are grammatically distinct from prototypical adjectives like large or beautiful. We make a description of one subset of functional adjectives: the English/Romanian IDENTITY ADJECTIVES same, different, and other/același, diferit and alt. We try to account for the need for a syntax of identity adjectives. The empirical facts described point to a central proposal stating that same and different belong to the functional category Degree rather than the lexical category Adjective, while other has properties attributed to a more determiner-like functional category in the DP.

Applying a contrastive descriptive approach to the Romanian counterparts of this group of identity adjectives we found facts which provide support for the idea that identity adjectives are functional as they behave in a similar way to demonstratives. Romanian has a demonstrative adjective indicating identity același. Diferit and alt behave syntactically in a similar way to different and other, i.e. diferit can be described as belonging to a functional category Degree while alt has properties attributed to a more determiner-like functional category in DP.

2. SOME SEMANTIC CONSIDERATIONS

Considering the literature referring to the meanings of the English different and the same, we can interpret them as expressing relations of non-identity and identity between individuals (cf. Heim, 1985, Carlson, 1987, Moltmann, 1992, Beck 2000).

(1) a. Every student read a different book.
   b. The same salesman sold me these two magazine subscriptions.

In examples (1a.-b.), different and same occur NP-internally, and their interpretation depends upon a plural or distributive NP occurring elsewhere in the sentence. Thus (1a.) can be paraphrased as “Every student read a book that is different from the book that every other student read”. It is simply assumed that different expresses non-identity, while same expresses identity, and that these are relations that hold amongst individuals. Such a view is nevertheless open to problems. The adjectives same and different can have scalar uses alongside with similarity uses as shown by the facts we will present below, referring to scalability and similarity denotations.

The first problem is that the relations of (non-)identity between individuals cannot hold to varying degrees, but those expressed by different and the same can (Huddleston and Pullum 2002). (2a) and (3) show that both different and the same readily occur with degree modifiers; (2b) shows that different also appears in comparative constructions.

(2) a. My new car is {a bit, quite, very, really} different from my previous one.
   b. Jack and Diane turned out to be more different than I had expected.
   (3) Frozen fish is {almost, nearly, just about, not quite, roughly} the same as fresh fish.
Such examples require that *different* and *the same* be given scalar denotations. The second problem is that *different* and *the same* have logical relations with similarity predicates. If we consider *different* and *alike*, for example, it is generally true that a sentence of the form *a and b are more different than c and d* is logically equivalent to the sentence *c and d are more alike than a and b*. In Romanian also, both *diferit* and *același* can be interpreted either as non-identity or similarity behaving like their English counterparts. To express similarity, Romanian uses *asemănător/la fel*. *Diferit* and *asemănător/la fel* can occur with degree modifiers and they establish logical relations with similarity predicates as shown in the examples:

(4) Mașina mea e un pic/ foarte/destul de diferită de a ta.
   [My car is a little/very/rather different from yours]
Mașina mea este diferită de a ta.
[My car is different from yours]
Mașina mea este asemănătoare cu a ta.
[My car is similar to yours]

_Acelasi_ usually does not appear with degree modifiers but there may appear situations when it does, like in (5) which can be paraphrased as “Dacia Logan and Renault Logan are both cars, and they share almost all relevant properties.”:

(5) Dacia Logan și Renault Logan sunt aproape aceeași masina.
   [Dacia Logan and Renault Logan are almost the same car]

As their associated paraphrases make clear, these examples are concerned with the amount of similarity or difference that exists between the relevant individuals, and thus involve the similarity predicate uses of *diferit* and *același* studied here.

**3. FUNCTIONAL ADJECTIVES**

Following Oxford (2010) we claim that functional adjectives should be recognized as grammatically distinct from prototypical adjectives. Although the English modifiers (*same, other, first, last*) are normally labeled as adjectives, their grammatical properties differ from those of prototypical adjectives. As we shall see hereafter they are grammatically similar to their Romanian counterparts. Taken together, these facts suggest that we are looking at the same category in both languages, but that this category is distinct from that of prototypical adjectives.

The table below summarizes some of the major differences between the two classes of English adjectives, referred to as “lexical” and “functional” adjectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEXICAL ADJECTIVES</th>
<th>FUNCTIONAL ADJECTIVES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(large, happy, beautiful)</td>
<td>(same, other, first, last)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take adverbial degree modifiers the really large house</td>
<td>No adverbial degree modifiers *the really same/other/first house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have comparative and superlative forms the larger / more palatial house the largest / most palatial house</td>
<td>No comparative or superlative forms <em>the same / more same house</em> <em>the samest / most same house</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly marked before a numeral #the large three house (cf. the three large houses)</td>
<td>Unmarked before a numeral the same/other/first three houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich lexical/encyclopedic content</td>
<td>Simple lexical content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open class</td>
<td>Closed class(es)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The term “functional adjectives” has antecedents in the work of Kayne (2005:13), who includes “functional adjectives like other, same, good” in his list of functional elements that are plausibly related to syntax, and Cinque (2005:327), who mentions same and other as “functional adjectives” in passing, observing that they should be added to his DP hierarchy. The differences noted in the table above provide the necessary grounds for recognizing functional adjectives as a distinct group of nominal function words, with properties similar to demonstratives or quantifiers. As we shall see further in this paper this claim holds true cross-linguistically as we document that these adjectives form a distinct class, i.e. the class of functional adjectives in Romanian, too.

The literature on adjectives observes that not all adjectives have the full range of prototypical adjectival behavior: certain adjectives can function attributively but not predicatively (e.g. Bolinger, 1967; Quirk et al., 1985; Huddleston and Pullum, 2002). Oxford (2010) proposes a list of “defective adjectives” in (6) combining such “attributive-only” adjectives with the functional adjectives discussed above. The rough classification suggested here is for descriptive convenience only—the development of a grammatically and
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4. IDENTITY ADJECTIVES – A CASE STUDY

The present paper aims at describing the properties of the English/Romanian identity adjectives. Identity adjectives have been researched by various authors who have approached the issue from the point of view of formal semantics on the one hand or functional grammar on the other hand. Carlson (1987), Moltmann (1992), Beck (2000), Alrenga (2005, 2006, 2009), and Brasoveanu (2008) have examined the semantics of same, different, and/or other from various angles. Their research concerned with matters such as the distinction between identity and similarity, the nature of identity, and the orientation of the comparison—whether it is sentence-internal, as in Mary and John met different men [from each other], or sentence-external, as in Mary and John met different men [from Sue]. Alrenga (2009) emphasizes in his study that same and different encode both similarity and identity (their identity function being primarily recognized). Turning from formal semantics to functional grammar, identity adjectives have been studied extensively by Breban (Breban, 2003; Breban and Davidse, 2003; Davidse et al., 2008). These studies are built on the idea that all adjectives in the semantic field of similarity and difference occupy a continuum of grammaticalization, with fully lexical adjectives at the starting point and referential “postdeterminers” at the endpoint. Based on a statistical corpus study, Breban and Davidse (2003) quoted by Oxford (2010:9) establish the grammaticalization rates summarized in (7), which reflect the proportion of referential, i.e. functional, versus lexical uses of each adjective.

5. PROPERTIES OF ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN IDENTITY ADJECTIVES – A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

We present some of the general properties of identity adjectives in English and Romanian starting from Oxford’s (2010) six descriptive generalizations regarding identity adjectives. These generalizations are based on material from Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, and Svartvik (1985) and Huddleston and Pullum (2002). Based on the analysis of these properties we strengthen the conclusion that same, different, and other along with their Romanian counterparts același, diferit and alt have extensive similarities with comparative and superlative adjective constructions.

5.1 Generalization 1: identity adjectives have the same word order as comparative and superlative adjective forms

English. As shown in (8), same, different, and other can either follow or precede a numeral. The different orderings appear to correlate with differences in semantic scope, as discussed by Breban and Davidse (2003:245).

(8) a. (i) We saw those three same men yesterday.
   (ii) We saw those same three men yesterday.
   b. (i) Choose three different cards.
   (ii) Choose a different three cards.
c. (i) The three other vehicles were damaged.
   (ii) The other three vehicles were damaged.

In contrast, absolute (i.e. non-comparative) adjectives do not share this ordering flexibility. In pre-numeral position, an absolute adjective is possible, but quite strongly marked:

(9) a. The three large vehicles were damaged.
   b. #The large three vehicles were damaged.

However, if the adjective is inflected in the comparative form, it gains the same flexibility of order that the identity adjectives have:

(10) a. The three larger/largest vehicles were damaged.
   b. The larger/largest three vehicles were damaged.

In this respect, then, identity adjectives are more like comparative adjectives than absolute adjectives, despite not being morphologically marked as comparative.

Romanian. In Romanian we have the following:

(11) a. I-am văzut pe acelaii trei oameni ieri
    [I saw the same three people yesterday]
   b. *I-am văzut pe trei acelaii oameni
    [I saw the three same people]
   c. Alle trei cărți diferite
    [Choose three books different]
   d. *Alle trei diferite cărți
    [Choose three different books]
   e. ?Trei alte mașini au fost avariate
    [Three other cars were damaged]
   f. Alte trei mașini au fost avariate
    [Other three cars were damaged]

We notice that unlike English, Romanian does not have great flexibility in the way it orders these adjectives. In Romanian position is more strict and we notice that acelaii can only appear in prenominal position whereas diferit can only appear postnominally. Alt is flexible as it can either precede or follow the cardinal, though the order cardinal alt noun is ruled by different scope readings. The same word order can apply in the comparative form, it gains the same flexibility of order that the identity adjectives have:

(12) a. Cele trei vehicule mari au fost avariate.
    [Those three vehicles big were damaged]
   b. *Cele trei mari vehicule au fost avariate.
    [Those three big vehicles were damaged]
   c. Cele trei vehicule mai mari au fost avariate.
    [Those three vehicles more big were damaged]
   d. *Cele trei mai mari vehicule au fost avariate.
    [Those three more big vehicles were damaged]
   e. Cele trei vehicule cele mai mari au fost avariate.
    [Those three vehicles the most big were damaged]
   f. Cele mai mari trei vehicule au fost avariate.
    [The most big three vehicles were damaged]
   g. Cele trei cele mai mari vehicule au fost avariate.
    [Those three the most big vehicles were damaged]

Examples (12 a-b) show that simple prototypical adjectives cannot move in prenominal position in the context of cardinals. The same holds for examples (12 c-d) involving the comparative, the only possible movement can appear when using superlatives as shown by examples (12 e-g) where the superlative can appear prenominally either before the cardinal or between the cardinal and the noun.

**Conclusion.** Comparing the ordering patterns that appear in English and Romanian we notice that identity adjectives pattern like comparatives and superlatives in both languages even though not consistently. This fact can be discussed in detail if the syntax of identity adjectives is to be contrasted with the syntax of comparatives and superlatives, but this is to be discussed elsewhere in detail.

5.2 Generalization 2: Same and different can occur with comparative clauses; other does not

English. Same can occur with a comparative as-clause, just like an equative as-comparative:

(13) a. Sue gave the same answer [as I expected].
    b. Sue gave as good an answer [as I expected].

**Different** can occur with a than-clause, just like a non-equative comparative:

(14) a. Sue gave a different answer [than I expected].
    b. Sue gave a better/more thorough answer [than I expected].

In contrast, other does not take a comparative clause:

(15) *Sue gave another answer [than I expected].

In spite of the fact that other cannot take a than-clause, the string other than can appear in syntactic contexts like the ones in (16):

(16) a. I need to speak with someone [other than John].
    b. [Other than these two chips], the finish is flawless.
Taking into account such examples Huddleston and Pullum (2002:1145) suggest that other than is actually a compound preposition similar in meaning to besides, and that it fossilizes an earlier state of affairs in which other, like different, could indeed select a than-clause. As evidence of this earlier stage, they provide an example from 1656:

(17) Neyther is the church reformed in our dayes, another church than that…deformed in the dayes of our fore-fathers.

Based on the example in (17) they conclude that most probably in the past, the grammatical properties of other were closer to those of present-day different.

Romanian. In Romanian același și, diferit and alt can all co-occur with comparative phrases. This fact makes Romanian identity adjectives grammaticalize to a lesser degree than in English.

(18) a. Mi-a dat același răspuns ca al tău. [He gave the same answer as yours]
   b. Mi-a dat un răspuns diferit de al tău. [He gave me an answer different from yours]
   c. Are un alt răspuns decât al tău/aiți de al tău. [He has another answer than yours]

5.3 Generalization 3: Same is obligatorily definite

English. Herdan and Sharvit (2006) state that same must be accompanied by the definite article as shown in (19).

(19) a. Both cars are produced in the same kind of facility.
   b. *Both cars are produced in a same facility / in same facilities.

In this respect, same is similar to superlative forms, which are usually accompanied by the, as indicated in (20).

(20) a. Mary is the best student.
   b. *Mary is a best student.

However, they note that given an appropriate context, an indefinite superlative can become acceptable. For example, (20b) improves if we imagine a convention attended by the best student from each school. In contrast, this does not appear to be possible for same, regardless of the context. For example, the intended meaning of (19a) above is clear, and can be paraphrased with identical, but (19b) remains fully unacceptable.

Romanian. In Romanian același cannot take any article. Its position is always prenominal but unlike adjectives that can only appear prenominally, it can get neither the definite nor the indefinite article. Moreover, it appears in the higher position in DP which points to a more determiner like nature of același.

(21) Același aspect este avut în vedere. [The same aspect is taken into consideration]
   a. Un același aspect este avut în vedere. [A same aspect is taken into consideration]

Alt is also always prenominal as shown in (22 a-b) and it can get the indefinite article as in (22 c)

(22) a. Alt aspect este avut în vedere. [Other aspect is taken into consideration]
   b. *Aspect alt este avut în vedere. [Aspect other is taken into consideration]
   c. Un alt aspect trebuie avut în vedere [Another aspect should be taken into consideration]

The problem appears when we discuss the definite article. Prenominal adjectives get the definite article like in (23 a). Alt becomes a pronoun when it gets the definite article like (23 b) shows.

(23) a. frumoasa fată [girlTHE beautiful]
   b. *Altul aspect trebuie avut în vedere. [The other aspect must be taken into consideration]

Conclusion. This fact points to a more determiner like nature of alt which is thus similar in behavior with același. They thus prove to be members of the same class of functional adjectives, i.e. identity adjectives, which must be syntactically positioned higher in the DP as they have determiner like features.

5.4 Generalization 4: Same and different take different degree modifiers; other takes none

English. As shown in (24 a-b) same takes the same degree modifiers as equative comparatives:

(24) a. Mary’s answers were just/exactly the same as I expected.
   b. Mary’s answers were just/exactly as good as I expected.

Same can also take the same degree modifiers as superlatives as shown in (25 a-b):
(25) a. John had the **absolute** same problem as I did.
    b. Yesterday was the **absolute** most beautiful day of the year.

It is evident from the examples above that the grammatical categories associated with the modifiers of *same* are in opposition: an adjective can be comparative or superlative, but not both (*as biggest as*). Unless we make the curious proposal that *same* is grammatically both comparative and superlative, the overlap in its modification options suggests that the availability of degree modifiers is based on semantic properties of the lexical item rather than its grammatical features. In contrast to *same, different* takes the same degree modifiers as *non-equative comparatives, as shown in (26 a-b).

(26) a. Sue gave a **far/much/way** different answer than I expected.
    b. Sue gave a **far/much/way** more thorough answer than I expected.

Unlike other functional adjectives, *different* can also take adverbial degree modifiers such as **extremely** or **remarkably**. However, such cases involves the interpretation of *different* as a true lexical adjective, not a functional adjective. Although the meaning of *other* is similar to that of *different*, it cannot take the same degree modifiers, as shown in (27). In fact, it appears that *other* does not take degree modifiers at all, having only the functional interpretation and determiner like features.

(27) *John came up with a **far/much/way** other solution.

Moreover, Oxford (2010) brings additional diachronic evidence, as found in OED, to prove that in the past *other* could be modified by *quite* and *far* as shown by the examples in (28 a-c).

(28) a. I thought it was fine to be a Gentlewoman indeed, for I had *quite other* Notions of a Gentlewoman now. (published 1722)
    b. **Far other** scene her thoughts recall. (published 1808)
    c. This Italian poetry is in a world **far other** from ours of to-day. (published 1879)

This is further evidence that the properties of *other* were once similar to those of present day *different* and it also shows the consistency of the class of identity adjectives.

**Romanian.** In Romanian, *același* can take degree modifiers like chiar/cam/exact/precis and similar to the English cases these degree modifiers appear also in equative comparatives:

(29) Nu mi-a dat **chiar același** răspuns cu m-am așteptat.
    [He did not give me quite the same answer as I expected]
    Mi-a dat **exact același** răspuns cu m-am așteptat.
    [He gave me exactly the same answer as I expected]

**Diferit** can appear in comparative and superlative constructions and also with degree phrases that are common for non-equative comparatives as well.

(30) a. **Are un mers mai diferit** decât al tău.
    [He has a walk more different than yours]
    b. **Cel mai diferit** răspuns a venit de la el.
        [The most different answer came from him]
    c. **Are un mers mult mai diferit** decât al tău.
        [He has a much more different walk than yours]
    d. O analiză **extrem de diferită** a constituit surpriza conferinței.
        [An extremely different analysis surprised the conference]

Even **alt** can appear with degree expressions, but it seems to be accidental and whenever the article is involved *chiar* is outside the DP as shown in (31 a)

(31) a. Mi-a dat **chiar un alt** răspuns.
    [He gave even another answer]
    b. Mi-a dat **chiar alt** răspuns.
    [He gave even other answer]

**Conclusion.** So far we can conclude that the modifiers of *same* pattern with both equative comparatives and superlatives while those of *different* pattern with non-equative comparatives. *Other* apparently, diachronically behaved like *different*, but no longer takes any degree modifiers at all. *Același* and *diferit* appear with degree modifiers while generally speaking *alt* does not take degree modifiers thus being similar in behavior with *other*, both having features that define them as determiner like elements.

5.5 **Generalization 5:** Same and different can be predicative; other cannot

**English.** The ability to function predicatively is shared with lexical adjectives.

(32) a. These two keys are the **same**.
    b. These two keys are **different**.
    c. *These two keys are **other**.

When appearing in predicative position *same* is obligatorily accompanied by *the* in a pattern
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similar with the pattern for predicative superlatives:

(33) These two keys are the best.

Romanian. In Romanian același, diferit can both be predicative. Alt cannot be predicative; if alt gets the definite article it can be predicative but in this case it has the features of a pronoun rather than an adjective. Further discussion should differentiate between the pronouns and the adjectives același and alt when used predicatively, as such predicative uses are in fact occupied by the respective pronouns not adjectives, marked by the presence of co-referentiality, which in the case of alt is marked by the presence of the definite article altul. Again, this is a discussion to be detailed elsewhere.

(34) Răspunsul este același.
   [The answer is the same]
   *Răspunsul este alt.
   [The answer is other]
   Răspunsul este altul.
   [The answer is the other]

Conclusion. The predicative use of this group of adjectives points clearly both in English and Romanian to the different properties of alt and other which indicates that their syntax is different from same, different and același, diferit. The pronominal properties indicate that they belong to the category of determiners rather than lexical adjectives.

5.6 Generalization 6: “Lexical comparatives” and grammatical comparatives; superlative forms are impossible for functional adjectives

English. In addition to same, different, and other, there is another class of adjectives, exemplified in (35), whose meanings also have a comparative component.

(35) similar, comparable, identical, akin, distinct, separate, superior, inferior

However, unlike same/different, the similar/distinct set does not share the hallmark grammatical property of a comparative construction—the ability to take a comparative clause:

(36) a. Sue’s answers were distinct [CP as I expected)]
   Sue’s answers were different/better [CP as I expected]
   b. Sue’s answers were similar [CP as I expected].

Sue’s answers were the same/as good [CP as I expected]

Rather, the similar/distinct set must express the standard of comparison using a PP:

(37) a. Sue’s answers were distinct [PP from John’s / from what I expected].
   b. Sue’s answers were similar [PP to John’s / to what I expected].

Based on this difference, the conclusion is that unlike comparative adjective forms and identity adjectives, the similar/distinct adjectives are not grammatically comparative. Instead, comparison is simply a component of their lexical meaning—they lexically select a certain type of PP, just as many other adjectives do:

(38) a. Lexical comparatives: distinct/separate (from), similar/identical (to), superior/inferior (to)
   b. Other adjectives: curious (about), fond (of), smitten (with), responsible (for), angry (at), rich (in), keen (on)

From the above data we can notice that although different patterns with functional same in that it can take a comparative clause, it also patterns with lexical distinct in that it can take a from-PP:

(39) a. Sue gave a different answer [CP than I expected].
   b. Sue gave a different answer [PP from what I expected].

This behavior suggests that different could be considered a “split category”: we have the lexical different, which selects a from-PP, and the functional different, which selects a than-clause. As evidence for such a split, recall that functional adjectives, unlike lexical adjectives, do not have comparative forms:

(40) *samer/*more same, *otherer/*more other

If there are indeed two versions of different, we would expect the comparative form more different to be possible with lexical different from, but not with functional different than. An example of lexical more different from is given in (41) below.

(41) Lexical “different”: comparative is possible
   Sue is more different [PP from what I expected] [CP than I was prepared for].

This is an unwieldy but grammatical sentence which states that Sue is different from what I expected, and that the extent of the difference is
greater than I was prepared for. In (42), the same example is recast using functional *more different than*. Although the intended meaning is the same, the sentence is ungrammatical.

(42) Functional “different”: comparative is not possible
* *Sue is more different [CP than I expected] [CP what I was prepared for].

It seems, then, that while lexical different has a comparative form, functional different does not—exactly what the proposed analysis predicts. Similar evidence comes from superlative forms, which are also impossible for functional adjectives (*samest/most same, *otherest/most other) defined as such by the presence of the from PP. As shown in (43 a-b), lexical most different from is possible, while functional most different than is not.

(43) a. John gave the most different answer [PP from what I expected].
   b. *John gave the most different answer [CP than I expected].

The evidence from comparatives and superlatives therefore supports the proposal that English has both lexical and functional versions of different.

Romanian. In Romanian differit behaves more vaguely. It is lexical as it has comparative and superlative forms which appear in the context of prepositional comparative phrases. Only the comparative forms of differit can be both lexical and functional as shown by the examples in (44).

(44) Un răspuns mai differit [CP decât am așteptat]./FUNCTIONAL
    [An answer more different than I expected]
    Un răspuns mai differit [PP de al tău nu se poate]./LEXICAL
    [An answer different from yours is not possible]

In superlatives we only have the lexical differit not the functional one as shown in (45 a-c). the superlative cel mai differit can appear only in the context of prepositional comparative phrases.

(45) a. Cel mai differit răspuns [PP din câte am primit]/LEXICAL
    [The most different answer from the ones I received]
   b. Mi-a dat cel mai differit răspuns [PP față de toate celelalte]/LEXICAL
    [He gave me the most different answer with respect to all the others]
   c. *Am primit cel mai differit răspuns [CP decât m-am așteptat].
    [I received the most different answer than I expected

6. CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE PROPERTIES OF ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN IDENTITY ADJECTIVES

Same, different, and other share a striking syntactic property: their word order is like that of comparative adjective forms rather than absolute forms. A closer look at their co-occurrence properties reveals extensive similarities between same and equative comparatives (as well as superlatives) and between different and non-equative comparatives. Other, in contrast, lacks many of the properties in question altogether. The grammatical distinctness of the identity adjectives is made especially clear by the existence of a set of “lexical comparatives”—lexical adjectives which have comparative meanings, but which cannot engage in the same grammatical patterns as comparative forms and identity adjectives. Closer examination reveals that different has both lexical and functional versions.

In Romanian același can behave like demonstratives while alt pronominalizes when getting the definite article and diferit has mainly lexical versions.

In both languages same, different and other / același, diferit and alt have extensive similarities with comparative adjective constructions.

The class of identity adjectives is best understood in the framework of functional grammar as they occupy a continuum of grammaticalization between fully lexical adjectives and functional adjectives. Thus some identity adjectives resemble more degree phrases while others have the features of determiner phrases. This could explain the properties they share with comparatives and the fact that despite being adnominal modifiers, these items are more functional than prototypical lexical adjectives. Some of the adjectives discussed i.e. other for English and același and alt for Romanian, have properties that make them seem less like an adjective and more like a determiner.

Examining the syntax of this set of words could lead to some interesting results regarding functional adjectives as a possible well defined class of adjectives.

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