

# Complementation and modification patterns in adjectives: a comparison of Afrikaans and Dutch

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This paper is intended to provide a brief overview of two descriptive categories which form part of Broekhuis' extensive framework to investigate the behaviour of adjectives in Dutch in various structural configurations, namely complementation and modification. If Afrikaans is brought into the equation, some interesting instances areas of both divergence and similarity come to the fore, particularly in view of the fact that the two languages share common grammatical foundations.

After a discussion of each category, certain deductions will be made which could serve as points of discussion regarding systematic (or incidental) grammatical differences emanating from the comparison between the two languages.

As manifestations of complementation, four contexts in which adjective phrases occur are identified and compared interlingually, namely: (1) with prepositional phrases, (2) with noun phrases, (3) as discontinuous components of such combinations, (4) and represented as a grammatical unit by way of pronominalisation of the AP itself.

As regards modification, the functioning of adjectives as intensifiers is investigated, in particular (1) deviations from, or compliance with, a tacitly assumed norm of inflection, and (2) the use of adjectives as prenominal attributive determiners, as against the predicative or adverbial use of such adjectives. A main area of difference is the inflection of attributive adjectives, which in Dutch is based on grammatical gender, while in Afrikaans the phonological structure of the adjective itself determines whether inflection will take place or not. In the case of monosyllabic adjectives which are normally not inflected in Afrikaans, inflection can be triggered by the possibility of (a) contrasting literal with figurative meaning, (b) the formality of the context, and (c) geolectal preference for inflection (e.g. in Kaaps "Cape Afrikaans"), and (d) literary style which may emulate diachronically dated usage.

## References

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