

## Parallel adjectival inflection - a new perspective from Alemannic

German attributive adjectives show the well known distinction of strong vs weak inflection. Strong inflection is realized when no determiner or when an uninflected determiner is realized (2), in all other cases adjectives bear weak inflection (1) (Olsen 1991, Roehrs 2006). When adjectives are stacked, the same rule applies but in addition, parallel inflection is obligatory, i.e. all adjectives bear the same inflectional ending - variation between strong and weak inflection leads to sharp ungrammaticality (3).

- (1) *mit ein-em gut-en neu-en Wein*  
with a-dat.sg.masc good-wk new-wk wine
- (2) *ein gut-er neu-er Wein*  
a good-nom.sg.masc new-nom.sg.masc wine
- (3) *\*gut-er neu-en Wein*  
good-nom.sg.masc new-wk wine

In Alemannic, a southern German dialect, the same distribution of adjectival inflection holds but in addition, attributive adjectives can also remain uninflected irrespective of the inflectional properties of the preceding determiner (Rehn 2019).

- (4) a. *mit am guad Wei*  
b. *mit am guad-a Wei*  
*with a-dat.sg.masc good wine*
- (5) a. *a guad Wei*  
b. *a guad-r Wei*  
*a good wine*

This optionality of overt inflection is not possible in stacking (6) with one exception, in definite nominative DPs one or both adjectives can remain uninflected (7).

- (6) *\*a groß schwarz Hund*
- (7) *der groß schwarz Hund / der groß-e schwarz Hund / der groß schwarz-e Hund*  
*a/the big black dog*

This raises the question of the function of adjectival inflection in general and in stacking in particular. In a tentative analysis I suggest, that the data lend support to the idea that in stacking the sequence of A and N form a unit that is again 'categorized' as nominal (cf. Sproat & Shih 1987). Obligatory inflection in stacking in this scenario is tied to this 'categorization' process. In DPs with only one adjective, a determiner can serve this function as in the presence of a determiner, inflection is optional whereas in the absence of a determiner inflection is also obligatory in DPs with only one adjective.

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