Coordinative syntax and the function of modification

The case of *nice and Adjective* expressions

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Introduction

(1) coordinate conjunction "and"

a. Most people take a common-sense approach, accepting that moderation in most things — including drinking — is the key to a balanced and healthy lifestyle. (BNC J23)

b. They must always be neat and tidy in appearance. (BNC KA0)

c. Provided the discrimination was not indirect and unintentional, damages can be awarded to take account of injury to feelings. (BNC AN5)

(2) It is nice and cool in the basement all year round.

(3) a. a nice person

b. nice comments

nice and Adj expression

→ Lack of "general positive value"

On one reading, a sentence like *This basil is nice and fragrant* entails the two propositions 'This basil is nice' and 'This basil is fragrant'. However, we contend that there is an additional emergent meaning of *nice and fragrant* in the sentence ... (Panther and Thornburg 2009: 62)

- Focus of interests:

  Meaning and constructional properties of *nice and ADJ* expressions

- Fundamental question of this paper:

  How does *nice* not denote the general positive value when combined with *and Adjective*?

→ Where does the "emergent" meaning come from?

Previous accounts

- *Nice and* as an “intensifier”: Lexicographers’ observation

- Cowie et al. (1985)

  “adv[erbial] mod[ifier] (of degree, extent) of adj[ective]/ adv[erb] it precedes”

- Harmon (1995):

  Meaning: “quite, very (esp. representing s/thing positive)”

- Panther and Thornburg (2009): *nice and* with non-gradable adjectives

(4) The entire festival lineup is available here, all nice and alphabetical [...] [twitchfilm.net/site/archive/date/2005/03]

Obviously …, *nice* cannot have a 'degree' sense … (ibid.: 78)

[N]ice and may have an additional implicature of intensification of the second conjunct when used with gradable adjectives, but this meaning is not systematically conveyed by the *nice and Adj* construction (ibid.: 79).

Distribution of *nice and Adj* expressions in attribution and predication

✧ *nice and Adj* in an attributive function:

(5) Panther and Thornburg (2009: 61, some omitted)

a. nice and riveting plot
b. a nice and knowledgeable staff
c. a nice and informative review
d. a nice and lovely car
e. a nice and meaningful statement
f. a nice and charming portrait
g. a nice and comfortable 3” waistband
h. a nice and quiet walk
i. a nice and swanky auditorium
j. a nice and chewy crust
k. a nice and relaxin’ doodle session

✧ *nice and Adj* in a predicative function:

(6) Panther and Thornburg (2009: 61)

a. There I just wanna take it nice and slow.

b. This addon [sic] makes them look nice and ajaxy.

c. Her fur's a little bit patchy right now as it will probably take me several days to get her nice and svelte.

d. The people are so nice and appreciative.

e. Places are limited to just 18 people to keep the workshop nice and intimate.

f. We are both human beings, can't we be nice and respectful?

g. Attractive hotel – rooms were nice and comfortable […]

We have not detected any formal and semantic differences between the two grammatical functions that *the nice and Adj* phrase may assume in a clause. … [I]t is therefore not necessary to differentiate between attributive and predicative functions of the pattern. (Panther and Thornburg 2009: 61)

- Question in this section:

  Is it really true that we do not need to differentiate between attributive and predicative functions?

→ Is there really no distributional difference in the way *nice and Adj* expressions are used?

✧ Formulating hypotheses:

<u>The text hypotheses</u>:

H_0: The frequencies of *nice and Adj* expressions of different constructions (CONSTRUCTION) are identical.

H_1: The frequencies of *nice and Adj* expressions of different constructions (CONSTRUCTION) are not identical.

null hypothesis

alternative hypothesis

<u>The statistical hypotheses</u>:

H_0: $n_{\textit{nice and Adj} \text{ in CONSTRUCTION: ATTRIBUTIVE}} = n_{\textit{nice and Adj} \text{ in CONSTRUCTION: PREDICATIVE}}$

H_1: $n_{\textit{nice and Adj} \text{ in CONSTRUCTION: ATTRIBUTIVE}} \neq n_{\textit{nice and Adj} \text{ in CONSTRUCTION: PREDICATIVE}}$

✧ Methods: Obtaining a sample

1. Corpus: the British National Corpus (BNC)

2. Constructions in focus:

   i. Attributive: Prenominal

      [*nice and Adj* HEAD]

   ii-a. Predicative 1: Subject complement

      [SUBJ VERB *nice and Adj*]

   ii-b. Predicative 2: Object complement

      [SUBJ VERB OBJ *nice and Adj*]

✧ Results:

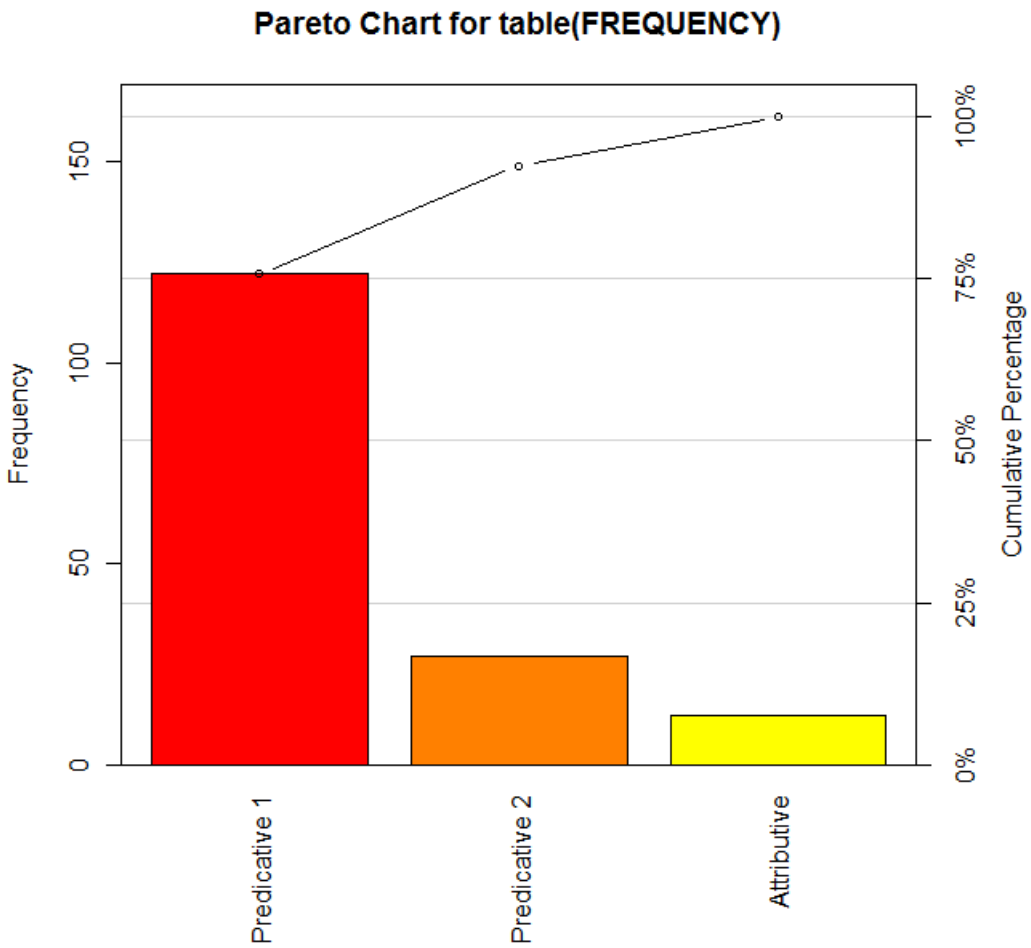
- Observed construction frequencies:

ATTRIBUTIVE	PREDICATIVE 1	PREDICATIVE 2	Row Totals
12	122	27	161

→ A strong preference for the Predicative 1

→ Very unlikely that the null hypothesis could be correct

- Pareto-chart:



	Frequency	Cum.Freq.	Percentage	Cum.Percent.
Predicative 1	122	122	75.776398	75.7764
Predicative 2	27	149	16.770186	92.54658
Attributive	12	161	7.453416	100

✧ Results of a chi-square goodness-of-fit test:

- Attributive vs. Predicative (1&2)

- Chi-square (X-squared) = 116.5776
- *df* (degree of freedom) = 1
- *p*-value = 3.55e-27 (0.00000000000000000000000000355)
  $p_{two\text{-}tailed} < 0.001$, ***; highly significant)
- observed = 12 149
- expected = 80.5 80.5
- residuals = -7.63 7.63

ATTRIBUTIVE	PREDICATIVE 1	PREDICATIVE 2	Row Totals
12	122	27	161

✧ Summary:

According to a chi-square goodness-of-fit test, the distribution of the two constructions (Attributive and Predicative 1&2) deviates highly significantly from the expected distribution ($\chi^2 = 116.5776$; $df = 1$; $p_{two\text{-}tailed} < 0.001$) : the construction where *nice and Adj* expressions occur in attributive function was observed 12 times although it was expected 81 times, and the construction where *nice and Adj* expressions occur in predicative function was observed 149 times although it was only expected 81 times.

✧ Conclusion:

- The frequencies of *nice and* Adj expressions vary in different constructions.

- It is possible to reject the null hypothesis.

→ An analysis like Panther and Thornberg（2009） is not statistically supported.

- It seems important to proceed to look into the properties of constructions, one by one.

Investigating the interaction of *nice and Adj* expressions and constructions

✧ Collostructional analysis:

- Aims at measuring the degree of attraction or repulsion that words exhibit to constructions (Gries & Stefanowitsch 2004a, 2004b, 2010; Stefanowitsch & Gries 2003, 2005)

- Collexeme analysis:

  Measures the degree of attraction/repulsion of a lemma to a slot in one particular construction

- The principle of semantic compatibility:

  [W]ords can (or are likely to) occur with a given construction if (or to the degree that) their meanings are compatible (Stefanowitsch and Gries 2005: 4).

1. Attributive: [[nice] [and] [ADJ] [HEAD]]

Number	ADJ	observed freq.	Fisher	coll.strength (-log10)	relation
1	easy	2	7.69E-07	6.114356128	***
2	deterministic	1	1.09E-05	4.963371105	***
3	forgiving	1	1.27E-05	4.896538378	***
4	durable	1	3.81E-05	4.419531216	***
5	tidy	1	7.43E-05	4.128894299	***
6	nasty	1	1.84E-04	3.735654493	***
7	extreme	1	3.17E-04	3.498529928	***
8	helpful	1	3.32E-04	3.478861916	***
9	healthy	1	3.76E-04	3.424696667	***
10	warm	1	6.44E-04	3.190844468	***
11	clear	1	2.17E-03	2.664141089	**
	TOTAL	12			

coll.strength > 3 => $p < 0.001$ (highly significant, ***)

coll.strength > 2 => $p < 0.01$ (very significant, **)

coll.strength > 1.30103 => $p < 0.05$ (significant, *)

coll.strength > 1 => p < 0.1 (marginally significant [ms])

2. Predicative 1: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]

Number	ADJ	observed freq.	Fisher	coll.strength (-log10)	relation
1	warm	32	5.34E-108	107.2727682	***
2	quiet	8	2.96E-23	22.52933113	***
3	tidy	5	1.86E-18	17.73035445	***
4	clean	5	2.30E-14	13.638839	***
5	sunny	4	4.77E-14	13.32111759	***
6	soft	5	7.87E-14	13.10385975	***
7	bright	4	3.83E-11	10.41646118	***
8	fresh	4	1.04E-10	9.98505965	***
9	peaceful	3	8.52E-10	9.069560405	***
10	easy	4	1.18E-09	8.928117993	***
11	cool	3	1.86E-09	8.729787145	***
12	comfy	2	6.73E-09	8.171726888	***
13	smooth	2	4.34E-06	5.36251027	***
14	gentle	2	4.41E-06	5.355266073	***
15	friendly	2	7.23E-06	5.140921775	***
16	comfortable	2	8.58E-06	5.066715228	***
17	roomy	1	1.05E-04	3.978397284	***
18	simple	2	1.08E-04	3.965371543	***
19	shapely	1	1.50E-04	3.825068406	***
20	fruity	1	1.62E-04	3.791827473	***
21	snug	1	1.70E-04	3.769040444	***
22	juicy	1	2.04E-04	3.69079582	***
23	tranquil	1	3.26E-04	3.486516043	***
24	tasty	1	4.02E-04	3.395665927	***
25	moist	1	5.86E-04	3.231880106	***

2. Predicative 1: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]

26	shiny	1	7.50E-04	3.124996646	***
27	calm	1	7.76E-04	3.110194248	***
28	polite	1	1.18E-03	2.926648298	**
29	slim	1	1.24E-03	2.9076303	**
30	smart	1	1.53E-03	2.816445466	**
31	mild	1	1.57E-03	2.803547458	**
32	accessible	1	1.76E-03	2.754734161	**
33	neat	1	1.77E-03	2.752026734	**
34	sweet	1	3.15E-03	2.501276029	**
35	solid	1	3.51E-03	2.454692884	**
36	weak	1	3.76E-03	2.425043224	**
37	cheap	1	4.10E-03	2.387110231	**
38	funny	1	4.67E-03	2.330776126	**
39	narrow	1	5.08E-03	2.293965339	**
40	thin	1	5.18E-03	2.28567024	**
41	dry	1	5.68E-03	2.245651664	**
42	positive	1	8.87E-03	2.052174316	**
43	red	1	9.21E-03	2.035646071	**
44	hot	1	9.33E-03	2.030071811	**
45	happy	1	1.22E-02	1.913284336	*
46	white	1	2.01E-02	1.695940534	*
47	central	1	2.05E-02	1.688670048	*
48	open	1	2.10E-02	1.677160727	*
49	big	1	2.61E-02	1.582694417	*
50	good	1	7.97E-02	1.098378236	ms
	TOTAL	122			

3. Predicative 2: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [OBJ] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]

Number	ADJ	observed freq.	Fisher	coll.strength (-log10)	relation
1	hot	5	2.20E-16	15.65757732	***
2	warm	3	4.53E-10	9.34428545	***
3	clean	2	5.81E-07	6.236197776	***
4	soft	2	9.50E-07	6.022139271	***
5	comfy	1	2.59E-05	4.586532587	***
6	tidy	1	1.67E-04	3.776763727	***
7	sticky	1	1.93E-04	3.713768146	***
8	handy	1	2.17E-04	3.662940274	***
9	neat	1	3.92E-04	3.406824737	***
10	bare	1	5.09E-04	3.293709043	***
11	smooth	1	6.55E-04	3.183626111	***
12	healthy	1	8.46E-04	3.072629637	***
13	fresh	1	1.58E-03	2.800519085	**
14	easy	1	2.91E-03	2.535957795	**
15	simple	1	3.28E-03	2.483861423	**
16	strong	1	3.69E-03	2.432503109	**
17	short	1	4.06E-03	2.391794992	**
18	private	1	4.10E-03	2.387110231	**
19	new	1	2.69E-02	1.570086302	*
	TOTAL	27			

✧ Comparison of the coll.strength of top 10 adjectives:

	Attributive		Pred 1		Pred 2	
Number	ADJ	coll.strength (-log10)	ADJ	coll.strength (-log10)	ADJ	coll.strength (-log10)
1	easy	6.114356128	warm	107.2727682	hot	15.65757732
2	deterministic	4.963371105	quiet	22.52933113	warm	9.34428545
3	forgiving	4.896538378	tidy	17.73035445	clean	6.236197776
4	durable	4.419531216	clean	13.638839	soft	6.022139271
5	tidy	4.128894299	sunny	13.32111759	comfy	4.586532587
6	nasty	3.735654493	soft	13.10385975	tidy	3.776763727
7	extreme	3.498529928	bright	10.41646118	sticky	3.713768146
8	helpful	3.478861916	fresh	9.98505965	handy	3.662940274
9	healthy	3.424696667	peaceful	9.069560405	neat	3.406824737
10	warm	3.190844468	easy	8.928117993	bare	3.293709043

Specifying the constructional schemas

1. Attributive: [[nice] [and] [ADJ] [HEAD]]

ADJ	coll.strength (-log10)
easy	6.114356128
deterministic	4.963371105
forgiving	4.896538378
durable	4.419531216
tidy	4.128894299
nasty	3.735654493
extreme	3.498529928
helpful	3.478861916
healthy	3.424696667
warm	3.190844468
clear	2.664141089

HEAD (lexeme)	coll.strength (-log10)
subtility	6.671009145
pallet	4.779107751
listening	4.17554873
equation	3.426200418
English	3.061980903
strategy	3.027658284
surface	2.964570262
image	2.939679971
letter	2.651889932
experience	2.630598586
question	2.391580949
place	2.253210168

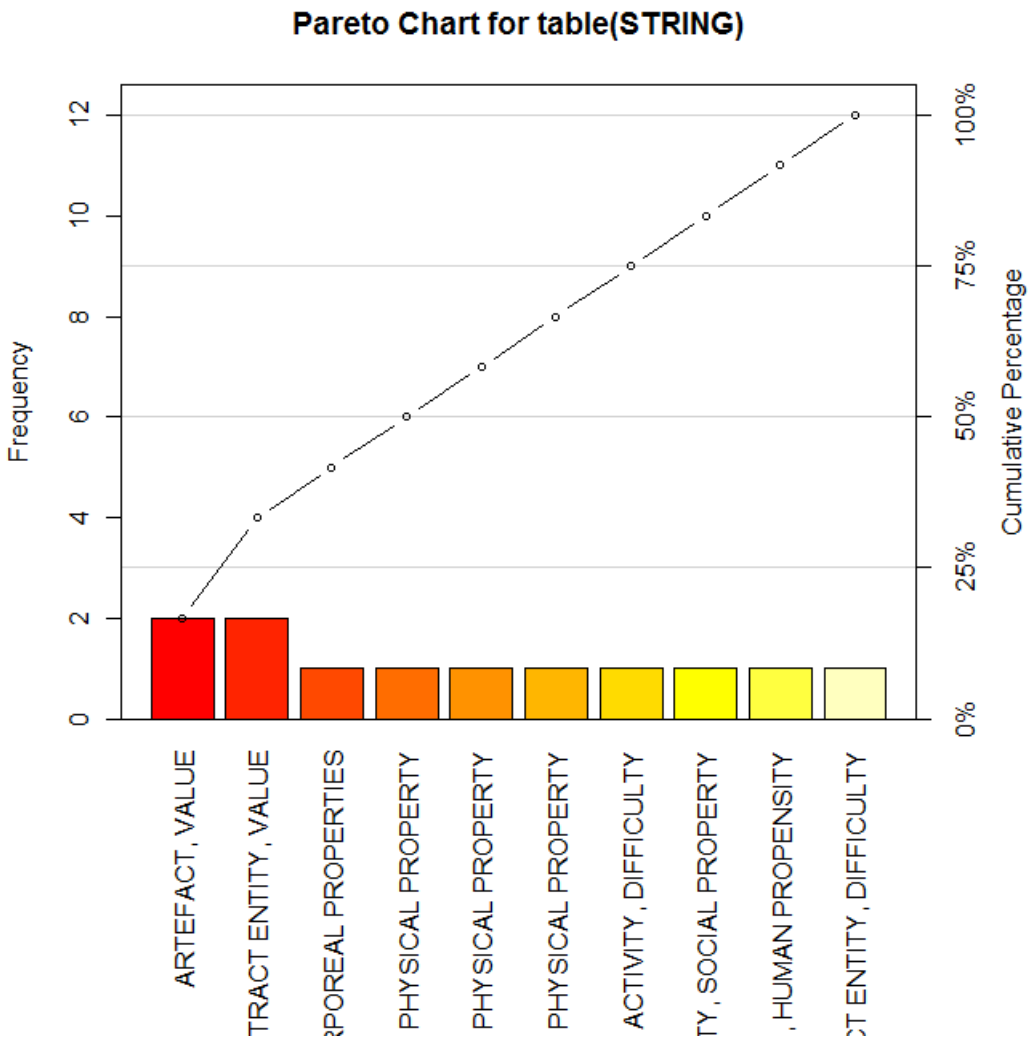
1. Attributive: [[nice] [and] [ADJ] [HEAD]]

	Frequency	Cum.Freq.	Percentage	Cum.Percent.
VALUE, ARTEFACT	2	2	16.666667	16.66667
VALUE, ABSTRACT ENTITY	2	4	16.666667	33.33333
SOCIAL PROPERTY, ABSTRACT ENTITY	1	5	8.333333	41.66667
PHYSICAL PROPERTY, SPEECH ACT	1	6	8.333333	50
PHYSICAL PROPERTY, ENVIRONMENT	1	7	8.333333	58.33333
PHYSICAL PROPERTY, ARTEFACT	1	8	8.333333	66.66667
HUMAN PROPENSITY, ABSTRACT ENTITY	1	9	8.333333	75
DIFFICULTY, ACTIVITY	1	10	8.333333	83.33333
DIFFICULTY, ABSTRACT ENTITY	1	11	8.333333	91.66667
CORPOREAL PROPERTIES, VISUAL PROPERTY	1	12	8.333333	100

nice and tidy pallets

nice and nasty experiences

1. Attributive: [[nice] [and] [ADJ] [HEAD]]



2. Predicative 1: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]

SUBJ (lexeme)	coll.strength (-log10)
it	68.87862205
they	13.19097928
you	9.610656689
that	6.672028376
Olivetti PG404	5.487849463
hoeing	4.964970718
ice-house	4.760950907
fruit cake	4.663940722
we	4.351347305
sponge	3.237546518
heater	3.074687909
rib	2.916855857
shed	2.850165303
tent	2.793174124
orange	2.751291264
coach	2.396098168
yours	2.35398859
he	2.269217724
metal	2.223444089
skin	2.107738393

VERB (lexeme)	coll.strength (-log10)
be	126.3256766
look	14.08745912
feel	6.19990182
sound	4.295163394
smell	2.591760035
remain	1.551139154
keep	1.289882635
get	0.684449466

ADJ	coll.strength (-log10)
warm	107.2727682
quiet	22.52933113
tidy	17.73035445
clean	13.638839
sunny	13.32111759
soft	13.10385975
bright	10.41646118
fresh	9.98505965
peaceful	9.069560405
easy	8.928117993
cool	8.729787145
comfy	8.171726888
smooth	5.36251027
gentle	5.355266073
friendly	5.140921775
comfortable	5.066715228
roomy	3.978397284
simple	3.965371543
shapely	3.825068406
fruity	3.791827473

2. Predicative 1: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]

	Frequency	Cum.Freq.	Percentage	Cum.Percent.
HUMAN, STATE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	17	17	13.9344262	13.93443
TEMPERATURE, STATE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	12	29	9.8360656	23.77049
ARTEFACT, STATE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	11	40	9.0163934	32.78689
FOOD, STATE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	9	49	7.3770492	40.16393
ENVIRONMENT, STATE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	8	57	6.557377	46.72131
WEATHER, STATE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	6	63	4.9180328	51.63934
ARTEFACT, PERCEPTION, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	4	67	3.2786885	54.91803
VISUAL PROPERTY, STATE, VALUE	3	70	2.4590164	57.37705
BODY AND OTHER PART, STATE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	3	73	2.4590164	59.83607
ARTEFACT, PERCEPTION, VALUE	3	76	2.4590164	62.29508
ACTIVITY, STATE, DIFFICULTY	3	79	2.4590164	64.7541
MENTAL STATES, STATE, VALUE	2	81	1.6393443	66.39344
MENTAL STATES, STATE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	2	83	1.6393443	68.03279
LIGHT, STATE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	2	85	1.6393443	69.67213
HUMAN, STATE, HUMAN PROPENSITY	2	87	1.6393443	71.31148
HUMAN, STATE, DIMENSION	2	89	1.6393443	72.95082
HUMAN, PERCEPTION, HUMAN PROPENSITY	2	91	1.6393443	74.59016
BODY AND OTHER PART, PERCEPTION, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	2	93	1.6393443	76.22951
ARTEFACT, STATE, HUMAN PROPENSITY	2	95	1.6393443	77.86885
ARTEFACT, STATE, DIMENSION	2	97	1.6393443	79.5082
ABSTRACT ENTITY, STATE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	2	99	1.6393443	81.14754

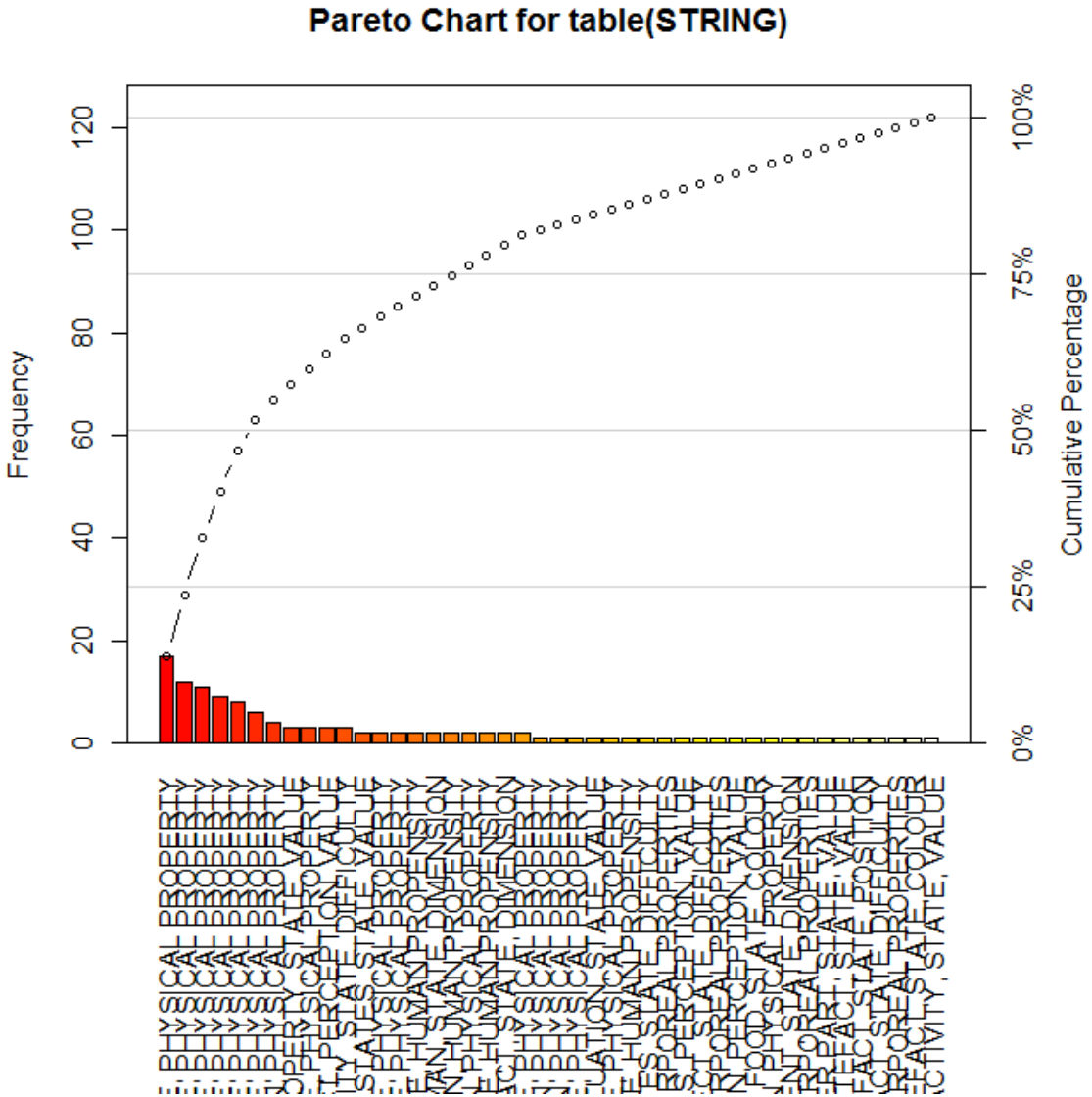
You are nice and warm.

They (leggings) are nice and bright.

2. Predicative 1: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]

VISUAL PROPERTY, PERCEPTION, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	1	100	0.8196721	81.96721
TEMPERATURE, PERCEPTION, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	1	101	0.8196721	82.78689
TEMPERATURE, CHANGE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	1	102	0.8196721	83.60656
SITUATION, STATE, VALUE	1	103	0.8196721	84.42623
SITUATION, STATE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	1	104	0.8196721	85.2459
MENTAL STATES, STATE, HUMAN PROPENSITY	1	105	0.8196721	86.06557
MENTAL STATES, STATE, DIFFICULTY	1	106	0.8196721	86.88525
MENTAL STATES, STATE, CORPOREAL PROPERTIES	1	107	0.8196721	87.70492
MENTAL STATES, PERCEPTION, VALUE	1	108	0.8196721	88.52459
MENTAL OBJECT, STATE, DIFFICULTY	1	109	0.8196721	89.34426
HUMAN, STATE, CORPOREAL PROPERTIES	1	110	0.8196721	90.16393
HUMAN, PERCEPTION, VALUE	1	111	0.8196721	90.98361
FOOD, STATE, COLOUR	1	112	0.8196721	91.80328
FOOD, PERCEPTION, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	1	113	0.8196721	92.62295
ENVIRONMENT, STATE, DIMENSION	1	114	0.8196721	93.44262
ENVIRONMENT, STATE, CORPOREAL PROPERTIES	1	115	0.8196721	94.2623
BODY AND OTHER PART, STATE, VALUE	1	116	0.8196721	95.08197
ARTEFACT, STATE, VALUE	1	117	0.8196721	95.90164
ARTEFACT, STATE, POSITION	1	118	0.8196721	96.72131
ARTEFACT, STATE, DIFFICULTY	1	119	0.8196721	97.54098
ARTEFACT, STATE, CORPOREAL PROPERTIES	1	120	0.8196721	98.36066
ARTEFACT, STATE, COLOUR	1	121	0.8196721	99.18033
ACTIVITY, STATE, VALUE	1	122	0.8196721	100

2. Predicative 1: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]



3. Predicative 2: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [OBJ] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]

SUBJ (lexeme)	coll.strength (-log10)
you	6.860120914
armies of volunteers	6.729088361
Mr and Mrs Smith	5.473789996
moisturizer	5.116338565
they	4.182897596
I	3.283746174
shirt	3.200177169
Jane	3.159141446
she	2.705533774
police	2.299469343
we	1.19859629
it	0.746661995

VERB (lexeme)	coll.strength (-log10)
keep	33.1421104
make	10.91328434
like	9.534468443
want	3.677367288
put	1.792634963
find	1.643974143
have	0.564952359

OBJ (lexeme)	coll.strength (-log10)
it	13.42481216
tooth	6.136498699
everything	5.061080188
lab	3.51243744
nail	3.340844719
knee	2.984221244
skin	2.761452112
floor	2.539703673
hair	2.471211808
street	2.249029016
issue	2.194499142
home	2.040195683
her	1.624885315
people	1.535659515
him	1.441891698
you	0.828566099

ADJ	coll.strength (-log10)
hot	15.65757732
warm	9.34428545
clean	6.236197776
soft	6.022139271
comfy	4.586532587
tidy	3.776763727
sticky	3.713768146
handy	3.662940274
neat	3.406824737
bare	3.293709043
smooth	3.183626111
healthy	3.072629637
fresh	2.800519085
easy	2.535957795
simple	2.483861423
strong	2.432503109
short	2.391794992
private	2.387110231
new	1.570086302

3. Predicative 2: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [OBJ] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]

	Frequency	Cum.Freq.	Percentage	Cum.Percent.
HUMAN, EMOTION, FOOD, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	4	4	14.814815	14.81481
HUMAN, CAUSATION, ARTEFACT, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	3	7	11.111111	25.92593
HUMAN, MAINTENANCE, HUMAN, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	2	9	7.407407	33.33333
ARTEFACT, MAINTENANCE, BODY AND OTHER PART, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	2	11	7.407407	40.74074
NATURAL PHENOMENON, MAINTENANCE, ENVIRONMENT, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	1	12	3.703704	44.44444
HUMAN, MAINTENANCE, PLACE, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	1	13	3.703704	48.14815
HUMAN, MAINTENANCE, ENVIRONMENT, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	1	14	3.703704	51.85185
HUMAN, MAINTENANCE, BODY AND OTHER PART, CORPOREAL PROPERTIES	1	15	3.703704	55.55556
HUMAN, MAINTENANCE, ARTEFACT, VALUE	1	16	3.703704	59.25926

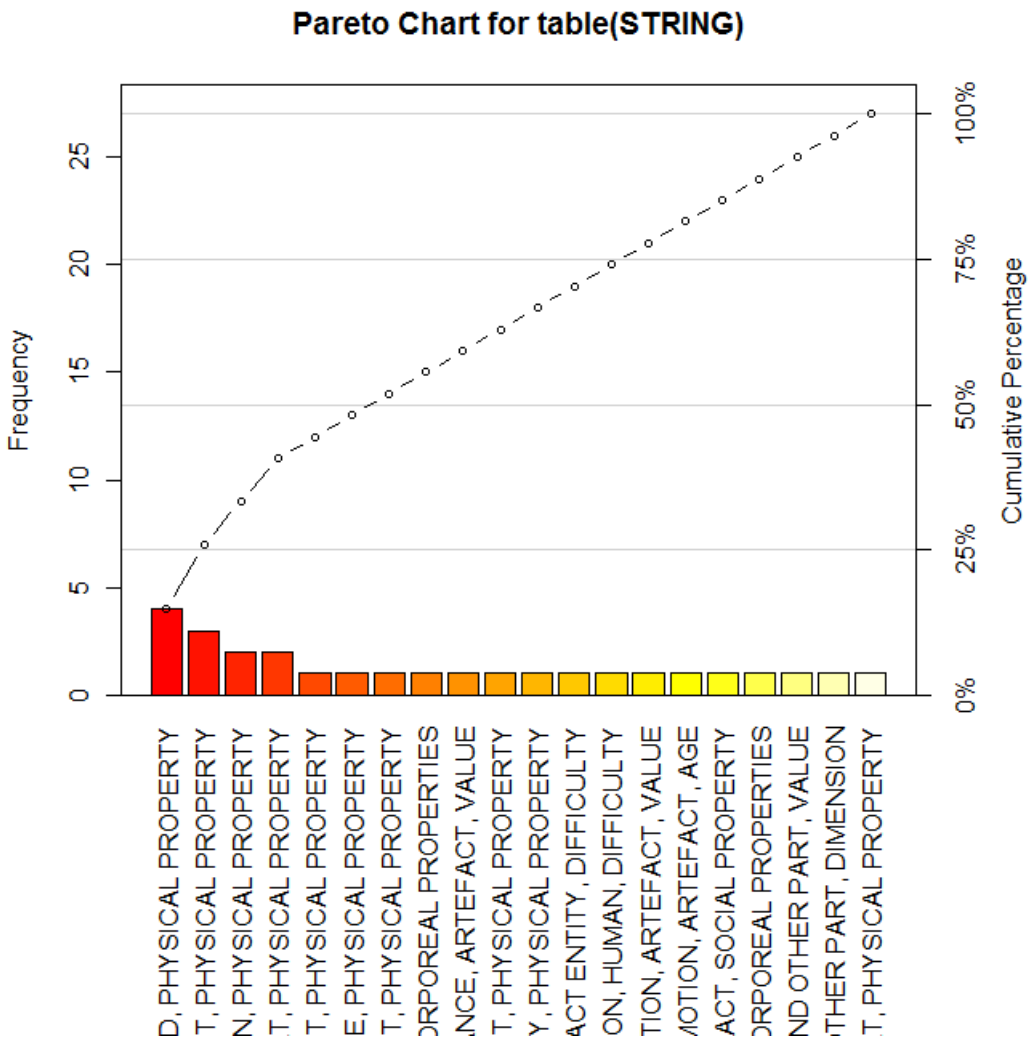
You like it (tea) nice and hot.

They (people) have to make it (road) nice and smooth.

3. Predicative 2: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [OBJ] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]

HUMAN, MAINTENANCE, ARTEFACT, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	1	17	3.703704	62.96296
HUMAN, MAINTENANCE, ABSTRACT ENTITY, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	1	18	3.703704	66.66667
HUMAN, MAINTENANCE, ABSTRACT ENTITY, DIFFICULTY	1	19	3.703704	70.37037
HUMAN, EVALUATION, HUMAN, DIFFICULTY	1	20	3.703704	74.07407
HUMAN, EMOTION, ARTEFACT, VALUE	1	21	3.703704	77.77778
HUMAN, EMOTION, ARTEFACT, AGE	1	22	3.703704	81.48148
HUMAN, CAUSATION, SPEECH ACT, SOCIAL PROPERTY	1	23	3.703704	85.18519
HUMAN, CAUSATION, HUMAN, CORPOREAL PROPERTIES	1	24	3.703704	88.88889
HUMAN, CAUSATION, BODY AND OTHER PART, VALUE	1	25	3.703704	92.59259
HUMAN, CAUSATION, BODY AND OTHER PART, DIMENSION	1	26	3.703704	96.2963
ARTEFACT, CAUSATION, BODY AND OTHER PART, PHYSICAL PROPERTY	1	27	3.703704	100

3. Predicative 2: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [OBJ] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]



Function of modification and the meaning of *nice and Adj* expressions

- Question:

  What is it that causes the “emergent” meaning to appear?

- Panther and Thornburg (2009):

  Provide accounts on the basis of inferential mechanisms (e.g. implicature, invited inference)

  We … conclude that the second conjunct of the *nice and Adj* construction is not licensed by virtue of its inherent meaning, but that it is dynamically, i.e. pragmatically, construed by the speaker as a positively rated attribute in a specific communication situation (ibid.: 72).

(7) a. … you can keep that white wine nice and chilly. (ibid.)

b. Summers in Hamburg are often rainy and chilly. (ibid.)

- Problem with Panther and Thornburg's (2009) accounts:

  Still not clear why the "inferential mechanisms" need to become invoked in the first place

- My suggestion:

  It's the function of modification that's at work.

- Shibuya (2005):

  Richer meaning (conceptualization) is likely to be available in modification (attribution) than in predication.

- *Nice* in qualitative and quantitative meaning

Qualitative:

(8) a. nice acting
b. nice day
c. nice family
d. nice guy

Quantitative:

(9) a. nice layer of oil
b. nice profit
c. nice surplus

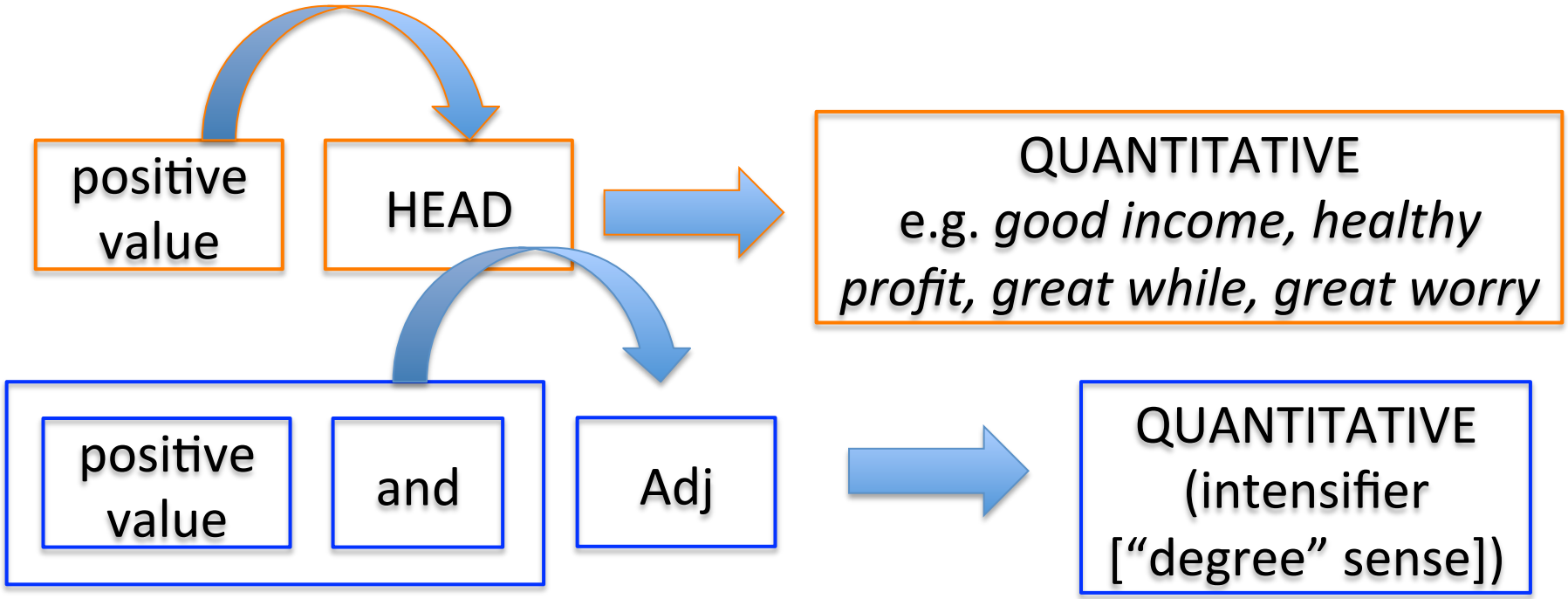
→ Function of modification (attribution) motivates the emergence of "quantitative" ("degree") reading.

→ The same logic applies to *nice and Adj* expressions.

- Then, why "intensifier" (quantitative) reading?

- Hypothesis :

  Positive values help to denote “large quantity”. (cf. also Shibuya 2005)



Qualitative:

(10) a. good and bad deeds

b. good and bad points

c. good and clean fun

Quantitative:

(11) a. good and drunk

b. good and hot

Semantic compositionality and the meaning of *nice and Adj* expressions

- Problem with Panther and Thornburg（2009）:

  Equation of the cross-constructional distribution of *nice and Adj* expressions

- What the present study suggests:

  Distribution and meaning of *nice and Adj* expressions are construction specific.

- Croft（2001）: Radical Construction Grammar

  In RCG, categories of constructions are defined by the construction itself. Categories are unique to each construction.

- Representation of the Intransitive construction and the Transitive construction:

	Reductionist construction grammar	Radical Construction Grammar
Intransitive construction	[SBJ VERB]	[INTRSBJ INTRVERB]
Transitive Active construction	[SBJ VERB OBJ]	[TRSBJ TRVERB TROBJ]

Table 1. The representation of constructions in reductionist and nonreductionist syntactic theories（Croft 2001: 54）

- Attributive, Predicative 1, and Predicative 2:

	Radical Construction Grammar representation
Attributive construction	[[nice and ATTRADJ] [HEAD]]
Predicative 1 construction	[[INTRSBJ] [INTRVERB] [nice and INTRADJ]]
Predicative 2 construction	[[TRSBJ] [TRVERB] [TROBJ] [nice and TRADJ]]

- Meaning of *nice and Adj* expressions:

  Emerges from the "interaction" with the properties of the construction

- Properties of constructions:

  Have a substantial influence on the distribution of *nice and Adj* expressions

Conclusion

✧ Summary:

- Distribution of *nice and Adj* expressions in attribution and predication

→ Panther and Thornburg's (2009) observation is not supported on statistical grounds.

- Investigating the interaction of *nice and Adj* expressions and the constructions
- Specifying the constructional schemas
- Function of modification and the meaning of *nice and Adj* expressions
- Semantic compositionality and the meaning of *nice and Adj* expressions

✧ Prospective issues:

- Increase in descriptive and predictive power

→ More work on schematic description of the constructions and their co-occurring lexemes

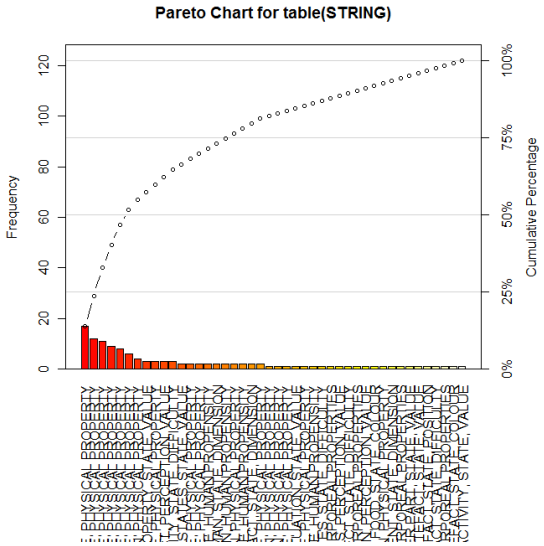
→ Yet, a danger of falling into “underspecification (high schematicity)” or “overspecification (low schematicity)”

Pred 1.

high

Schematicity

low



???

2. Predicative 1: [[SUBJ] [VERB] [nice] [and] [ADJ]]

SUBJ (lexeme)	coll.strength (-log10)
it	68.87862205
they	13.19097928
you	9.610656689
that	6.672028376
Olivetti PG404	5.487849463
hoeing	4.964970718
ice-house	4.760950907
fruit cake	4.663940722
we	4.351347305
sponge	3.237546518
heater	3.074687909
rib	2.916855857
shed	2.850165303
tent	2.793174124
orange	2.751291264
coach	2.396098168
yours	2.35398859
he	2.269217724
metal	2.223444089
skin	2.107738393

VERB (lexeme)	coll.strength (-log10)
be	126.3256766
look	14.08745912
feel	6.19990182
sound	4.295163394
smell	2.591760035
remain	1.551139154
keep	1.289882635
get	0.684449466

ADJ	coll.strength (-log10)
warm	107.2727682
quiet	22.52933113
tidy	17.73035445
clean	13.638839
sunny	13.32111759
soft	13.10385975
bright	10.41646118
fresh	9.98505965
peaceful	9.069560405
easy	8.928117993
cool	8.729787145
comfy	8.171726888
smooth	5.36251027
gentle	5.355266073
friendly	5.140921775
comfortable	5.066715228
roomy	3.978397284
simple	3.965371543
shapely	3.825068406
fruity	3.791827473