WHERE DOES NOMINAL GRADABILITY COME FROM?

MISGIVINGS, SECOND THOUGHTS, REGRETS, AND THE HOPE OF REDEMPTION

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Something we think we understand (Kennedy & McNally 2005, Rotstein & Winter 2001, others):

(1)   a. rather $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{transparent} \\ \text{straight} \\ \text{long} \end{array} \right\}$

       b. perfectly $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{transparent} \\ \text{straight} \\ {}^{\#}\text{long} \end{array} \right\}$

       c. partly $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{transparent} \\ {}^{\#}\text{straight} \\ {}^{\#}\text{long} \end{array} \right\}$

Something we don't really understand:

(2) a. real $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{idiot}\\\text{smoker}\\\text{sportscar}\end{array}\right\}$

    b. big $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{idiot}\\\text{smoker}\\{}^{\#}\text{sportscar}\end{array}\right\}$

    c. utter $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{idiot}\\{}^{\#}\text{smoker}\\{}^{\#}\text{sportscar}\end{array}\right\}$

($^{\#}$indicates ill-formedness on a degree reading)

Big-picture questions:

- How does nominal gradability come about?
- What makes certain nouns more easily gradable than others?
- How do nouns differ from adjectives with respect to gradability?
- What does this reveal about gradability in general?

Guiding ideas:

- nouns are only indirectly gradable
- nouns lack a degree argument, but . . .
- . . . some are nevertheless associated with scales
- a major axis of variation among degree-modified nouns: how a scale is retrieved from a noun meaning

ROADMAP

- **Adnominal degree morphemes**
- Prototypicality modifiers
- Dimensions and dimensional modifiers
- Conclusion

The modifiers in (3) are not actually (ordinary) adjectives (Morzycki 2009, de Vries 2010, Xie 2010; cf. Constantinescu 2011):

(3)
$$\begin{Bmatrix} \text{true} \\ \text{real} \\ \text{slight} \\ \text{total} \\ \text{utter} \\ \text{absolute} \\ \text{outright} \end{Bmatrix} \begin{Bmatrix} \text{disaster} \\ \text{idiot} \\ \text{magic} \\ \text{bullshit} \end{Bmatrix}$$

The size adjectives in (4) *are* regular adjectives, but doing something special:

(4)
$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{big} \\ \text{huge} \\ \text{colossal} \\ \text{humungous} \\ {}^{\#}\text{small} \\ {}^{\#}\text{little} \\ {}^{\#}\text{diminutive} \end{array} \right\} \text{idiot}$$

Not the same meaning as homophonous adjectives:

- *true bullshit* would, on the usual meaning of *true*, be contradictory
- *true disaster* vs. *?untrue disaster*
- *total idiot* but not *#partial idiot*
- some don't even have adjectival homophones: *utter, downright, out-and-out, straight-up, outright*

No predicative use:

(5)   #That $\begin{Bmatrix} \text{disaster} \\ \text{idiot} \\ \text{magic} \\ \text{bullshit} \end{Bmatrix}$ is $\begin{Bmatrix} \text{true} \\ \text{real} \\ \text{utter} \\ \text{absolute} \\ \text{outright} \end{Bmatrix}$.

Even worse with *seem*, a classic diagnostic of adjective-hood:

(6)   #That $\begin{Bmatrix} \text{disaster} \\ \text{idiot} \\ \text{magic} \\ \text{bullshit} \end{Bmatrix}$ seems $\begin{Bmatrix} \text{true} \\ \text{real} \\ \text{utter} \\ \text{absolute} \\ \text{outright} \end{Bmatrix}$.

Can't support their own degree modification:

(7) #some $\begin{Bmatrix} \text{absolutely true} \\ \text{completely real} \\ \text{very utter} \\ \text{quite absolute} \\ \text{fully outright} \end{Bmatrix} \begin{Bmatrix} \text{disaster} \\ \text{idiot} \\ \text{magic} \\ \text{bullshit} \end{Bmatrix}$

Broadly similar facts in other languages (examples welcome!).

Japanese:

(8)
$$\left\{\begin{array}{l} \text{mattaku-no} \\ \textbf{utter} \\ \text{kanzen-na} \\ \textbf{absolute} \\ \text{kanpeki-na} \\ \textbf{outright} \end{array}\right\}$$ baka
idiot

Japanese counterparts also lack a predicative use:

(9) #Ano-baka-wa
that idiot
$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{mattaku} \\ \textbf{utter} \\ \text{kanzen} \\ \textbf{absolute} \\ \text{kanpeki} \\ \textbf{outright} \end{array} \right\}$
-da .
is

'That idiot is utter/absolute/outright.'

Japanese counterparts also can't support their own degree modification:

(10) # $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{totemo}\\\textbf{very}\\\text{kanari}\\\textbf{pretty}\\\text{motto}\\\textbf{more}\end{array}\right\}$ $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{mattaku-no}\\\textbf{utter}\\\text{kanzen-na}\\\textbf{absolute}\\\text{kanpeki-na}\\\textbf{outright}\end{array}\right\}$ $\begin{array}{l}\text{baka}\\\textbf{idiot}\end{array}$

Adnominal degree words often have ad-adjectival cognates:

(11)   a. true $\sim$ truly
       b. real $\sim$ really
       c. utter $\sim$ utterly
       d. slight $\sim$ slightly
       e. absolute $\sim$ absolutely
       f. outright $\sim$ outright (e.g., *outright dead*)
       g. flat-out $\sim$ flat-out (e.g., *flat-out dead*)
       h. downright $\sim$ downright (e.g., *downright dead*)

Adnominal modifiers (at least the ones at issue here):

- syntactically & semantically distinct from ordinary adjectives
- analogous to degree morphemes in AP such as *more*, *very*, *less*, *really*

✔ Adnominal degree morphemes

■ **Prototypicality modifiers**

■ Dimensions and dimensional modifiers

■ Conclusion

Nouns support more structurally complicated degree constructions too:

(12) a. Clyde is more phonologist than phonetician.
b. Clyde is more of an idiot than Floyd.

(13) a. Clyde is a bigger idiot than Floyd.
b. Clyde is as big an idiot as Floyd.

Reasons to think nouns have a degree argument:

- Nouns have specialized degree words.
- Nouns support comparatives and equatives.
- Gradability is crosscategorial (Sapir 1944, Bolinger 1972, Abney 1987, Doetjes 1997, others).

Slap on a degree argument and go home?

But nouns aren't **as** gradable as adjectives.

If they both had degree arguments, what's the difference?

Project from here on: degree morphemes in the absence of degree arguments.

Real and *true* occur relatively freely (see also Constantinescu 2011):

(14) $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{real} \\ \text{true} \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{disaster} \\ \text{idiot} \\ \text{smoker} \\ \text{basketball fan} \\ \text{American} \\ \text{sportscar} \end{array} \right\}$

Similar freedom in Japanese (*hontoo-no* 'real').

Analytical intuition: *real* and *true* use scales of prototypicality.
A *real idiot* is an especially prototypical one.

Importance of prototypicality for nominal gradability not a
surprise (Kamp & Partee 1995, Sassoon 2007a, de Vries
2010, Sassoon 2007b).

Prototypicality is a bit slippery. Predictions?

NPs with no prototypes (Kamp & Partee 1995) should be odd with *real*:

(15) Floyd is a $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{real} \\ \text{true} \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} ^{??}\text{male nurse} \\ ^{\#}\text{non-Methodist} \\ ^{\#}\text{resident} \end{array} \right\}$.

Possibly related to contrastive focus reduplication (Ghomeshi et al. 2004):

(16) I'll make the fruit salad, and you make the SALAD-salad.

They explicitly appeal to prototypicality.

(Is it possible to test this for nouns without prototypes?)

Possibly related to Japanese *rashii* (McCready & Ogata 2007):

(17)   onna   rashii   onna
       woman   RASHII   woman
       'feminine woman'

M&O call this a 'stereotypical adjective' which requires 'exemplify[ing] the properties ordinarily associated' with an individual.

Perhaps even related to *-ish* and *-like*:

(18) a. I read something novel-$\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{ish}\\\text{like}\end{array}\right\}$.

  b. That bird was pigeon-$\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{ish}\\\text{like}\end{array}\right\}$.

Real sportscar (roughly): 'very similar to the prototypical sportscar'.

Ingredients:

- **prototype** maps a noun denotation to its prototype
- **similar**$_c$ maps an individual and a prototype to the (maximal) degree of their similarity (in c)
- **standard**$_c(N)$ = the degree of similarity to a prototype sufficient to count as a member of extension of N (in c)
- $\gg_c$ is a vague 'considerably exceeds' relation

Real requires exceeding the standard considerably
(like *very*):

(19)   a. $[\![\,real\,]\!]^c = \lambda f \lambda x$. $\mathbf{similar}_c(x, \mathbf{prototype}(f)) \gg_c$
$$\mathbf{standard}_c(f)$$

      b. $[\![\,real\ sportscar\,]\!]^c$
$$= \lambda x . \mathbf{similar}_c(x, \mathbf{prototype}(\mathbf{sportscar})) \gg_c$$
$$\mathbf{standard}_c(\mathbf{sportscar})$$

Unmodified noun:

(20) $[\![\,\textit{the sportscar}\,]\!] = \iota x[\textbf{sportscar}(x)]$

Assuming (21):

(21) $\textbf{sportscar}(x) \iff$
$\textbf{similar}_c(x, \textbf{prototype}(\textbf{sportscar})) >$
$\textbf{standard}_c(\textbf{sportscar})$

These are doubly ruled out:

(22) a. #That sportscar is real.
      b. #a very real sportscar

Wrong category, wrong type.

Contrast with *more of a*, which is also relatively free:

(23) a. This is more of a $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{disaster} \\ \text{idiot} \\ \text{smoker} \\ \text{basketball fan} \\ \text{American} \\ \text{sportscar}\end{array}\right\}$.

b. Floyd is more of a $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{male nurse} \\ \text{non-Methodist} \\ {}^?\text{resident}\end{array}\right\}$ than Clyde.

Suggests that *more of a* not about prototypes.

- Is the notion of a prototypical idiot appropriate or even coherent?
- A *real sportscar* may actually be quite atypical. Likewise for *real idiot*. Is this a problem?

De Vries (2010): most gradable nouns have upper-open scales.

Intuitively, no upper bound on e.g. idiocy. More important:

(24) a. This glass is more full than that one.
      entails: That one isn't full.

    b. Floyd is more of an idiot than Clyde.
      doesn't entail: Clyde isn't an idiot.

Any scale based on proximity to a prototype should be upper-closed.

Same issue:

- Suppose George is the prototypical idiot.
- Now take away a few brain cells. Was this actually the prototype all along?
- Keep going. Now he's dead. Is this the prototype?

The desiderata: to explain...

- atypical *real sportscar*
- *real idiot*
- oddness in e.g. #*real non-Methodist*
- perhaps, why *more of a* isn't sensitive to prototypes but nevertheless similarly promiscuous
- relation to the non-fake reading?

De Vries (2010): any scale based on proximity to a prototype should be upper-closed. We need to talk about better or worse **exemplars**, not prototypes.

So:

- *real sportscar*: a good exemplar of a sportscar
- *real idiot*: a good exemplar of an idiot

Straightforward to implement.

What about *real sportscars* and *real idiots* being unusual?

- prototypical exemplars of a category aren't **typical**
- the prototypical triangle presumably exist in the real world
- similar reasoning should go through for exemplars

Worry:

- People find 2 and 4 better exemplars of even numbers than 34 and 806 (Armstrong et al. 1983, cited by de Vries).
- Does that make 2 and 4 *true even numbers*?

(25)   **Floyd:** Name an even number.

Clyde: 806.

Floyd: No, a $\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \textbf{\textit{real}} \\ ?\textbf{\textit{true}} \end{array} \right\}$ even number, like 2 or 4!

An alternative approach:

- appeal to some notion of normality or stereotypical ways things might be
- an intensional approach
- advocated by Constantinescu (2011)
- indirectly, crucial component in McCready & Ogata (2007)

McCready & Ogata (2007), for Japanese *rashii*:

- requires that an individual have more of the stereotypical properties associated with a noun: a *rashii woman* is a stereotypical one
- conditionals of epistemic normality: what is taken to be normal given background knowledge
- $p > q$ iff, whenever p, the normal thing would be p
- maybe one could frame this using an epistemic modal base and a stereotypical ordering source?

- the set of stereotypical properties:

  stereotypical(**woman**)
  $$= \left\{ P : \begin{array}{l} \forall x[\textbf{woman}(x) > P(x)] \wedge \\ \neg\forall x[\textbf{woman}(x) \rightarrow P(x)] \end{array} \right\}$$

- *rasshi* simply says there are lots of these (literally counts them):

  $[\![\textit{rasshi woman}]\!] = \lambda x : \textbf{woman}(x)\ .$
  $\qquad |\textbf{stereotypical}(\textbf{woman})| > \textbf{standard}_c(\textbf{many})$

Nice feature of this: no need for prototypes:

- a prototype is simply the most stereotypical individual
- nothing requires that there be one

Applying this to *real idiot*:

(26) $\llbracket$ *rasshi idiot* $\rrbracket = \lambda x : \mathbf{idiot}(x)$.
$|\mathbf{stereotypical}(\mathbf{idiot})| > \mathbf{standard}_c(\mathbf{many})$

But is a *real idiot* actually the most stereotypical idiot or even the best exemplar of idiocy?

Yet another option: *a real idiot* is someone who is an idiot in worlds in which the standards of idiocy are especially stringent.

Degree readings of size adjectives and *major* more restricted:

(27) $\left\{\begin{array}{l} \text{big} \\ \text{huge} \\ \text{major} \end{array}\right\}$ $\left\{\begin{array}{l} \text{disaster} \\ \text{idiot} \\ \text{smoker} \\ \text{basketball fan} \\ ^{\#}\text{American} \\ ^{\#}\text{sportscar} \end{array}\right\}$.

The idea: no degree argument, but certain nouns **are** inherently conceptually associated with scales.

Similar move necessary to reflect polysemy in adjectives:

(28) a. The US is bigger than Canada.   (population)
    b. Canada is bigger than the US.   (area)

Big's lexical entry must make available multiple dimensions:

(29) **dimensions**(**big**) =
           {**size-by-population**, **size-by-area**, . . .}

To be big, it is sufficient to exceed the standard on just one dimension.

Sassoon (2007b, 2013): this depends on the adjective. *Healthy* requires all dimensions, *sick* only one.

Standard assumption about simple adjectives: an unpronounced degree morpheme POS (Cresswell 1976, von Stechow 1984, Kennedy 1997, and many others). Possible implementation:

(30) $\llbracket \text{POS} \rrbracket^c = \lambda g \lambda x \, . \, \exists D \begin{bmatrix} D \in \textbf{dimensions}(g) \, \wedge \\ \mu(D)(x) \geq \textbf{standard}_c(D) \end{bmatrix}$

...where $\mu(D)$ is the measure function ($\langle e, d \rangle$) associated with the dimension D.

(31) $\llbracket \textit{Canada is } \text{POS } \textit{big} \rrbracket^c = \exists D \begin{bmatrix} D \in \textbf{dimensions}(\textbf{big}) \, \wedge \\ \mu(D)(x) \geq \textbf{standard}_c(D) \end{bmatrix}$

Nouns may specify dimensions too:

(32) a. **dimensions**(**basketball-fan**) =

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textbf{attention-devoted-to-basketball}, \\ \textbf{enthusiasm-for-basketball}, \\ \textbf{knowledge-about-basketball}, \\ \textbf{frequent-attendance}, \\ \vdots \end{array} \right\}$$

b. **dimensions**(**smoker**) =

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textbf{frequency-of-smoking}, \\ \textbf{enthusiasm-for-smoking} \\ \vdots \end{array} \right\}$$

For *chair*, though, it would be hard to articulate dimensions.
No salient gradable quality is sufficient to be a chair.

So, **dimensions**(**chair**) is undefined.

On its degree reading, *big* requires that the measure of an individual along a lexically-determined dimension be large (treating *big* as a degree head, even though it isn't one):

(33)   a. $[\![big_{Deg_N}]\!]^c = \lambda f \lambda x \, . \, \exists D \begin{bmatrix} D \in \textbf{dimensions}(f) \, \wedge \\ \textbf{large}_c(\mu(D)(x)) \end{bmatrix}$

     b. $[\![\textit{Clyde is a big}_{Deg_N} \textit{ smoker}]\!]^c =$
$$\exists D \begin{bmatrix} D \in \textbf{dimensions}(\textbf{smoker}) \, \wedge \\ \textbf{large}_c(\mu(D)(\textbf{Clyde})) \end{bmatrix}$$

NB: Still no degree argument for nouns: $[\![\textit{smoker}]\!]$ is $\langle e, t \rangle$; $[\![big_{Deg_N}]\!]$ is $\langle et, et \rangle$.

How does this ensure that (34a) entails (34b)?

(34) a. Clyde is a big$_{Deg_N}$ smoker.
      b. Clyde is an smoker.

It doesn't. Could add requirement of exceeding standard by a large amount:

(35) $[\![$ *Clyde is a big$_{Deg_N}$ smoker* $]\!]^c =$
      $$\exists D \begin{bmatrix} D \in \textbf{dimensions}(\textbf{smoker}) \wedge \\ \textbf{large}_c(\mu(D)(\textbf{Clyde}) - \textbf{standard}_c(D)) \end{bmatrix}$$

...but, a more interesting hypothesis:

(36)   On their degree readings, nouns have minimal
       standards.

As with *chair*, **dimensions**(**sportscar**) not defined. Rules out $^{\#}big_{Deg_N}$ *sportscar*:

(37) $[\![^{\#}$*This is a big$_{Deg_N}$ sportscar*$]\!]^c =$
$$\exists D \begin{bmatrix} D \in \textbf{dimensions}(\textbf{sportscar}) \wedge \\ \textbf{large}_c(\mu(D)(\textbf{this})) \end{bmatrix}$$

More restricted still:

$$
(38) \quad
\left\{
\begin{array}{l}
\text{utter} \\
\text{complete} \\
\text{total} \\
\text{absolute} \\
\text{outright} \\
\text{flat-out}
\end{array}
\right\}
\left\{
\begin{array}{l}
\text{disaster} \\
\text{idiot} \\
^{\#}\text{smoker} \\
^{\#}\text{basketball fan} \\
^{\#}\text{American} \\
^{\#}\text{sportscar}
\end{array}
\right\}.
$$

Similar facts in Japanese. Elsewhere? (Examples welcome.)

What's special about e.g. *disaster* and *idiot*?

- Being a basketball fan is complicated.
- Being an idiot is simple.

Some nouns specify only one dimension:

(39) a. **dimensions**(**idiot**) = {**idiocy**}
      b. **dimensions**(**disaster**) = {**disastrousness**}

Utter presupposes that its noun is unidimensional:

(40) a. $\llbracket utter \rrbracket^c$
           $= \lambda f \lambda x \,.\, \textbf{large}_c(\mu(\iota D[D \in \textbf{dimensions}(f)])(x))$

      b. $\llbracket Clyde \ is \ an \ utter \ idiot \rrbracket^c$
           $= \textbf{large}_c(\mu(\iota D[D \in \textbf{dimensions}(\textbf{idiot})])(\textbf{Clyde}))$
           $= \textbf{large}_c(\mu(\textbf{idiocy})(\textbf{Clyde}))$

Requires that the measure of Clyde along the idiocy scale be large.

What goes wrong in $^{\#}$*utter smoker*?

- failure of presupposition
- there are multiple dimensions specified by *smoker*
- so $\iota D[D \in \textbf{dimensions}(\textbf{smoker})]$ is undefined

What goes wrong in $^{\#}$ *utter sportscar*?

- same as in $^{\#}$ *big sportscar*
- failure of presupposition
- there are no dimensions specified by *sportscar*
- so **dimensions**(**sportscar**) is undefined

Is it plausible to say that *basketball fan* has multiple dimensions but *sportscar* has none?

This could be simply a lexical stipulation, but it'd be nice to do better.

Sassoon (2007b, 2013):

(41) a. Floyd is healthy except for his high blood pressure.
      b. Floyd is not sick except for his high blood pressure.

(42) a. #Tweety is a bird except for the gills.
      b. #Tweety isn't a bird except for the feathers.

This might be evidence that *bird* is non-dimensional (contra Sassoon).

We should find a contrast with multidimensional nouns.
Maybe?

(43)   a. Floyd isn't a smoker except for the occasional cigar.
       b. Floyd isn't a basketball fan except for his constant
          betting on games.

Why do so many unidimensional nouns seem suspiciously emotively loaded?

Maybe this isn't about dimensions but about **expressive meaning**?

(44) Clyde saw a fucking goat.
suggests: speaker is agitated

Typical expressive:

(45) Clyde didn't see a fucking goat.
      suggests: speaker is agitated

Compare to:

(46) Clyde didn't see a(n) $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{idiot} \\ \text{disaster} \\ \text{genius} \end{array} \right\}$.
      doesn't suggest: speaker is agitated

Maybe this isn't about dimensions or expressive meaning but
extremeness?

A class of cross-categorial degree modifiers that occur with
'extreme' predicates (Morzycki 2012):

$$(47) \quad \begin{Bmatrix} \text{outright} \\ \text{flat-out} \\ \text{straight-up} \\ \text{out-and-out} \\ \text{downright} \end{Bmatrix} \begin{Bmatrix} \text{huge/}^{\#}\text{big} \\ \text{fantastic/}^{\#}\text{OK} \\ \text{excessive/}^{\#}\text{appropriate} \end{Bmatrix}$$

Are unidimensional degree modifiers actually just extreme?
Would explain #*utter heap*.

This motivated a three-way distinction among nouns:

- nondimensional: *sportscar*
- multidimensional: *smoker*
- unidimensional: *idiot*

Any evidence for this outside of degree modifiers?

Exclamatives (Ai Taniguchi, p.c.):

(48) a. What a(n) $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{idiot} \\ \text{smoker} \\ \text{doctor} \end{array} \right\}$!

  b. Boy, is she a(n) $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{idiot} \\ \text{smoker} \\ ^{\#?}\text{doctor} \end{array} \right\}$!

  c. Isn't she a(n) $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{idiot} \\ ^{\#}\text{smoker} \\ ^{\#?}\text{doctor} \end{array} \right\}$?!

Bigger picture:

- nouns support varied array of degree modifiers
- only indirectly gradable
- some adnominal degree modifiers involve something like prototypicality (*real, true*)
- others involve scales provided lexically but indirectly by the noun
    - some presuppose a single scale (*utter, complete*)
    - others don't (*big, huge, major*)

- major axis of variation among adnominal degree modifiers: how they extract a scale from noun
- yields a typology of nouns: nondimensional, multidimensional, unidimensional

So... where does all this leave adjectives?

GRATITUDE

Thanks!

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IS THIS REALLY ALL ABOUT SCALE STRUCTURE?

For adjectives, scale structure is crucial. How far would that have gotten us here?

- nothing here to suggest that scale structure isn't important for nouns too
- probably not relevant to presence or absence of a degree argument
- probably not relevant to *real*/*true*
- what about *big* vs *utter*?

Utterly may require upper-closed scales:

(49) $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{utterly}\\\text{completely}\\\text{absolutely}\end{array}\right\}$ $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{impossible/}^{\#}\text{possible}\\\text{closed/}^{\#}\text{open}\\\text{full/}^{\#}\text{empty}\end{array}\right\}$

Nominalizations:

(50) $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{utter}\\\text{complete}\\\text{absolute}\end{array}\right\}$ $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{impossibility/}^{\#}\text{possibility}\\{}^{?}\text{closure/}^{\#}\text{openness}\\\text{transparency/opacity}\\{}^{??}\text{fullness/emptiness}\end{array}\right\}$

But:

(51) a. $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{utter} \\ \text{complete} \\ \text{absolute} \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{idiot} \\ \text{disaster} \end{array} \right\}$

    b. $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{utterly} \\ \text{completely} \\ \text{absolutely} \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{idiotic} \\ \text{disastrous} \end{array} \right\}$

So: scale structure remains important, but probably not an account of the contrast.

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