Different perspectives on proper noun modifiers
Workshop at BICLCE2017 in Vigo, 28-30 September 2017

Convenors
Tine Breban (The University of Manchester) & Julia Kolkmann (University of York)

Topic
Proper nouns used as modifiers, as e.g. in *the Watergate scandal*, *a London theatre*, *the Ghana problem*, *another Hillary phone call*, are a relatively new and productive phenomenon in English (see Biber and Gray 2011, Rosenbach 2007). There are only a few studies on the phenomenon in English (Rosenbach 2007, 2010) and a few on similar constructions in other Germanic languages (Schlücker 2013 on German and Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2013 on Swedish), which rather than fully explaining the phenomenon, in fact identify a variety of issues for further study. These issues fall within different traditional areas of linguistics, morpho-syntax, semantics and pragmatics, phonetics, sociolinguistics, etc. We believe that only by investigating these issues 'in dialogue' can we fully understand this new use of proper nouns in English. The aim of this workshop is then to bring together experts from different areas around the topic of proper noun modifiers. The workshop is seen as a stepping stone towards a special journal issue, in which the contributors can work with and benefit from the findings of their co-contributors, in order to reach a fuller level of understanding of this new phenomenon as well as, more generally, of the interplay of different fields of linguistics.

Outstanding issues in context
- One open question pertains to the **morpho-syntactic** status of the proper noun modifiers. Several authors have shed their light on noun modifiers and have argued for a compound or (and even *and*) a phrase status (see e.g. Bauer 1998, Giegerich 2004, 2015). The issue of the proper noun modifiers is quite probably even more intriguing as they in general show the syntactic behaviour of phrases, but usually have fore-stress, which is typically seen as a key distinguishing feature of compounds. Questions about individual lexicalization, and analogical formation with existing lexicalization, and even lexicalization of a larger identifying proper noun construction with a fore-stress pattern, are interesting options to explore.
- Within the area of **phonetics**, stress has been proven to be an important part of the morpho-syntactic debate, and has been identified as a (minor, but not neglectable) factor in the genitive alternation (Shih et al. 2015). The stress patterns of the proper noun modifiers have not yet been looked at on the basis of natural language data.
- The discussion of the **semantic** interpretation of the construction has focussed on the identifying function of some proper noun modifiers, and on how it could be integrated into existing models of the noun phrase (Rosenbach 2007, Schlücker 2013, Breban forthc.). But the issue of how the proper noun actually identifies is much more complex and intriguing. For instance, in *the Ghana problem*, the actual explicit content added by the proper noun *Ghana* is very limited and most of the interpretative work is left to the 'decoding' participant. We invite papers looking into underspecification, underdetermination, the role of **pragmatics** in this construction and possibility in contrast to genitive constructions.
- Koptjevskaja-Tamm (2013) used long stretches of text to discuss when and how Swedish proper noun modifiers were used in **discourse** as alternatives for other possible constructions (determiner genitives, more complex constructions with postmodification). A similar, fleshed out qualitative discourse study of proper noun modifiers in English has not yet been done.
- In terms of **variation**, the main question is how the proper noun modifier construction relates to the genitive constructions in terms of speaker choice. Rosenbach's (2007) main claim is that they are equivalent when we restrict focus on proper noun modifiers denoting humans in definite noun phrases, but has to concede that even within this very restricted set, equivalence is not absolute, e.g. *the Guggenheim museum* versus **Guggenheim's museum* and *John's sister* versus **the John*

sister. Alternations with other constructions, the *of*-genitive (see e.g. Biber et al. 2016) and with adjectival modifiers, e.g. *the Italian invasion*, are also of interest.

- Rosenbach (2007) restricted her corpus work to texts in the news **genre**, as she argued proper noun modifiers are a common feature of a nominalized style. Breban (2013) found that newspaper headlines were a frequent source. However, the construction seems to be productive in other, informal genres, e.g. our colleagues are setting out *a Manchester strategy*, discussing *the Kazachstan scholarship problem*, and hoping to have *Boris bikes* in Manchester in the near future. A study looking into different genres, in the trend of work on noun modifiers by Biber and colleagues, would be welcome.

- In terms of the **historical** development, we know that the first examples of proper noun modifier constructions were found in the 17th and 18th centuries with proper nouns denoting locations, e.g. *Greenwich Park* (Biber and Gray 2011, Rosenbach 2007). The studies show that noun modifiers show a marked increase in frequency only in the 20th century. The specific information on proper noun modifiers is restricted to Rosenbach's discussion of the different semantic types of nouns featuring in the ARCHER news corpus, but it is only focused on this issue and doesn't provide a full picture of the development of this construction as such and in relation to noun modifiers in general.

- A final issue concerns the relation of proper nouns modifying nouns, such as *the Watergate scandal*, and another recent use, proper nouns modifying adjectives, e.g. *Einstein smart*, *Usain Bolt fast* (Vartiainen 2016). To what extent do these **constructions** share features, share a history and influence each other, if at all?

The workshop will consist of full papers and work in progress reports, which will be allotted 20 minutes for presentation (plus 10 minutes for discussion). The **deadline for submission of abstracts** (ca. 500 words, excluding title, references and keywords) is **15 January 2017**. Notification of acceptance will be sent out by 15 March 2017. Abstracts should be sent to tine.breban@manchester.ac.uk.

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