

# Inflectional potential and differential coding of property words: A typological study

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This study focuses on differential coding of property words regarding their inflectional potential, as illustrated in (1). Similar phenomena are also called “adjective classes” (Dixon & Aikhenvald 2004) or “split adjective” (Wetzer 1996, Stassen 1997).

(1) Ma Manda (Papunesia, Nuclear Trans New Guinea)

a. *nak-nga=nang yot udu kusamba*  
 1SG-EMPH=GEN house that.ANA **big**

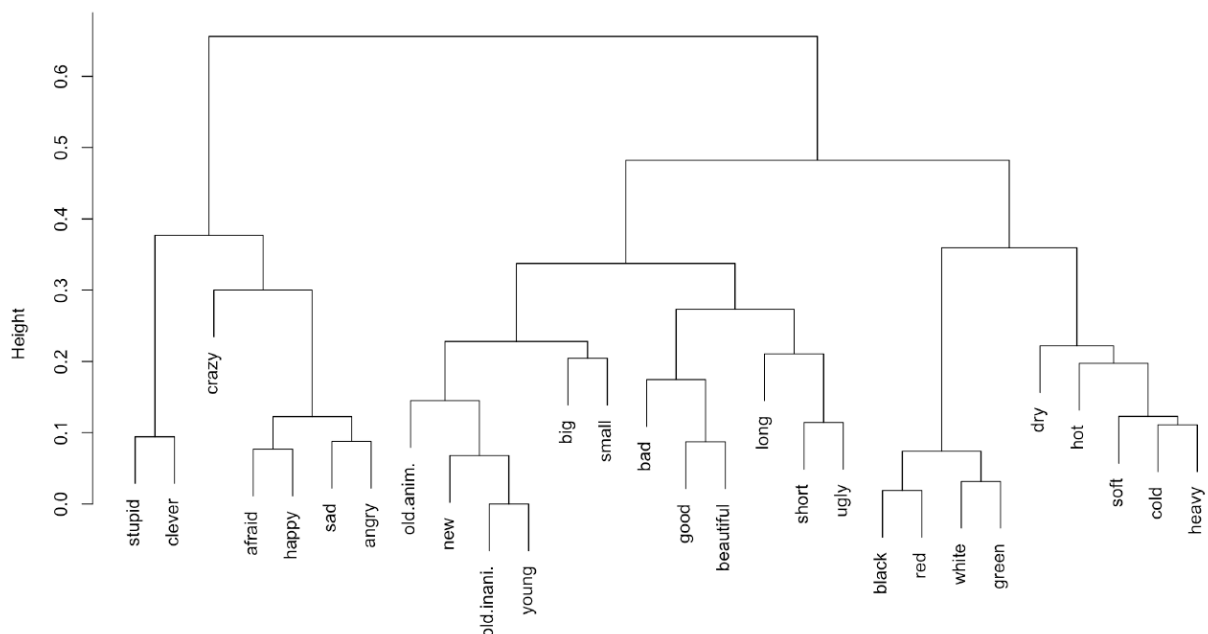
‘My house is big.’ (Pennington 2016: 133)

b. *daampa-be-k*  
**happy**-IRR.SG-3SG

‘He will be blessed.’ (Pennington 2016: 128)

The aim of this study is to find out the correlation between different property concepts and different inflectional categories via a cross-linguistic survey. Two types of inflectional categories are taken into account: nominal inflection (i.e. grammatical markers of definiteness, number, gender and case) and verbal inflection (i.e. grammatical markers of tense, aspect, mood, voice, and argument indexing). I have investigated 26 property concepts from 6 different semantic types based on Dixon (1977). My sample consists of 41 genealogical and geographical diverse languages and the result is shown in Figure 1. As shown in Figure 1, the property concepts located closer together in the cluster tend to show similar inflectional potential in languages.

Figure 1. The Clustering analysis of property concepts



## References

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