

UNFINISHED “VERBIZATION”

– development of predicative constructions
with a feminine adjective in the 17th and 18th centuries
in the light of corpus data

Renata Bronikowska

Institute of Polish Language Polish Academy of Sciences

renata.bronikowska@ijp.pan.pl

Predicative constructions with adjectives in the Middle Polish

- SŁUSZNY 'right' (masculine) → SŁUSZNA (feminine)
 - *słuszna to zrobić* 'it is right to do that'
- PEWNY 'certain' (masculine) → PEWNA (feminine)
 - *pewna, że to niemało mozółu* 'it is certain that it takes a lot of work'
- DZIWNY 'strange' (masculine) → DZIWNA (feminine)
 - *dziwna, że cię chwala* 'it is strange that you are praised'
- MOŻNY 'possible' (masculine) → MOŻNA (feminine)
 - *można to zrobić* 'it is possible to do that'
- NIEPODOBNY 'impossible' (masculine) → NIEPODOBNA (feminine)
 - *niepodobna wątpić, że...* 'it is impossible to doubt that...'

The relics of predicative constructions in the contemporary Polish

- Predicatives (defective verbs that conjugate with an auxiliary verb *być* 'to be')
 - MOŻNA 'it is possible'
 - NIEPODOBNA '*bookish*: it is impossible'
- Stabilized expressions
 - CO GORSZA 'what is worse'
 - MNIEJSZA Z TYM / MNIEJSZA O TO 'never mind'

What if... we had more predicatives?

Contemporary paradigm
of MOŻNA 'it is possible'

można

było można

będzie można

byłoby można (można by)

niech będzie można

present

past

future

conditional

imperative

Potential paradigm
of SŁUSZNA 'it is right'

słuszna

było słuszna

będzie słuszna

byłoby słuszna (słuszna by)

niech będzie słuszna

Purpose of the study

- tracing the process of “verbization”
- quantitative analysis
- based on corpus data
- 17th- and 18th-centuries texts

Material

- Electronic Corpus of 17th- and 18th-century Polish Texts (up to 1772) – <https://korba.edu.pl/>
- 167 adjectival lexemes in nearly 6.5 thousand predicative uses
- Additional marking in the XLS file
- Assumptions for the description of units
 - DZIWNA 'strange' (*dziwna, dziwniejsza, najdziwniejsza*)
 - LEKKA 'light' (*lekka, letka, lżejsza, lekciejsza, leksza, letsza...*)
 - NIEMOŻNA 'impossible' (*niemożna, nie można*)

Forms of predicative constructions

Kto się sam czego dobrze nauczył/ **słuszna** aby drugich uczył.

Who has learned something well / **(it is) right** that he/she teaches others.

Słuszna rzecz, abyś słowu królewskiemu dosyć uczynił.

(It is) a right thing that you hold the king's word.

Izali **to słuszna** nic nie przedawać/ a przecię zapłatę brać?

(Is) it right not to sell anything / and take the payment?

Słuszna jest/ aby głośno sławił się dźwięk jego wojennej sławy.

(It) is right / for the sound of his war fame to be heard.

Słuszna mi się zda mówić, że...

(It) seems right to me that ...

Issues

1. Which adjectives appeared most frequently in predicative constructions?
2. How did the number of such structures change over the course of two centuries?
3. Did the predicative constructions change in the way that could indicate the ongoing process of “verbization” of adjectival feminine forms?

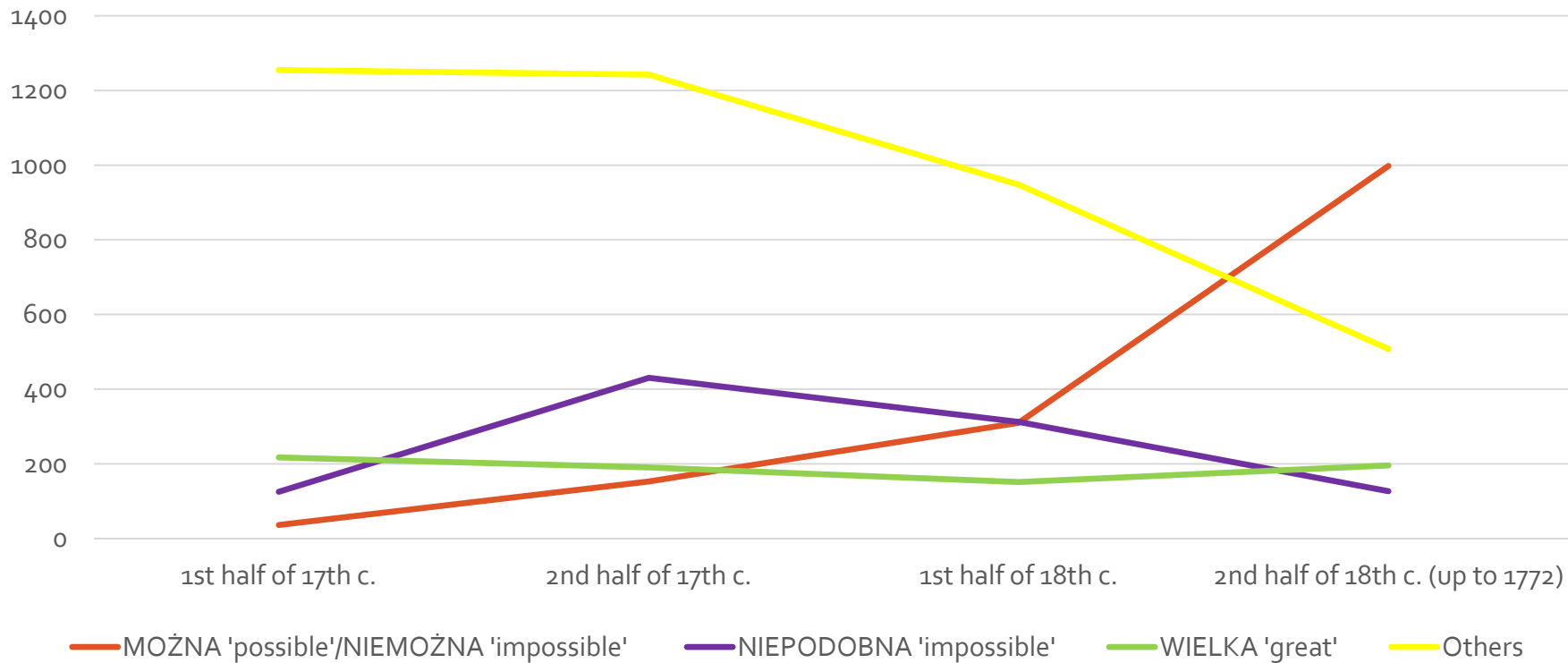
Selected determinants of the completed process of “verbization”:

- Ellipsis of the noun *rzecz* ‘thing’
- Ellipsis of the form *jest* ‘is’ in the present tense

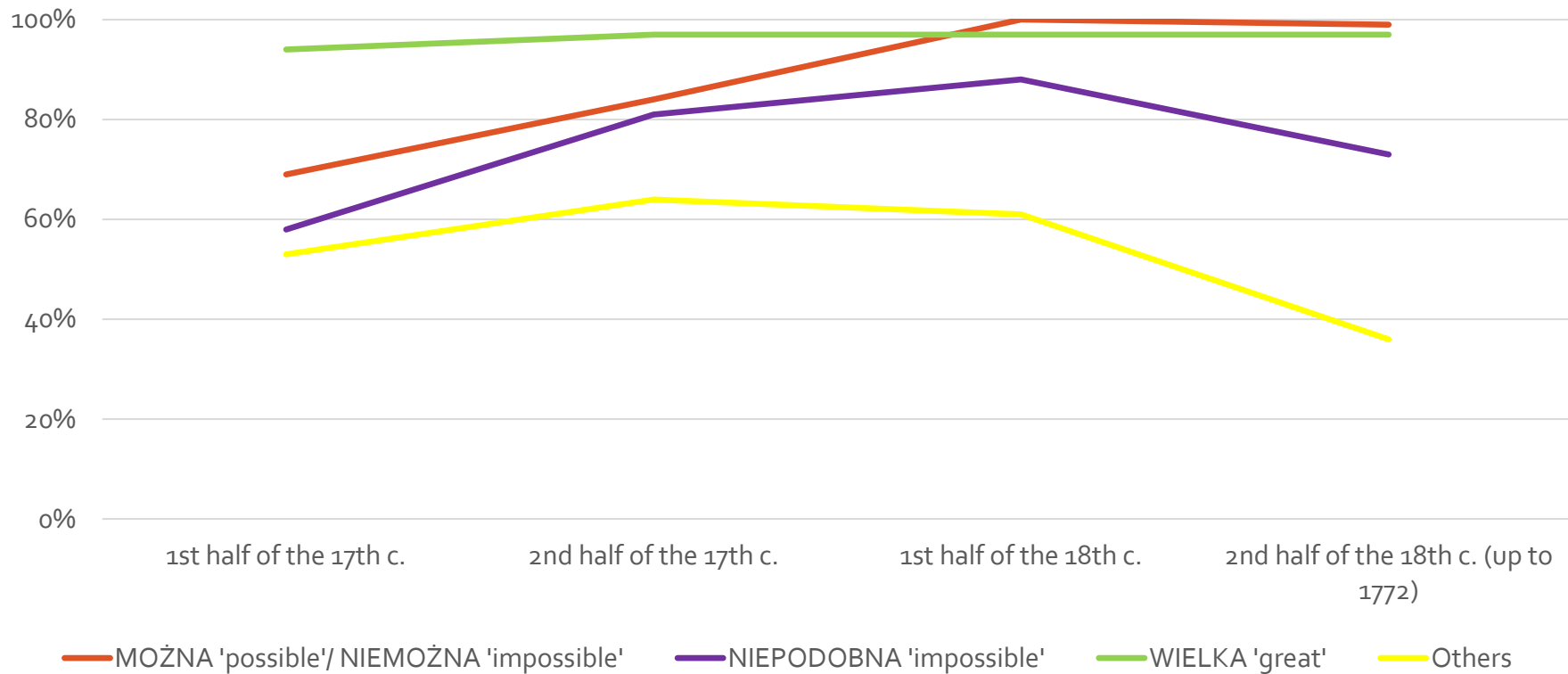
The most popular adjective forms

Adjectives	Number of occurrences	Adjectives	Number of occurrences
NIEPODOBNA 'impossible'	855	ZŁA 'bad'	165
WIELKA 'great'	571	DOBRA 'good'	130
MOŻNA 'possible'	502	POTRZEBNA 'necessary'	125
PEWNA 'certain'	438	MAŁA 'small'	94
NIEMOŻNA 'impossible'	311	CIEŻKA 'hard'	88
SŁUSZNA 'right'	273	NIESŁUSZNA 'wrong'	79
INSA 'another'	254	NIEBEZPIECZNA 'dangerous'	78
DZIWNA 'strange'	230	PIĘKNA 'beautiful'	72
PODOBNA 'possible'	209	POŻYTECZNA 'useful'	71
GODNA 'appropriate'	194	PRZYWOITA 'proper'	62
TRUDNA 'difficult'	172	POSPOLITA 'common'	55

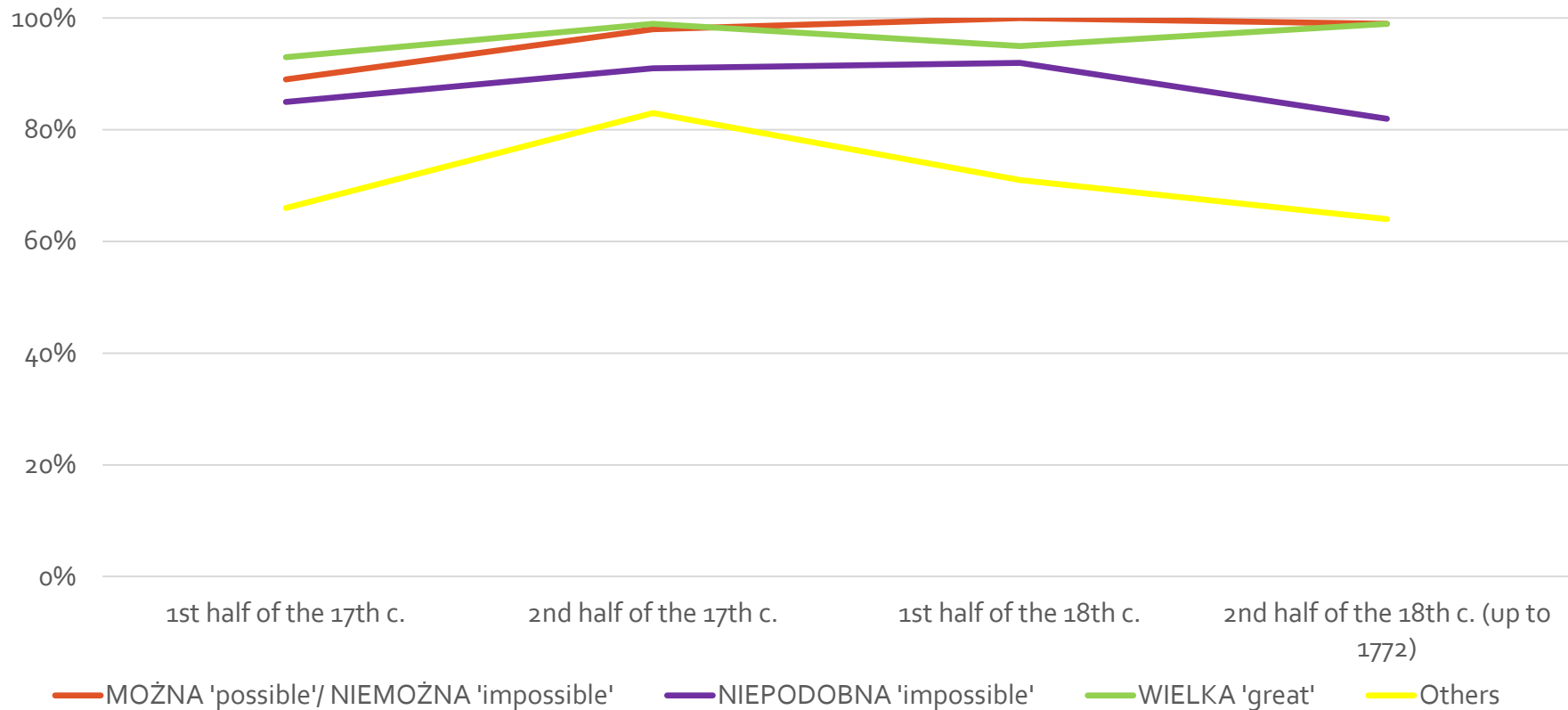
The popularity of predicative constructions with the adjective in the feminine form in the 17th-18th centuries



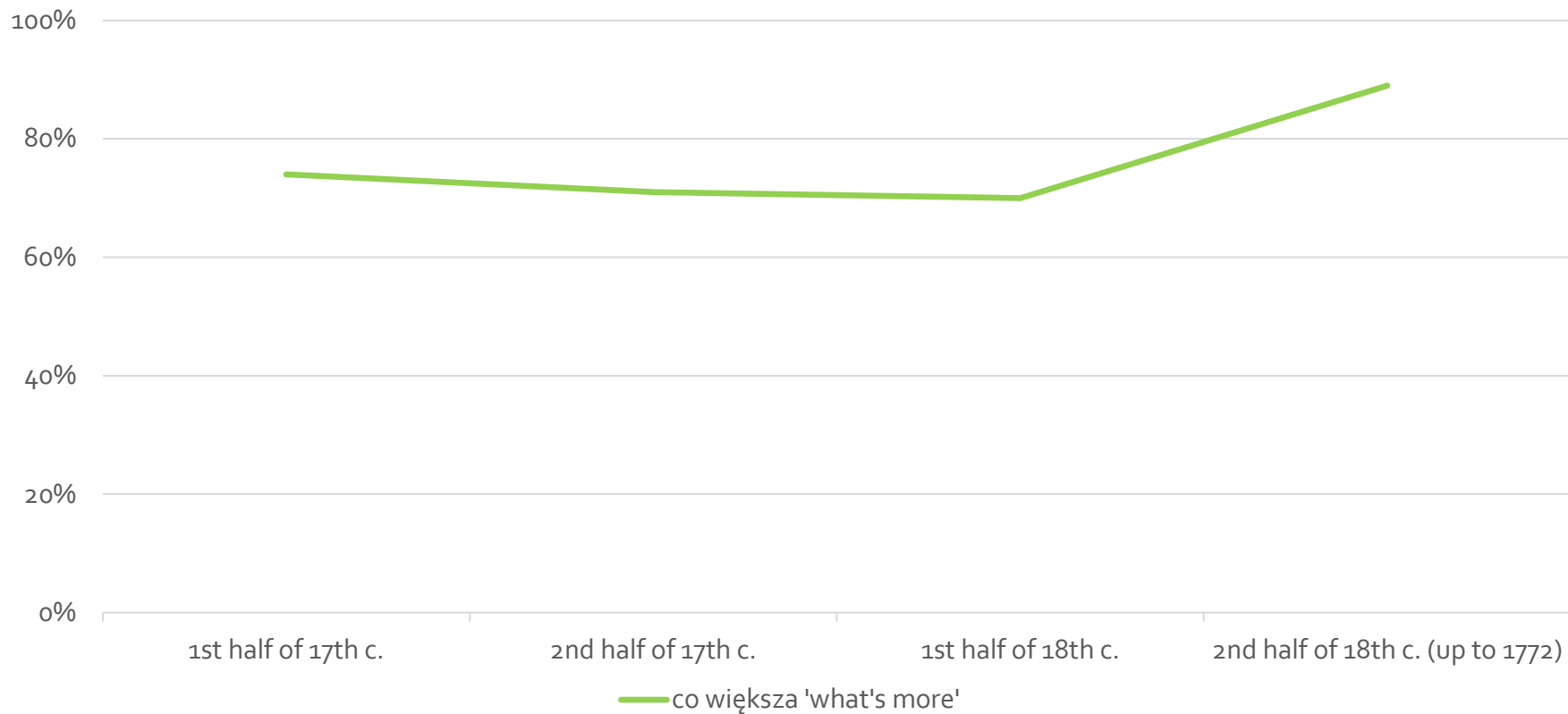
Sole adjective (without the noun *rzecz*) form percentage



Sole adjective (without the verb *jest*) form percentage



Expression *co większa* 'what's more' percentage in all predicative uses of the adjective WIELKI 'great'



Conclusions

- 2nd half of the 17th and 1st half of the 18th century – the greatest intensity of the “verbization” process
- 2nd half of the 18th century – slowing down of the “verbization” process
- the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries – the creation of the predicative MOŻNA is completed
- the predicative NIEPODOBNA in the 2nd half of the 18th century still being at the development stage
- predicative uses of WIELKI in the course of the 17th and 18th centuries stabilize as an expression *co większa* ‘what’s more’

Thank you!