Agreement and Case: Impersonal Sentences in Slavic and Accusative and Dative NPs
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The paper discusses two issues in connection with the feature makeup and feature valuing of functional categories:
(i) the status of impersonal sentences with accusative internal arguments, and
(ii) the status of obliquely marked NPs denoting (potential) causers of events expressed by the impersonal verbs.

Accusative Impersonal Sentences (AIS) in Slavic languages pose a problem for Burzio-style analyses of Case licensing having no overt external argument, cf. (1). Some authors (e.g. Lavine & Freidin (2002), Harves (2006) take the verb in (1a) to lack agreement morphology indicating that T is a (φ-)incomplete head incapable of assigning nominative to a NP. On the other hand, v is considered to be φ-complete (cf. Lavine & Freidin 2002) valuing the unvalued Case feature of the internal argument (= accusative). Crucially, in the mentioned analyses, v does not select an external argument (following Babby 1994).

Apart of a couple of minor shortcomings, the analysis employing T’s alleged defectiveness faces at least three problems:
(i) This analysis cannot account for the control and binding facts with AIS (cf. below);
(ii) This stipulation leads to a proliferation of derivational dead ends (e.g., T being restricted to the specification ‘defective’ with AIS due to v’s 4)-completeness);
(iii) T’s morphology is not taken seriously which, although not sharing φ -features with any of the NPs in the sentence, exhibits markers otherwise capable of spelling out agreement.

Ad (i): AIS in Slavic (with the exception of -no/-to-constructions in Ukrainian) allow for control of the PRO subject in gerund clauses, cf. (2), the latter requiring control by a prominent argument—in most cases the matrix subject, but in any case not by an internal theme-argument (cf. Rappaport 1984 for details concerning Russian). Besides, reflexive AIS with “impersonal subjects” interpreted as [+animate] allow for binding of anaphoric elements, cf. (3a). Interestingly, there are personal counterparts of reflexive AIS which do not allow for binding. Binding and control is also attested for -no/-to-constructions in Polish (cf. Lavine 2005).

In this paper I argue that none of the categories of AIS is defective. In the light of the binding and control data, I assume that either the category v in AIS selects for a semantically bleached nominal expression (lacking φ-features) or v is equipped with features capable of establishing the respective syntactic relations. This also makes v a licensor of unvalued structural Case features of the internal argument, cf. (4) for the AGREE-relation and the valuation of [uCase]. This is why the case facts in (3) go hand in hand with the binding facts. In the personal variant of the sentence (= 3b), in contrast to
(3a), the respective variant of the reflexive marker absorbs the external argument (strips off “external features” of v) altogether (hence no accusative). T of AIS has unvalued φ-features which (in the absence of matching φ-features of a goal) have to be valued as default. The -no/-to-constructions in Polish and nominal impersonal predicates in Russian provide evidence that the feature valuation of T’s φ-features is rather a consequence of a default mechanism than due to agreement with a null D.

Polish and Slovenian allow for dative NPs denoting the (potential) causer of the event expressed by the verb to occur in reflexive AIS, cf. (5). This led several authors to propose either that this NP occupies the “subject position” or that it discloses an existentially closed null pronoun being coindexed with the latter (cf. among others Rivero & Milojeviá Sheppard 2003). Analyses in this line predict that the NP_DAT should be capable of binding reflexive possessive pronouns in the same way as its covert counterpart. (6) shows that neither the personal nor the impersonal variant allows for binding by NP_DAT (unlike quirky subjects in Icelandic). It follows that these NPs are rather introduced in the complement domain of v (some lower applicative head or V itself) and that they cannot establish relations to a position which would enable them to bind anaphoric elements. In this, these NPs фонд sharply contrast with covert elements within the v-projection with AIS without dative NPs.

**Examples**

(1) a. Soldat-a rani-l-o pul-cj,
   soldier.M-SG-ACC wounded.PST.N.SG bullet.F.SG.INST
   ‘A soldier was wounded by a bullet.’ (Russian)

b. T-ę książki-ę {czyt-a/czyta-l-o} się z przyjemnością.
   this bookF:SG:ACC read.PRES:3.SG/read.PRT.N.SG REFL with pleasure.F.SG.INST
   ‘One reads this book with pleasure.’ (Rivero 2001) (Polish)

(2) Mašin-u zanesł-o na povorot-e PRO razvrenuv vopreki šosse.
   ‘At the turn, the car swerved turning against the direction of traffic.’ (Russian)

(3) a. Svoj-e starš-e se ubog-a.
   REFL.POSS:ACC parents.M.PL:ACC REFL obey.PRES:3.SG
   ‘One obeys (has to obey) one’s parents.’ (Slovenian)


(4) a. \([\text{TP} \ldots \text{T} [\text{vP} [\varphi] [\text{DP}_{\text{intern}}]]] \]
   \([\text{NON-AGREE} \uparrow] \]
   \([\text{AGREE} \uparrow] \]

b. \([\text{TP} \ldots \text{T} [\text{vP} [\varphi] [\text{DP}_{\text{intern}}]]] \]
   \([\text{default } \varphi] \]

(5) Danes dopoldne se mi je jedlo jagode
   (Slovenian)
   today morning REFL me.DAT AUX3.SG eat.PRT.N.SG strawberries.F:PL:ACC
   ‘This morning, I felt like eating strawberries.’ (Rivero & Milojeviá Sheppard 2003)
(6) a. Janez-u i se jejo *svoj-i / OKnjegov-i j cmok-i.
   'Janez feels like eating his dumplings.'  (Slovenian)

b. Janez-u i se jé *svoj-e / OKnjegov-e j cmok-e.
   'Janez feels like eating his dumplings.'

References


