

## Against the unaccusative structure of Polish psych predicates with accusative and dative Experiencers<sup>1</sup>

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Cross-linguistically, stative psychological predicates with an accusative or dative Experiencer are taken to have an unaccusative structure, with the Experiencer generated in the VP-internal position, c-commanding the Stimulus (Belletti and Rizzi 1988, Landau 2010). Not only is the structural position of accusative and dative Experiencers considered to be uniform, but also their syntactic category. According to Landau (2010), accusative and dative Experiencers are oblique, viz. they represent PPs with an overt or covert P head.

The aim of the paper is to examine the structural position, as well as the syntactic category, of accusative and dative Experiencers in Polish. In particular, an attempt is made to check whether accusative and dative Experiencers, found with stative psych predicates in Polish, are associated with an unaccusative structure, and whether they are oblique.

First of all, the binding properties of accusative and dative Experiencers in Polish are examined. It is noted that neither accusative nor dative Experiencers co-occurring with verbal psych predicates can bind the anaphor contained within the Stimulus, as in (1) and (2) below:

- (1) \*Marka<sub>1</sub> martwią swoje<sub>1</sub> długi.  
Mark-acc worry self's debts-nom  
'His debts worry Mark.'
- (2) \*Markowi<sub>1</sub> podobają się swoje<sub>1</sub> obrazy.  
Mark-dat appeal-to refl self's pictures-nom  
'His pictures appeal to Mark.'

The ungrammaticality of (1) and (2) above follows from the Anaphor Agreement Effect (AAE) of Rizzi (1990), which specifies that anaphors cannot appear in positions construed with agreement. In Polish, nominative case marked nominals determine agreement, and therefore the anaphor contained within the nominative Stimulus is blocked in (1) and (2) by the AAE.

Nonetheless, the anaphor marked for case different from the nominative may be bound by the dative Experiencer. This can be observed with non-verbal psych predicates, such as *wstyd* 'shame', *strach* 'fear', *żal* 'pity', etc., and is illustrated in (3).

- (3) Markowi<sub>1</sub> jest żal siebie<sub>1</sub> /swojej<sub>1</sub> młodości.  
Mark-dat is pity himself-gen /self's<sub>1</sub> youth-gen  
'Mark feels pity for himself/for his youth.'

Accusative Experiencers, however, can never bind anaphors (contra Tajsner 2008), as confirmed by the ungrammaticality of (4) below:

- (4) \*Marka<sub>1</sub> już mdli od swoich<sub>1</sub> kłamstw.  
Mark-acc already nauseates from self's lies  
'Mark is already sick of his lies.'

The contrast in the binding properties of accusative and dative Experiencers, shown in (3) and (4), testifies to their different structural position. It is argued that dative Experiencers can bind subject-oriented anaphors (cf. (3)), if the AAE is controlled for, and therefore they are merged in the Spec, vP position (following Nikolaeva's 2014 proposal for Russian Experiencers). Accusative Experiencers, in turn, can never bind subject-oriented anaphors (cf. (4)), and are hence merged VP-internally.

Since dative Experiencers are located in Spec, vP, the psych predicates they co-occur with do not have an unaccusative structure (contra Miechowicz-Mathiasen and Scheffler

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2008). Accusative Experiencers, in spite of being VP-internal, are taken not to constitute a part of unaccusative structure, either. This is because, the accusative case of the Experiencer is structural, not inherent, as it turns into the genitive under negation (cf. Biały 2005), cf. (4):

- (4) a. Fizyka fascynuje Marię.  
 physics-nom fascinates Mary-acc  
 ‘Physics fascinates Mary.’  
 b. Fizyka nie fascynuje \*Marię /Marii.  
 physics-nom not fascinates \*Mary-acc Mary-gen  
 ‘Physics doesn’t fascinate Mary.’

It is proposed that accusative Experiencers found with stative psych predicates in Polish are associated with the complex ergative structure, as in Bennis (2004). In the complex ergative structure, the v values the accusative of the Experiencer, even though it lacks an external argument, which proves that Burzio’s (1986) Generalisation does not operate in Polish.

It is also demonstrated that neither accusative nor dative Experiencers in Polish can give rise to the verbal (eventive) passive. However, the reason for their resistance to the verbal passive is not the same. Accusative Experiencers in Polish are immune to verbal passives, because the complex ergative structure they form lacks an external argument. Dative Experiencers, in turn, do not give rise to the verbal passive, because they are considered to be oblique, viz. they represent complements of a null P, which values the dative case on the Experiencer. The inherent dative case of the Experiencer cannot be held responsible for the fact that dative Experiencers do not passivise (contra Biały 2005). This is so because some inherently case marked objects can passivise in Polish (cf. Zabrocki 1981). Treating dative Experiencers as PPs can account for their resistance to passivisation. Since PPs are phases (Abels 2003), the dative Experiencer in the complement domain of the phase head cannot be probed from outside the phase.

To conclude, Polish psych predicates with the two types of Experiencer are not associated with an unaccusative structure, but have either a complex ergative structure with the VP-internal accusative Experiencer or a dyadic structure with a dative Experiencer in Spec, vP. Not only do accusative and dative Experiencers in Polish occupy different structural positions, but they also represent different syntactic categories, viz. a D(N)P and a PP, respectively.

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