

**On Burzio's Generalization and unexpected accusatives.
Evidence from Polish experiencer constructions**

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The problem: despite the conceptual and empirical problems associated with correlating assignment of accusative case [ACC] with external theta-role assignment by a verb captured under Burzio's Generalization [BG], BG is maintained in mainstream minimalism. In Chomsky (2008), the assignment of the external theta role is dissociated from the verb itself and the external argument [EA] is introduced by $v/*v$ /Voice, but assignment of ACC (by a functional head via AGREE) is still correlated with external theta-role assignment, as expected if BG is a syntactic universal (a view criticized a. o. in Marantz 1991/2000 and Baker 2015, who have argued for a configurational dependent case theory, on which a case can be a dependent case such that it is assigned at Spell Out (or realized at PF) only when there is another non-lexical case-marked DP in the domain). In dependent case theory, (structural) ACC is thus dependent on nominative case [NOM] in nominative-accusative languages. Adopting Chomsky's functional head model of case, Lavine (2010) and Lavine & Babby (2019) argue that in Russian Transitive Impersonals (1), ACC may be assigned in the absence of Voice, the head dedicated to introducing an agent. Absent (agentive) Voice, the head assigning ACC is v_{CAUSE} , whose EA, a non-volitional causer, is realized as an oblique VP-internal argument. The verbal roots that license v_{CAUSE} are all lexically causative ([+c]). Absent [+c] on a verbal root, v_{CAUSE} is not licensed and ACC is not assigned (absent agentive Voice). Thus, while ACC is independent of v /Voice (and of the presence of NOM in the structure), it is still correlated with theta-role assignment in Lavine & Babby (LB) in languages in which v /Voice and v_{CAUSE} work independently, as in Russian and Ukrainian as well as in Icelandic (Fate Accusatives), in which the causer may be abstract (or suppressed (2)), but where its presence is syntactically identified (see LB for arguments).

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| (1) | Ledyšku | rastopilo | solncem. | <i>Russian</i> |
| | icycle-ACC | melted-imp | sun-INSTR | |
| | 'The icicle was melted by the sun/The icicle melted due to the sun.' | | | (LB, (6b)) |
| (2) | Bátinn | rak | á land. | <i>Icelandic</i> |
| | boat.the-ACC | drove to | land. | |
| | 'The boat drifted ashore.' | | | (LB, (16a)) |

The proposal: building on LB, this paper provides further evidence from Polish (stative) experiencer constructions against correlating the assignment/valuation of ACC with the assignment of external theta role and for the dependence of ACC on NOM in the same domain. The data analyzed here cover Polish stative NOM-ACC object experiencer structures (3) and the reflexively marked impersonal structures with a dative (4), analyzed as the Involuntary State Construction in Rivero (2003 *et seq.*).

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|-----|--|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------|---------------|---------------|
| (3) | Kłopoty | finansowe | martwią | Marię. | <i>Polish</i> | |
| | problems-PL.NOM | financial _A -PL.NOM | worry-PL.Imperf | Mary-ACC | | |
| | 'Financial problems worry Mary.' | | | | | |
| (4) | Tę | książkę | czytało | mi | się dobrze. | <i>Polish</i> |
| | this-ACC | book-ACC | read-3.SG.N.Imperf | me-DAT | SE well. | |
| | 'Reading this book was pleasant for me/I enjoyed reading this book.' | | | | | |

In this paper, we provide evidence that the structure in (3) is not a double object unaccusative, but a complex ergative lacking a causing subevent, with the (ACC-marked) experiencer c -commanding the (NOM-marked) stimulus. On the assumption that ACC is structural here, as diagnosed by the shift to genitive under negation, the experiencer object is assigned the Voice's feature of structural case, which is spelled out with ACC morphology at PF. The stimulus values the features of T and is realized with NOM morphology at PF. Structures like (3) thus show that ACC is independent of EA in the structure. Structures like (4) do not license agentive adverbials and purpose clauses (see also Krzek 2013). Following recent literature that dissociates the head Voice introducing the external argument from the verb(alizing head v), we take this to indicate that the construction in (4) does not involve a syntactically active agent (contra Rivero 2003), whether projected to an argument position or existentially bound off at the Voice-level (Spathas *et al.* 2015; Schäfer 2017). As the agent that is not projected to an argument position is the hallmark of middle voice (Kaufman 2007; Schäfer 2008), we analyze structures like (4) as (impersonal) middles, taking a referential/episodic meaning to be consistent with middle semantics (see also Iwata 1995, Beavers & Udayana Under revision). We argue here that the dative is an argument of a syntactic head introducing an experience event, hence an experiencer. The syntactic (applicative) head that introduces the experience event expresses a relation between the experiencer and the event denoted by vP , which is an activity, i.e. a predicate with stages in the sense of Rothstein (2004),

and it has the semantics of a subjective evaluative/mental attitude predicate. The middle adverbial spells out the content of the experiencer's evaluation. Adopting an approach on which lexical entries are not structured (Borer 2005; Schäfer 2008, *i.a.*), any agent entailments, i.e. entailments of animacy and control (over the activity) that structures like (4) give rise to, are the lexical entailments of the verb, which encodes manner and entails the initiator/controller over the manner of action it encodes. To account for accusative case in structures like (4) in contrast to canonical (personal) middles like (5), which also do not have a syntactically represented agent, as diagnosed by inability to license agentive adverbials and purposives, we argue here that unlike in BG-languages, in which Voice has a feature of structural case only if its specifier is filled with an element with case, in Polish, Voice can have the feature of case in the absence of an element with a case feature in its specifier. This is what accounts for ACC being licensed in (4), where *się* is in the specifier of the non-thematic Voice. To account for (5), we take *się* to realize the non-thematic Voice head rather than be in specifier position, and as Voice is not a nominal category, *się* cannot (and does not) have a feature of case. Thus, the verb's internal argument values T's ϕ -features and is NOM.

- (5) Ta książka czyta się dobrze. Polish
 this-SG.F.NOM book-SG.F.NOM reads-3SG.F SE well
 'This book reads with pleasure.'

On these assumptions, (4) is grammatical in Polish, unlike (6) in German, which we analyze as a BG-language bundling EA and accusative Case on Voice (contra Schäfer 2008). We take the fact that *się* cannot realize (lexical) accusative case (assigned by P) in Polish (7) as evidence that *się* in (4) and (5) is caseless. Furthermore, we take default dative case in impersonal sentences in Polish (8) as evidence that *się* does not have the feature of nominative case in Polish impersonals (see also Marelj 2004).

- (6) *Ich glaube, dass es sich einen Roman leicht liest. German
 I believe that it SE a-ACC novel-ACC easily reads-3.SG.N.Imperf
 'I believe that reading a novel is easy.' (Lekakou and Pitteroff 2018)
- (7) On liczy na *się/siebie. 'He relies on himself.'
 he-NOM counts on SE/SELF-ACC Polish
- (8) *Tu nie tańczy się samemu/*sam. 'One does not dance by oneself here.'
 here not dances-3.SG.N SE SELF-DAT/SELF-NOM Polish

To the extent that *się* is not nominative in (4), such structures provide evidence against the dependence of ACC on NOM and against the case dependence approach of Alexiadou *et al.* (2015), on which ACC can only be realized on an argument that does not value the ϕ -features of Voice. Thus, whether the property of ACC assignment/valuation is correlated with the property of assignment of an external theta-role (and/or correlates with NOM in the domain) depends on the set and featural make-up of functional heads in a given language, as expected on minimalist assumptions. BG-languages (English, German) are languages in which the Voice head has ϕ -features and a case feature only in the presence of an element with a case feature in its specifier. In languages like Polish, which do not bundle assignment of EA and case on Voice, the element in the specifier of Voice need not have a case feature for Voice to also have a case feature (4), and further, Voice can have a case feature also in the absence of a filled specifier (3), deriving cross-linguistic variation in case licensing and distribution.

Funding information

This research was funded by grant 2014/15/B/H2/00588 from National Science Centre, Poland.

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