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IN SEARCH OF A NEW ONTOLOGICAL CATEGORY
IN LANGUAGE: EVENT SUB-KINDS

A b s t r a c t. Our analyses of reflexive impersonals with dative logical subjects and of dispositional middles proper in Polish result in the hypothesis that the inventory of event categories represented in linguistic theory should be broadened to include event sub-kinds, alongside event kinds and event tokens. The morpho-syntax and syntax of clauses containing the two types of structures mentioned above seem to suggest that one more ontological category is needed to account for the distribution of manner modifiers vs. spatio-temporal modifiers, logical subjects (or agentive participants) in the non-canonical case forms, as well as to explain the distribution of agent-oriented adverbs in the relevant sentences in Polish. Reflexive impersonal clauses with dative logical subjects and the ones containing dispositional middles proper differ significantly from the clauses addressing event kinds and event tokens. Consequently, they require a different treatment in linguistic theory.

Key words: reflexive impersonal; dispositional middle; event kind; event sub-kind; event token.

INTRODUCTION

The distinction between individual level and stage level predicates has been discussed extensively in linguistic literature ever since Milsark (1977) and Carlson (1979) proposed the distinction. The labels used for the distinction vary, but the gist of the differentiation remains the same. The original terms used by Milsark (1977) are state and property predicates, while Carlson's (1979) better known labels are stage level and individual level predicates. The original definitions of the described linguistic categories are quoted below:

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[…] states are conditions in which an entity finds itself and which are subject to change without there being an essential alternation of the entity …[Properties] are descriptions which name some trait possessed by the entity and which is assumed to be more or less permanent or at least to be such that some significant change in the character of the entity will result if the description is altered[…]. (Milsark, 1977, p. 212)

[The individual level vs. stage level] distinction is correlated with the sort of entity the predicate meaningfully applies to. If the predicate speaks of general characteristics, or dispositions, we represent it as applying to a set of objects. If something more fleeting is intended, somehow more temporary, and in some sense less intrinsic to the nature of a given individual, the predicate is represented as denoting a set of stages. This distinction is intended to correspond to the basically atemporal nature of individuals as opposed to their time-bound stages […]. (Carlson, 1979, p. 57)

Presenting complex theoretical issues in the nutshell, one may claim that individual level predicates code what Gehrke (2011, 2015) calls kinds of events, while stage level predicates code event tokens. Taking such conceptions as points of departure, a number of sources resort to the distinction between individual level and stage level predications (and consequently to the distinction in conceptualisation between kinds of events and event tokens) — see e.g. Condoravdi (1989), McConnell-Ginet (1994), Keyser and Roeper (1984), Fagan (1988), Lekakou (2006), Krifka et al. (1995) – to account for a variety of language data. Among the data described in terms of stage level and individual level predicates one should mention properties of dispositional middles in various languages (see e.g. Keyser and Roeper 1984; Fagan 1988; Ackema and Schoorlemer 2006), the use of the perfective aspect in Slavic languages (see e.g. Filip 2008 and 2013), or properties of *Be*-passive clauses with adjectival participles and *Become*-passive clauses in German (Gehrke 2011 and 2015; Gehrke and McNally 2011). Notwithstanding the terminological distinctions, all these sources prove that linguistic expressions may name either types of events or particular events while the structures naming these conceptualisations of events have distinct properties. In this text we will address the distinctions among coding strategies of various event categories as conceptualized in language, and we will develop our analysis in juxtaposition to the developments proposed by Gehrke (2011 and 2015) . We will claim that language situates the category of event sub-kinds between event kinds and event tokens. The material substantiating the existence of such a category consists in refle-

xive impersonals[1] with dative logical subjects and dispositional middles proper in Polish.

1. EXPOSITION OF REFLEXIVE IMPERSONALS WITH DATIVE LOGICAL SUBJECTS IN POLISH

Reflexive impersonals with dative logical subjects in the Polish language have attracted much attention since they show interesting morpho-syntactic properties. They have been analysed, among others, by Bondaruk and Szymanek (2007), Krzek (2012), Cichosz (2014), Rivero et al. (2010), Rivero and Arregui (2012), and Holvoet and Linde Usiekniewicz (2015). They are structures containing verbs in the invariable third person singular form, neuter in the past tense, while with no specific gender signalled in the present tense, as in this tense the gender distinction is obliterated. Laskowski (1984, 146–147) calls these forms default verbal forms for impersonals in Polish. The verb in the reflexive impersonal clause does not show agreement with the dative argument, which plays the role of the logical subject in the sentence, nor does it agree with any other argument in the sentence (when such arguments are present). The sentences in (1) and (2) below show that verbal forms are not altered along with changing logical subjects:

(1)   *Trudniej*   *jeździ*   *się*   *kierowcom*   *po Dębicy*.
       more-difficult   drive.3rdS.PRS   REFL   driver.DAT.PL   in Dębica
       'It is more difficult for drivers to drive in Dębica.'

(2)   *Trudniej*   *jeździ*   *mi*   *się*   *rano*.
       more-difficult   drive.3rdS.PRS   I.DAT.SG   REFL   in-the-morning
       'It is more difficult for me to drive in the morning.'

Apart from the characteristic verbal form, the reflexive impersonal clause under consideration has the non-canonical subject. Canonical subjects in Polish bear the nominative case (see e.g. Nagórko 1997/2008). Reflexive impersonals do not have such subjects, but they contain arguments in the dative case showing other subject-like properties (see e.g. Keenan 1976 for

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[1] Impersonals are understood here in the broad sense proposed by Malchukov and Siewierska (2011), as well as by Malchukov and Ogawa (2011). They see impersonal constructions as all clauses lacking canonical subjects, i.e. the arguments which are agentive definite NPs in the position (and case, if relevant) characteristic of/reserved for external arguments in a given language.

the full inventory of these properties) i.e., dative arguments perform the role of instigators of the events coded by the impersonals. Thus they may be considered logical subjects, although in section 2 we shall argue that these instigators are not conceptualised as typical agents.[2]

The specific morpho-syntax of impersonal clauses, as sketched above, is paired with equally interesting syntax. Namely, reflexive impersonal clauses with dative logical subjects have to contain the adverbial modification of manner. Without such modification they are ungrammatical (see 3, 4 below):

(3)   * *Jeździ*   *się*   *kierowcom*   *po Dębicy.*
       drive.3rdS.PRS   REFL   driver.DAT.PL   in Dębica
       'Drivers drive in Dębica.'

(4)   * *Jeździ*   *się*   *kierowcom*   *rano.*
       drive.3rdS.PRS   REFL   driver.DAT.PL   in-the-morning
       'Drivers drive in the morning.'

At the same time, spatio-temporal adverbial modification cannot appear alone in impersonal clauses, as the examples in (3) and (4) above illustrate.

Explanations for the data with similar, but not identical limitations as those obtaining for Polish reflexive impersonals, have been offered in linguistic literature. The analyses which may bear on this situation and which may be of immediate interest to us are given by Gehrke (2011, 2015) for German clauses with adjectival participles: *Be*-passives (*Sein*-passives) and *Become*-passives (*Werden*-passives). Gehrke observes that spatio-temporal adverbials are ungrammatical in German adjectival *Be*-passives (see 5 below), in contradistinctions to manner adverbials (see 6 below).[3]

(5)   **Der Computer ist vor drei Tagen repariert.*
       the computer is before three days repaired
       'The computer was repaired three days ago.'

                                                          (Gehrke 2015, 6)

(6)   *Das Haar war schlampig gekämmt.*
       the hair was sloppily combed
       'the hair was combed sloppily.'

                                                          (Gehrke 2011, 242)

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[2] Agentivity is seen as another feature of canonical subjects by Keenan (1976).

[3] For the purposes of this text we simplify Gehrke's (2011 and 2015) analyses significantly, but only some points included in her much more extensive account are immediately relevant here.

Gehrke (2011 and 2015) ascribes this type of differentiation in sentence modification to the fact that *Be*-passives address event kinds and as such they are not directly anchored in particular spatio-temporal circumstances. The specificity of *Be*-passives can be contrasted with the distinct behavior of *Become*-passives — which take spatio-temporal modifiers without similar limitations. Gehrke assumes that *Become*-passives code event tokens, and not kinds of events. Event tokens, i.e. individual events, are situated in particular spatio-temporal circumstances. Consequently, time and space adverbials are grammatical in *Become*-passives in German.

The situation concerning Polish impersonal reflexives does not mimic the constraints on German adjectival participles. German *Be*-passives are grammatical without any modification whatsoever:

(7)　*Die Reifen sind aufgepumped.*
　　　the tires are up-pumped
　　　'The tires are inflated.'

　　　　　　　　　　(Gehrke, 2011, p. 241)

Although Polish reflexive impersonals with dative arguments contain manner adverbial modifiers, the presence of these modifiers is not an option (as it is in German), but a must. Sentences without manner modifiers are ungrammatical:

(8)　**Kierowcom　　się　　jeździ.*
　　　driver.DAT.PL　　REFL drive.3rdS.PRES
　　　'Drivers drive.'

At the same time the appearance of manner modifiers in other sentence structures in Polish is by no means a *sine qua non* requirement:

(9)　*Kierowcy jeżdżą.*
　　　driver.NOM.PL drive.3rdP.PRES
　　　'Drivers drive.'

Moreover, even structures which are very similar to the reflexives described in this paper, i.e. reflexive impersonals with arbitrary subjects (instead of dative logical subjects), do not have to take manner adverbs:

(10)　*Jeździ　　　się.*
　　　drive.3rdS.PRES　REFL
　　　'One can drive.'

For such sentences like (10) above to be grammatical, however, modal interpretation must be imposed upon the clause, as the translation into English clarifies. Modality, according to some sources, is connected with the presence of the generic operator[4] in the sentence—see e.g. Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet (2000). Modal semantics is not obligatory in reflexive impersonals with dative logical subjects (cf. however Rivero et al. 2010). Consequently, we will not attribute the obligatoriness of adverbial manner modifiers in such clauses to the very presence of the generic operator, especially since other clauses which presumably have such an operator in their logical representation do not require the presence of manner modifiers (see 9, 10 above).[5] Thus, we still lack an explanation for the obligatory adverbial manner modifiers in impersonal clauses. An explanation cannot be provided by Gehrke's (2011 and 2015) analysis either, as in her data manner adverbials are not obligatory. Their presence is taken to be symptomatic of coding kinds of events, but kinds of event may be coded without such modifiers. This is not so with the Polish data; adverbial manner modifiers have to be spelled out in reflexive impersonal clauses of the relevant type.

At this point, note what manner adverbials contribute to the meaning of impersonal sentences: the adverbials delimit sub-kinds of events unfolding in a specific manner. For instance in examples (1) and (2) only more difficult occurrences of driving events are targeted, as opposed to the kind of events which is specified as driving in itself.

Event kinds in Gehrke's material differ from the Polish data in another respect as well: *Be*-passives in German cannot be freely accompanied by spatio-temporal modifiers irrespective of manner modification. Polish data exemplifying reflexive constructions diverge in this respect from German *Be*-passives—when manner modification is present, spatio-temporal modifiers are admissible (see 1, 2 above). We have to draw the conclusion that Gehrke's distinction between kinds of events and event tokens does not allow us to reflect all the categories of conceptualisations of events as coded in language. In our opinion we need also the category of sub-kinds. Our data prompt further that sub-kinds, in contradistinction to kinds, can be anchored in spatio-temporal circumstances, as evidenced by spatio-temporal modifiers

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[4] For the concept of the generic operator see e.g. Farkas and Sugioka (1983), Heim (1982), Carlson and Pelletier (1995).

[5] In the examples in (9) and (10) the use of the imperfective tense (with habitual interpretation) seems to prompt the working of this operator.

featured by reflexive impersonals. In other words, events unfolding in a specific manner can be situated in space and time dimensions as well.

We have to add here that Polish reflexive impersonals with dative logical subjects do not represent event tokens either. Event tokens do not have to be delimited by manner modification, as they are individual occurrences of events. Although they may be situated with respect to time and space, they do not have to take on any specific manner of realisation. Recall that Polish reflexive impersonals with dative logical subjects cannot be modified by adverbials of time and space alone. Consequently, they are not realisations of event tokens.

Thus our hypothesis that language codes, apart from kinds of events and event tokens, also sub-kinds of events as a linguistically relevant conceptualised category seems to be fully corroborated by reflexive impersonal clauses.

2. DISPOSITIONAL MIDDLES PROPER[6]
AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CATEGORY OF SUB-KINDS
OF EVENTS IN POLISH.

Dispositional middles proper show the characteristics that point to event sub-kinds, just like reflexive impersonals with dative subjects discussed in the previous section. Dispositional middles are such constructions in which the formal subject of a clause is affected in some way, while the causer of this change is not necessarily overtly stated, but it is always logically present. These structures are rare in Polish, but the *National Corpus of the Polish Language*[7] contains some relevant examples.

Dispositional middles appear in other languages as well and they have been extensively analysed as they are notorious for 'funny' morpho-syntactic and syntactic properties. They are characterised in depth by Ackema and Schoorlemmer (2006), but interesting analyses can also be found in Keyser and Roeper (1984), Fellbaum (1986), Pitz (1988), Condoravdi (1989), Fagan (1992), Ackema and Schoolemmer (1995), Lekakou (2006). By and large, dispositional middles, apart from their specific semantics (affected subject, logical instigating participant) are characterized by the presence of adver-

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[6] Reflexively marked middles in Polish seem to represent two types of structures: dispositional middles proper and stage level middles — see Malicka-Kleparska 2017 for Polish and Fried 2006 for similar data in Czech.

[7] The corpus is entered in the references as Przepiórkowski et al. 2012.

bials of manner, such as e.g. *easily* or *well* (alternately they may contain also some modal element, negation or emphatic stress — subject to language specific variations, see Ackema and Schoorlemmer, 2006 for details). Below we illustrate dispositional middles with two English examples:[8]

(11)   *Oatcake fanzine sold well at 30p.*
(12)   *I bruise easily.*[9]

The presence of adverbial manner modification in dispositional clauses is generally attributed in the literature of the subject to the fact that the manner specification must provide the scope for the generic operator, as discussed in Ackema and Schoorlemmer (2006).

Polish dispositional middles proper share some features with dispositional middles in other Indo-European languages, English including. They possess some properties of generic statements, i.e. they bear the imperfective aspect (realizing, among other meanings, habitual meaning in Polish — see Willim 2006, 200–201, 247; see also Wierzbicka 1967, 2236; Comrie 1976, 112–1140; Fisiak et al. 1978, 107–118; Smith 1997, 231-241; Filip 1999, 185-187). They may contain modals or be negated, but first and foremost, they are characterised by the adverbial modification of manner:

(13)   *Filety   kroją   się   dużo łatwiej.*
       fillet-NOM.PL.M cut-PRES.IMP.3rd.PL REFL   more easier
       'Fillets cut much easier.'

(14)   *Świerk   kroi   się   równo,*
       spruce-NOM.SG.M   cut-PRES.IMP.3rd.SG REFL   evenly
       szczypka   po   szczypce.
       piece-NOM.SG.F   after   piece-LOC.SG.F
       'Spruce cuts evenly, piece after piece.'

15.   *Auto* […][10]   *prowadzi   się   łatwo jak … rower.*
       car-NOM.SG.N   drive-PRES.IMP.3rd.SG REFL   easily as   bicycle-NOM.SG.M
       'The car drives easily, like a bicycle.'

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[8] Dispositional middles are more numerous in English than in Polish, though still not particularly frequent — see Malicka-Kleparska 2017.

[9] In this sentence the logical instigating participant is the same as the surface subject. Thus the sentence has reflexive interpretation.

[10] Reviewer noticed that in this case the form *auto* may represent both the nominative and the accusative case. A less controversial example has been suggested: *Francuskie samochody prowadzą się specyficznie.* 'French cars drive in a specific way.' In this sentence the argument can only be in the nominative case.

(16) *W relacjach   z   szefami   szczególnie łatwo*
in relation-LOC.PL.F   with   boss-INS.PL.M   especially   easily
powielają   się   zachowania […] *z   dzieciństwa.*
copy-PRES.IMP.3rd.PL REFL   behavior-NOM.PL.N from   childhood-GEN.SG.N
'In relations with bosses it is especially easy to copy your behavior from your childhood.'

(17) *Kandydatom   pomysły   wyczerpują   się   na*
candidate-DAT.PL   idea-NOM.PL exhaust-PRES.IMP.3rd.PL   REFL   at
etapie   projektowania   plakatów.
stage-LOC.SG   design-GEN.SG   poster-GEN.PL
'Candidates exhaust their ideas at the stage of designing posters.'

Dispositional middles in Polish, like reflexive impersonals, have to be accompanied with the manner adverbial (see 13–15) or some more extensive context specifying a property of this type of events (see 16) which are addressed by dispositional clauses. Spatio-temporal modifications appear sporadically, but one has to remember that the overall set of attested dispositional middles is not extensive. However, in example (17) we can see an instance of temporal modification.

Dispositional middles also resemble reflexive impersonals in this respect that the logical subject may be realized as a dative phrase, and not as a nominative subject, as illustrated in (17) above.

Possibly the property of having non-canonical logical subjects that reflexive impersonals and dispositional middles share in Polish has something to do with them realising event sub-kinds. At this point we may only hypothesise that event sub-kinds are characterised by taking formally non-canonical subjects, while event tokens tend to have canonical subjects, i.e. referential, definite, in the form characteristic of subjects in a given language. Then event kinds have non-specific participants or sets of participants (see Carlson 1977) as subject arguments.

Another feature that reflexive impersonals with dative logical subjects (18) and dispositional middles proper (19) have in common is their inability to appear with manner modification which consists of agent-oriented adverbs, such as *ostrożnie* 'carefully', *celowo* 'on purpose', etc.:

(18) **Kierowcom   jeździ   się   celowo.*
driver.DAT.PL   drive.3rdS.PRES REFL   on-purpose
'Drivers drive.

(19) *Kandydatom   pomysły   wyczerpują   się   ostrożnie
     candidate-DAT.PL idea-NOM.PL exhaust-PRES.IMP.3rd.PL REFL carefully
     na etapie   projektowania   plakatów.
     at   stage-LOC.SG design-GEN.SG   poster-GEN.PL

'Candidates exhaust their ideas at the stage of designing posters.'[11]

This limitation on the occurrence of manner modification in the clauses under discussion is coherent with the non-canonical subjects of these clauses. Evidently, formally 'odd' subjects, i.e. these in the dative case, lose on the reading of agentivity as well. Consequently, typical agent-oriented adverbials are banned in these clauses.

Our comparison of reflexive impersonals containing dative logical subjects and dispositional middles proper in Polish shows that they share some interesting properties, such as their predilection for manner modification, the presence of participants in the events described in the form of dative NPs, as well as the ban on agent-oriented adverbs. We believe that these analogies are not haphazard and that they are symptomatic of certain categorisation similarities that the two structures reflect. In our opinion the impersonals and middles analysed here spell out the concept of event sub-kinds, as opposed to kinds and tokens coded by a variety of other structures in language.

3. CONCLUSION

In this text we have presented two classes of data in Polish sharing some interesting properties. Reflexive impersonals with dative logical subjects and dispositional middles proper favor (or require) manner modification to be specified in their clauses, and they take non-canonical subjects, with the ban on agent-oriented manner modification resulting from the latter property. In order to offer an explanation for these regularities we have put forward the hypothesis that certain clause types code event sub-kinds (alongside event kinds and event tokens spelled out by other clauses in language). Event sub-kinds have to be defined by a manner in which they are conducted. As sub-kinds, they may be located in specific spatio-temporal circumstances. They

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[11] In fact we have found an exception to this regularity in the *National Corpus of Polish*:
Ten   sposób   płacenia   też   przyjmował   się   ostrożnie.
this-NOM.SG way-NOM.SG paying-GEN.SG also   accept-PST.3rd.SG REFL   carefully
'This way of paying was also accepted with caution.'

also possess logical subjects that are less than canonical, which is signaled in Polish by their dative case and not fully agentive status, in turn supported by the ungrammaticality of agent-oriented adverbs in the clauses under analysis. Such subjects are situated between definite, specific, agentive canonical subjects of the clauses spelling out event tokens and indefinite subjects or subjects referring to sets of objects characteristic of event kinds.

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POSZUKIWANIA NOWEJ ONTOLOGICZNEJ KATEGORII
W JĘZYKU: PODTYPY ZDARZEŃ

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Przeprowadzone analizy nieosobowych konstrukcji zwrotnych z logicznym podmiotem w celowniku, a także dyspozycyjnych konstrukcji medialnych właściwych językowi polskiemu pozwalają nam sformułować hipotezę, że inwentarz konceptualizacji zdarzeń w teorii języka powinien być poszerzony o kategorię podtypów zdarzeń, obok typów zdarzeń i zdarzeń pojedynczych. Morfo-syntaksa i syntaksa zdań z powyższymi konstrukcjami wydają się sugerować, że taka dodatkowa kategoria jest niezbędna, aby wyjaśnić zjawiska występowania modyfikacji adwerbialnych sposobu w odniesieniu do modyfikacji czasu i miejsca, a także występowania podmiotu logicznego czy też wykonawcy czynności w niecharakterystycznej dla języka polskiego formie przypadka. Podobnie wyjaśnienia wymagają ograniczenia dotyczącego występowania w takich zdaniach przysłówków nakierowanych na wykonawcę czynności. Wydaje się, że zaproponowanie dodatkowej kategorii podtypu wydarzenia może pomóc wyjaśnić genezę takiej charakterystycznej (morfo)syntaksy zdań.

Słowa kluczowe: nieosobowe struktury zwrotne; medialne struktury dyspozycyjne właściwe; typ wydarzenia; podtyp wydarzenia; wydarzenie jednostkowe.