

СТАТЬИ

AXEL HOLVOET

Lithuanian Language Institute, Vilnius

**The middle voice in Slavonic and Baltic:
Some problems of taxonomy**

In the literature on the voice systems of the Slavonic and Baltic languages, we observe some negative consequences of the divorce between synchronic and diachronic linguistics in the age of structuralism. It is a matter of common knowledge that the functions of the Indo-European middle voice have been taken over, in both language groups, by reflexive forms. Rare, however, are those who accept the conclusion that the Slavonic and Baltic reflexive might still be, functionally, a middle. The fact that the Slavonic reflexives are, typologically, best described as an instance of the middle voice is occasionally pointed out by linguists; as an example we might cite Schenker [1988, 373]. Descriptions of another type predominate, however.

In the older grammars of the Slavonic and Baltic languages, the system of voice is often described as a ternary system, with the reflexive voice as a successor to the middle voice. Of course, this mode of description is not based on considerations of a historical-comparative nature; it is rooted in the grammatical tradition. The model of the classical languages accommodates not only the binary system represented by Latin (active and medio-passive), but also the ternary system represented by Greek (active, middle and passive). For an overview of this three-voice system in the grammars of various languages cf. Geniušienė [1987, 21–22].

In more recent times, the approach to reflexive verb forms in Slavonic seems to have been affected by the practice of Russian lexicographers, who lemmatize reflexive verbs as separate lexical items. Grammars of the Soviet period describe reflexive forms as being related to the active forms by a derivational process, the reflexive marker *-ся* being ascribed a func-

tion basically similar to that of the verbal prefixes; verbs as *начитаться* are described as containing a discontinuous morpheme *на...-ся*; an exception is made for those cases where *-ся* is used as a marker of the passive, alongside the analytic passives based on passive participles [ПГ 1960, 420]. In the case of Russian grammar, lexicographical practice seems to have been more important than the influence of structuralism. Even the most outstanding Russian structuralist, Roman Jakobson, did not propose banishing reflexive forms from the system of voice oppositions, though in every other respect his description is true to the structuralist principles (two binary oppositions – ‘active : intransitive’ and ‘reflexive : passive’ instead of one ternary opposition, and the reflexive form as marked with respect to the active form, cf. [Jakobson 1984, 4]).

Owing to the influence of Russian scholarship, this derivational view of the reflexive forms has spread to the grammar of at least several other, also non-Slavonic, languages. This can be observed in the grammars of the Baltic languages. In Latvian grammars, a system with three voices, viz. active, passive and reflexive, maintained itself up to the fifties; it is reflected in the Latvian edition of Endzelin’s grammar [Endzelīns 1951], but the Academy Grammar [MLLVG 1959, 554–564] duly conforms to the tradition of Soviet (i.e., Russian) grammar and distinguishes reflexive and non-reflexive verbs. The same can be observed in Lithuanian grammar. In his 1901 grammar, Jablonskis [1957, 98] uses the term ‘reflexive verbs’ for the sake of convenience, but explicitly refers to the reflexive forms as representing the ‘reflexive voice’ of the verb (*grįštamoji rūšis*) [Jablonskis 1957, 122–123]. The formulations are less clear in his 1922 grammar, but still the links between reflexivity and voice are not severed [Jablonskis 1957, 298–299]. His view is reflected in the Lithuanian dictionary [LKŽ 1941–2002], where reflexive forms are not separately lemmatized and defined. The grammars, however, expound a view that is at variance with lexicographical practice, for from the first major Soviet Lithuanian grammar onwards [LKG 1971, 46–48, 186–189] reflexive forms are said to belong to separate reflexive verbs, the reflexive marker *-si* being described as a derivational marker (though the latter is explicitly stated only in the more recent one-volume grammar, cf. [DLKG 1994, 406–410]).

A similar evolution, though probably not influenced, in this case, by Russian grammar, can be observed in Polish grammar. Whereas older grammars such as that of Szober [1962] still have the ‘reflexive voice’, the new Polish grammar (I am quoting the second edition of the volume on morphology, cf. [GWJP 1998, 191–194]) banishes the reflexive forms from inflectional morphology and relegate them partly to derivational morphology and syntax, and partly to limbo. The new *Morphology* distinguishes between

(i) *się* as a reflexive pronoun, i. e., as marker of coreferentiality, (ii) *się* in 'impersonal' constructions of the type *We wsi buduje się nową szkołę* 'They are building a new school in the village' and constructions denoting involuntary states, such as *Wygodnie mi się siedzi na tym krześle*, (iii) *się* as a derivational marker in middle voice constructions like *Olówek się złamał* and (iv) *się* as an empty morph in *reflexiva tantum* such as *bać się*.

As the new Polish grammar is more explicit about the reasons for rejecting the traditional view of the 'reflexive voice' than the above-mentioned Latvian and Lithuanian Grammars, which simply copy the model of Russian grammar, it seems useful to comment on some aspects of the conception advanced in [GWJP 1984; 1998].

The elimination of the reflexive voice in the 1984 edition of this grammar has already been criticized for several reasons by Schenker [1992]. On the one hand, Schenker points out a few terminological and notional inconsistencies which occur in the 1984 edition and subsist in the new edition. An important point is Schenker's criticism of the notion that the evidence of *reflexiva tantum* such as *bać się* should be discarded in dealing with the function of reflexive verbs, as there is no opposition between a reflexive and a non-reflexive form in this case. Schenker is certainly right here, and we might add that such instances of defectiveness may be revealing in trying to determine the meaning of an inflectional category. We are reminded here of Benveniste's insistence on the crucial importance of deponents in determining the function of the Indo-European middle voice [Benveniste 1966, 171].

The exposition offered in [GWJP 1998, 191–194] is a convenient point of departure for a discussion of some points of syntactic interpretation and taxonomy raised by the Slavonic and Baltic reflexive forms.

Taxonomically, an interesting question is what kind of linguistic unit *się* actually is. The authors are explicit about case (i), where *się* is a reflexive pronoun occupying some syntactic position in the sentence, (iii), where *się* is a derivational marker, and (iv), where *się* is nothing at all. What *się* is in (ii), they tactfully pass over in silence. The view was once fashionable that in *Buduje się szkołę* the pronoun *się* occupies the position of a nominative subject and should therefore be described as a distinct indefinite or generic pronoun (comparable to French *on*, German *man*) having only a nominative form [cf. Saloni 1976, 106]. The grammar does not uphold this view (at least not explicitly), but puts nothing in its place either.

Now however one interprets the 'construction' *Buduje się szkołę*, it is clear that *Wygodnie mi się siedzi* does not represent the same construction. The syntactic differences between the constructions *mieszka się* and *mieszka mi się* were pointed out by Brajerski [1979]. The construction

buduje się is exclusively finite. It can be compared to the personal form *oni budują* 'they are building' but for the fact that the subject implicit in *buduje się* is generic. There is no difference with regard to diathesis between this construction and the basic active construction *oni budują*, and both can have an accusative object like *szkołę*. The construction *Wygodnie mi się siedzi* is not exclusively finite: one can say, for instance, *Wygodnie mi się siedzi, ale mogło by mi się siedzieć jeszcze wygodniej*. In such a sentence, *się* belongs to the infinitive *siedzieć*, as in the sentence *To się mogło zdarzać* 'That could happen' when compared to *To się zdarza*. From the construction *Buduje się szkołę* one could also, in principle, derive a corresponding sentence with the same modal verb, viz. (?) *Tu się może budować szkołę*, but such a sentence would hardly be acceptable, as *może się* 'one may' is replaced with *można*: instead of **Tu się nie może wchodzić z lodami* one says *Tu nie można wchodzić z lodami*. In other words, in the construction *Mogło by mi się siedzieć jeszcze wygodniej* we have an instance of the 'construction' *siedzieć się* rather than of the 'construction' *mogło się* 'one could', which is not used, though theoretically conceivable.

What is to be done with this inconvenient 'construction' *siedzieć się*? Within the framework proposed by the authors of the 1984 and 1998 *Morphology*, there is no answer to this question. After having exhausted all logical possibilities, viz. (i) inflectional marker (explicitly condemned on p. 194, where the so-called reflexive voice is declared non-existent), (ii) derivational marker (this can be inferred *ex silentio*, as this type is not mentioned among those containing the derivational marker *się*), (iii) a pronoun occupying a syntactic (subject or object) position in the clause and (iv) nothing at all, one is compelled to conclude that, in this case, *się* is less than nothing at all as one is not allowed to pose the question what kind of linguistic unit it could be.

In fact, among the modes of description the authors of the *Morphology* consider theoretically acceptable (as mentioned, they do not include the treatment of *się* as an inflectional marker), the view of *siedzieć się* as a lexical unit comparable to such middle voice verbs as *złamać się* (with *się* as a derivational marker) is the least objectionable. A construction like *wchodzi się* 'one enters' can hardly be viewed as an instance of a 'reflexive verb' **wchodzić się*, because it is an exclusively finite form with an implicit generic or indefinite subject, which makes it problematic to define a nonfinite form like **wchodzić się*. There is no such problem with *siedzieć się*, and in this case non-finite forms do actually occur. This is because in *(wygodnie) się siedzi* there is no implicit indefinite (specific or generic) subject-agent. The process or state that is characterized as being realized in a particularly successful and effortless way without active involvement

of the subject is represented here as a spontaneous process. The actual subject is demoted and appears as an experiencer dative (*wygodnie mi się siedzi*). Unlike what we observe in cases like *ołówek się złamał*, there is no object undergoing the spontaneous process described by *siedzieć się*, and therefore this verb is subjectless. The relationship is about the same as between *Pali się* and *Dom się pali*¹.

The problem with shifting forms like *siedzi (mi) się* from inflectional to derivational morphology is that this approach compels us to treat *siedzieć się* as a separate lexical item. The standard practice in Polish lexicography is to list reflexive verbs as subentries, with separate meaning definitions. If we look at the three-volume Polish dictionary (ed. Szymczak), then we find that the existence of a reflexive verb *mieszkać się* is recognized whereas that of *mieszkać* is not. Two explanations can be offered for this: either *mieszka się* is interpreted as a syntactic construction (with *się* taking the place of some noun phrase), or it is viewed as an inflectional form of *mieszkać*, which need not be separately lemmatized. The latter explanation should be rejected straight away, for if *mieszka się* is an inflectional form (a form of the 'reflexive voice' or 'middle voice'), then why should this explanation not extend to *mieszka się*? If no inflectional account is available, then we are faced with the necessity of postulating such verbs as *mieszkać się*, *rozmawiać się*, *pracować się* etc. This may strike many speakers of Polish, whether linguists or not, as absurd, but it certainly does not appear absurd to Russian lexicographers, who are more consistent in this respect. They list the reflexive forms used in the above-mentioned facilitative constructions as separate lexical items and use the infinitive to lemmatize them. It is customary to use the infinitive in defining the meaning of a verb as well, but in this case it is clearly impossible to follow this usage, so that the meaning is defined by describing the situation in which these reflexive forms are used. The four-volume Russian dictionary (ed. Evgen'eva) has such entries as *работаться* [...]. разг. О наличии желанья работать, о том, как идет у кого-л. работа. [...]; *спаться* [...] О наличии желанья или возможности спать [...]. Nothing of the kind can be found in Polish dictionaries. The only verb of this type to appear at least in certain Polish dictionaries is *chcieć się*, which is given in the *Słownik wileński* as a subentry under the heading *chcieć*.

In Latvian lexicography, the treatment of reflexives is exactly the same as in Russian lexicography, which is not astonishing in view of the similarities in the formation and use of reflexives in both languages. Reflexives are listed as separate lexical items. For standard Latvian, this approach is basically unproblematic. Problems arise in dialect lexicography, as can be seen from Antoņina Reķēna's dictionary of the High Latvian dialect of Kalupe

[Reķēna 1998]. As can be seen from the constructions cited in the dictionary, the use of reflexives in this dialect differs considerably from their use in the standard language; it seems to be much closer to that of the Slavonic (Polish and Russian) reflexives. So, for instance, the verb *braukt* 'drive' (Polish *jechać*), which has no reflexive forms in Low Latvian and in the standard language based on it, is used in an impersonal reflexive construction corresponding to Polish *jedzie się, jeździ się* 'one drives':

- (1) *pastūov'eig'i brāucās ār tū zyrgu*
'This horse was constantly used for driving out.'

However, Latvian lexicographical practice requires every reflexive form to be lemmatized as a separate reflexive verb, and the dictionary duly lists a reflexive verb *braukties*, the meaning of which is defined with the aid of a passive construction *tikt brauktam* (which would more or less correspond to Polish **być jechanym, jeżdżonym*). This construction is actually deviant, as the intransitive verb *braukt* can yield only an impersonal passive *tiek braukts* 'one drives', which is exclusively finite and cannot be used in the infinitive. The infinitive *tikt brauktam* is therefore artificially created to match the infinitive *braukties*, equally artificially created to yield a lemmatic form.

The lack of verbs like *jechać się* in Polish dictionaries seems to be determined by two reasons. First, there is an evident lack of mutual understanding between grammarians and lexicographers. Grammarians banish reflexive forms like *rozmawiało się* from inflectional morphology, so that they must be shifted either to syntax, or to the lexicon. As the syntactic solution is not available (a fact deplorably overlooked by grammarians), only the lexicon is left, but as the lexicographers have not been apprised of the new grammatical interpretation, the new lexical items are in limbo. But there is also another reason. Apart from the problems of lemmatization, verbs like *rozmawiać się, jechać się* etc. are not optimal candidates for units of lexical description because of their obvious semantic derivative-ness. In this respect, they are quite specific among reflexive verbs.

Generally speaking, most Slavonic and Baltic reflexives are more easy to describe than the corresponding non-reflexives because they are semantically more primitive. The meaning of the non-reflexive *wywrócić* 'cause to turn over' is more complex than that of the middle-voice reflexive *wywrócić się* because it consists of the meaning of *wywrócić się* plus the additional element of causativity. This is particularly evident in the case of verbs describing mental states, such as 'fear', 'get angry' etc., because these typically describe inner states not necessarily presupposing external agency. The frequency of *media tantum* and *reflexiva tantum* in this do-

main is a well-known fact (cf. Slavonic *bojati se*, Lithuanian *džiaugtis* etc.). For Slavonic, Gołąb [1968] argues that a non-reflexive like *prze-straszyc* could be derived from the reflexive *prze-straszyc sie* by a process of dereflexivization. The direction of the derivational relationship (as based on a semantic relationship) is nicely reflected in the Baltic languages, which often show an overtly marked causative verb alongside a *reflexivum tantum*. Lithuanian, for instance, has *išgąsdinti* 'frighten' (a causative in *-din-*) alongside the reflexive *išsigąsti*, and Latvian similarly has the causative *iztrūcināt* (causative suffix *-ina-*) alongside the reflexive *iztrūkties* in the same meaning. In these Baltic examples, a middle voice verb with a reflexive marker is thus opposed to a causative verb with an overt causative marker. There is no difference in formal markedness in these cases. In Slavonic, such a difference exists, as the reflexive is formally marked with respect to the semantically derivative causative verb.

The pattern of markedness need not bother lexicographers, but it is certainly of interest to grammarians. It is not astonishing to see that many authors writing on reflexives tend to view reflexivization as an operation affecting basic, unmarked non-reflexive structures. This tendency is evident, for instance, in Geniušienė's work [1987] on reflexives, where a verb like Russian *сидеться* is described as an 'autocausative'. This awkward notion, leading to circular paths of derivation (the intransitive verb is derived from the causative verb which, in turn, presupposes the corresponding intransitive predicate) is based on the erroneous assumption that the verbs traditionally described as reflexive (because of a marker derived from the reflexive pronoun) should be described as primarily reflexive in the sense of describing a situation in which the object happens to be coreferential with the subject. This assumption is obviously wrong because most reflexive situations cannot be described by reflexive verbs, cf. (2) and (3) (from Russian and Lithuanian respectively):

- (2) Он считается великим писателем.
 (3) Jis matosi veidrodyje.

Neither is it possible to use (2) in the sense of 'he considers himself to be a great writer', nor could we use (3) in the meaning of 'he sees himself in the mirror'. This can be achieved only by using the reflexive pronouns *себя*, Lith. *save*:

- (4) Он считает себя великим писателем.
 (5) Jis mato save veidrodyje.

Of course, combinations with Russ. *себя*, Lith. *save* cannot be taken into account when describing the function of the reflexive verbs. In the

literature on reflexives, it is customary to base the semantic description of reflexives on such cases as Russ. *бриться, мыться, купаться*. Lith. *skustis, praustis, maudytis* etc. This is wrong because these are prototypical middle voice verbs rather than prototypical reflexive verbs. As Kemmer [1993, 53–66] points out, the prototypical reflexive situation is one in which agent and patient are normally distinct, but may coincide in particular cases (*He saw Mary He saw himself in the mirror*). The ‘body action middles’, to which such verbs as *wash, shave, bathe* etc. belong, reflect a situation in which agent and patient are prototypically undistinguishable, though less frequently they may be distinct (*He shaved: The barber shaved him*). In English, such ‘grooming verbs’ as *wash, shave* are typically treated as non-reflexive (though [Kemmer 1993, 53] notes such marked constructions as *Tiger was washing himself*, referring to a cat). In Slavonic, it is possible to refer to such situations by means of reflexive constructions proper, but it is not customary. In Polish one can say *Jan goli siebie* ‘John shaves himself’, but this requires contrastive stress on the reflexive pronoun. In this case, the reflexive interpretation (two participants, who are stated to coincide in a particular instance) is marked, as opposed to the middle voice interpretation reflected by *golić się* (only one participant is involved). The construction *Jan widzi siebie w lustrze* ‘John sees himself in the mirror’, on the other hand, requires no contrastive stress, probably because the only possible interpretation is reflexive here: a middle voice construction is not available at all. Once the reflexive constructions Pol. *widzieć siebie*, Russ. *видеть себя*, Lith. *matyti save*, Latv. *redzēt sevi* etc. have been set apart from the middle voice constructions Pol. *golić się*, Russ. *бриться*², Lith. *skustis*, Latv. *skūties* etc., we have sufficient grounds for rejecting the assumption that reflexivity *sensu stricto* (co-referentiality of potentially distinct agent and patient) is the prototypical or basic meaning of the Slavonic and Baltic verbs commonly called reflexive. It is therefore clear that there is no reason whatsoever for explaining the meaning of middle voice reflexive verbs like *wywrócić się, golić się* etc. on the basis of the meaning of the corresponding non-reflexive verbs.

Now what is specific about reflexives of the type discussed above (i.e., those of the type *работаться*, recognized in Russian lexicography, or *jechać się*, not recognized in Polish lexicography) is that it would obviously be absurd to derive the meaning of the non-reflexive forms from that of the reflexive forms. This case is particularly striking because it is hard even to conceptualize the meaning of *jechać się* independently of that of *jechać*.

It should also be noted that there are cases where the reflexive form describes a process that can be conceptualized independently of that described by the non-reflexive, but it does not seem reasonable to do so.

These are forms of the type which Geniušienė (rather inappropriately) calls 'quasi-passive'. It is well attested in Polish and Latvian³. In these languages, the involuntary character of an action usually requiring conscious human agency is often emphasized by using a reflexive verb:

- (6) *Sięgnęła po serwetkę, ale wyciągnęły się dwie.* (J. Anderman)
 'She reached out for a napkin, but drew out two.'
 (7) *Man bija nopircies saldais šņabis.* (G. Janovskis)
 'By accident I had bought a sweet liqueur.'

The processes referred to by the reflexives *wyciągnąć się*, *nopirkties* cannot be conceived without human agency. If, in the case of prototypical middle-voice reflexives, the meaning of the non-reflexive verb is composed of that of the reflexive plus the element of external agency, in the cases under discussion the relationship is different. It is easiest to describe the meaning of the reflexive as being composed of that of the non-reflexive verb plus the additional element of 'involuntary action'. Of course, this human agency must be ignored in order for the middle-voice verb to be used. The pretence is created that the liqueur bought itself, without the buyer intervening. Nevertheless, the act of buying cannot be conceived of without a buyer. Whereas a verb like *wywrócić się* is the expression of a self-contained predicate which does not involve the notion of human agency, the meaning of the verb *nopirkties* requires the notion of human agency in order to be described as a self-contained predicate. The direction of semantic derivation is thus the reverse of what we observe in the case of most reflexives.

The case of *rozmawiać się*, *jechać się* etc. does not fundamentally differ from that of the type *wyciągnąć się*, Latv. *nopirkties*. These facilitative middle voice verbs denote human activities depicted as spontaneous processes. Here, as well as in the preceding case, the activity cannot be conceived of without human agency, but this agency is ignored. The meaning of *rozmawiać się* is based on that of *rozmawiać*, as that of *wyciągnąć się* is based on that of *wyciągnąć*.

How should the mutual relationship between reflexives and non-reflexives be reflected in the dictionaries? In principle, it would be possible to describe the meaning of the pair *wywrócić* : *wywrócić się* by defining the meaning of the middle voice verb *wywrócić się*, which is semantically more primitive, and taking it as a basis for describing the meaning of the causative *wywrócić się*. But this solution would be awkward because of the formal markedness of the reflexive verb. The treatment of aspect pairs would be a good parallel here: the obvious procedure is to describe the meaning of *napisać* on the basis of *pisać*, and that of *zapisywać* on the

basis of *zapisać*, although the verb taken to be basic is imperfective in one case and perfective in the other. In the same way, it seems intuitively obvious to base the lexical description of *wywrócić się* on that of *wywrócić*.

In the case of such reflexive verbs as *wyciągnąć się*, *rozmawia się* this mode of description is obvious not only for formal reasons, but also for semantic reasons. Here, the reflexive forms are not even mentioned, probably on the tacit assumption that these forms are actually, in a way, inflectional forms which need no separate lexical description. If this is true for *wyciągnąć się*, then it could also be true for *wywrócić się*, but every lexicographer probably feels intuitively that the meaning of *wywrócić się* is more elementary than that of *wywrócić*, so that reflexives of this type are described separately, even though the meaning of the reflexive is completely predictable from that of the non-reflexive and vice versa.

The facts adduced here point to a twofold direction of derivation for reflexives non-reflexives: *przestraszyć się* > *przestraszyć* on the one hand and *wyciągnąć* > *wyciągnąć się*, *rozmawiać* > *rozmawiać się* on the other. A situation of this type is not characteristic of derivation, but it is quite normal in an inflectional relationship. We may compare the number opposition, where the relationship between singular and plural may be more or less symmetrical but we also have instances where the singular is the usual form and the plural is reserved for special uses (i.e. mass nouns such as *water*, *wine*...), and instances where the plural is the common form and the singular is usually defined by using formulations of the type 'either of a pair of...', 'each of the pair of...' (*shoes*, *lungs*...).

All this being taken into consideration, it seems that the idea of doing away with the 'reflexive voice' was not so good an idea after all. The view of the relationship between *wywrócić* and *wywrócić się* as derivational rather than inflectional is in itself objectionable because it requires a direction of semantic derivation that does not correspond to reality. But once one accepts the derivational view, one is virtually obliged to extend it to such 'reflexive verbs' with which no one likes to operate, e.g., *rozmawiać się*, *siedzieć się*, for, as argued above, it is not so easy at all to explain them away as 'constructions'. If one is not prepared to accept the consequences of the derivational view, then the best solution is to return to the inflectional view, viz., the 'reflexive voice'. Of course, it should be realized that this term is, at best, a conventional label. Functionally, the reflexive voice is a middle voice.

What, then, is to be put in the place of the binary voice system 'active vs. passive' advocated in most grammars of the modern Slavonic and Baltic languages? Should we return to a ternary voice system? Though every

answer to this question is necessarily based on certain a priori considerations concerning the functions we should expect voice oppositions to perform in the language system, the purely taxonomical aspect should not be neglected. In this respect, a question of considerable interest is to establish whether the two oppositions ('active vs. passive' and 'non-reflexive vs. reflexive') intersect or not. If they do not intersect, then a ternary system 'active : reflexive : passive' is taxonomically unproblematic. If they do, then the obvious conclusion is that the two oppositions function independently of each other. The obvious thing to do in such a situation is to deny either the reflexive forms or the passive forms membership in the category of voice. Both solutions are available for finite forms, because it is possible to regard the periphrastic passive forms with 'be' and other auxiliaries (Russian *быть*, Polish *być* and *zostać*, etc.) as syntactic constructions rather than analytic verb forms. This is not possible for participles, because the opposition of active and passive participles (*читающий* : *читаемый*, *czytający* : *czytany*) clearly belong to verbal inflection. Now in Slavonic there appears to be no intersection between the two above-mentioned oppositions. Either reflexive participles are opposed to passive ones (*умывшийся* : *умытый*), or the opposition is neutralized, the passive participle taking over the function of the reflexive one. We find an instance of the latter in Polish *uśmiechnięty* 'smiling', a formally passive participle derived from the intransitive middle voice verb *uśmiechnąć się* (which is, of course, incapable of occurring in passive constructions) with loss of the reflexive marker. In this case, the relationship is of the same kind as in the case of *pęknięć pęknięty*, which shows that the derivation of 'passive' participles from intransitive inchoative verbs is associated with the middle voice rather than with reflexivity.

It goes without saying that such constructions as Polish *obawiano się* 'some people feared' are only apparent counterexamples. The form in *-no/-to* derives historically from a passive participle, and the construction based on it from an impersonal passive, but nowadays it undoubtedly behaves like an active form, and is rightly described as such in Polish grammar.

The case of Lithuanian is obviously more problematic. Lithuanian has reflexive forms of passive participles, though they are subject to restrictions:

- (8) *Knyga buvo pasiskolinta iš mokytojo.*
'The book was borrowed from the teacher.'
- (9) *Tikėtasi svarbių pranešimų.*
'Important news was expected.'

Constructions like (9) resemble the Polish constructions of the type *obawiano się*, except that the transition from a passive to an impersonal construction has not yet taken place: an accusative object is not retained (as in Polish) but is normally promoted to subject. (8) is a normal passive construction based on the reflexive *pasiskolinti* 'borrow', opposed by its reflexive marker to *paskolinti* 'lend'. Here, the reflexive marker *-si-* is infixal, so that it can be added without restrictions to all participial forms regardless of case, number and gender (the suffixed reflexive marker can be added only to neuter passive participles). It can thus be seen that, in Lithuanian, the categories of passive and reflexive intersect, at least for participles. This was noted by Mel'čuk [1993]. As Mel'čuk, in agreement with the definitions of voice oppositions adopted by the Leningrad school, regards both reflexivization (in the sense of a form marking the identity of two participants, agent and patient) and passive as instances of voice, he proposes that this category should be described as comprising two types of oppositions (which could be labelled VOICE₁ and VOICE₂).

What is questionable in Mel'čuk's account is the identification of the Lithuanian reflexive (actually middle voice) forms with reflexivity as defined by the Leningrad school. This, however, does not affect the purely taxonomical aspect of his proposal. From this point of view, it seems perfectly reasonable to operate with a voice system comprising two kinds of oppositions: 'active vs. middle', and 'active vs. passive'. An alternative solution would involve shifting passive forms from morphology to syntax. This solution seems perfectly acceptable as well in view of the low degree of grammaticalization of the Slavonic and Baltic 'analytic' passive. This would leave us with an inflectional opposition 'active : middle' in such languages as Polish, Latvian and Lithuanian, and 'active : mediopassive' in Russian.

We could also conceive of a third solution, taxonomically less rigorous, viz. a ternary system despite the fact that middle and passive intersect. The intersecting part belongs to the periphery of both categories anyway. Let us consider the consequences of this solution for Lithuanian⁴. When we take a typical agentive predicate such as *atidaryti* 'open', then we have a ternary opposition involving (i) an active construction with agent and patient, (ii) a middle voice construction in which normally no agent is expressed because the process is viewed as spontaneous, and (iii) a passive construction which, unlike the middle voice construction, suggests conscious human agency, and in which an agent can sometimes be explicitly expressed.

- (10) *Jonas atidarė langą.*
'John opened the window.'

- (11) *Langas atsidarė.*
 'The window opened.'
 (12) *Langas buvo (Jono) atidarytas.*
 'The window was opened (by John).'

In this case, there is a clear-cut opposition and no intersection: there can be no construction combining the features of (11) and (12). The instances of intersection involve some relatively marginal uses of both the middle and the passive. On the one hand, *atsidaryti* cannot only denote a spontaneous process, but also an action some agent performs in his own interest. In this meaning, *atsidaryti* is transitive, and we can have *atsidaryti langą* 'to open a window for one's own convenience'. It can correspondingly occur in a normal agented passive:

- (13) *Matyt, šis langas buvo jau kažkieno atidarytas.*
 'Someone has evidently opened this window (for his own convenience).'

If we leave the indirect reflexives illustrated in (13) out of consideration, then the use of reflexives in passive constructions is restricted to impersonal passives. These occupy, in a way, an intermediary position between prototypical passives (with object-to-subject promotion) and prototypical 'impersonals' of the type illustrated by Polish *zbudowano szkołę* (without object-to-subject promotion). Unlike the Polish impersonal preterite in *-no/-to*, the Lithuanian impersonal passive cannot have accusative objects, as these are automatically promoted to objects to yield a personal passive. All other object cases, however, including the genitive obligatorily replacing all accusative objects if the verb is negated, are retained. Reflexive verbs can be used in such constructions without any restrictions:

- (14) *Tikėtasi naujų rinkimų.*
 'New elections were expected.'

The construction involved here is still, strictly speaking, passive rather than impersonal. The transition from one type to another would be sealed by the introduction of non-promoted accusative objects. As long as this final stage has not been reached, constructions like (14) can still unambiguously be identified as 'impersonal passives' rather than 'impersonals', but, if this final obstacle were lifted and, say, non-promoted accusative objects were introduced alongside subjects promoted from accusative objects, then this would automatically change the syntactic interpretation of (14), which it would then be possible to interpret as a true 'impersonal' rather than an 'impersonal passive'. In this sense we can say that the Lithuanian passive constructions with oblique objects are a transitional type between passives and impersonals.

Thus, if one does not insist on a rigorous taxonomy, in which instances of intersection of reflexive (middle) and passive are excluded, then we could accept a ternary voice opposition, with active, middle and passive, even for Lithuanian. All three categories have clearly distinct prototypes, though at their peripheries there are cases of overlap. My aim is not, however, to advocate such a solution. One can equally well operate with two voice oppositions, VOICE₁ and VOICE₂, as proposed by Mel'čuk. This solution, however, is not quite as elegant as it might appear at first sight, because actually it is only the active voice that fully participates in both types of oppositions ('active : middle' and 'active : passive'), whereas the intersection of middle and passive yields only a very small number of constructions, with a limited number of verbs. Which of these two models one prefers will depend on whether one adopts a cognitive or a structural mode of description.

For Latvian and the modern Slavonic languages, where passive and middle do not intersect, the ternary model of description is still less problematic than for Lithuanian. It seems therefore legitimate to pose the question whether the ternary voice system, discarded in more recent grammars of the Slavonic and Baltic languages, is not, in many respects, better than what has been put in its place.

NOTES

¹ When an object is involved, it may appear either as a subject or as an object. e.g. *Ta książka dobrze się czyta* and *Dobrze mi się czyta tę książkę*. The difference apparently depends on how much the inherent properties of the object are responsible for the ease with which the process referred to takes place. The co-occurrence of both constructions shows that we can distinguish two stages of syntactic demotion: (i) demotion of the agent (*Czytam tę książkę* > *Ta książka dobrze mi się czyta*), and (ii) demotion of the patient (*Ta książka dobrze mi się czyta* > *Tę książkę dobrze mi się czyta*). Stage (ii) reflects a situation in which a human action is depicted as a spontaneous process requiring neither agent nor patient. In this sense, the subjectless facilitative (*dobrze*) *się czytać* provides us with a model for the description of (*dobrze*) *się siedzieć*.

² In Russian, the line of distinction between these two types is sometimes blurred by the occurrence of unmotivated reflexive constructions like *чувствовать себя, вести себя*, for which one would expect middle voice verbs in *-ся*. These are only apparent exceptions, because these verbs are loan translations from French *se sentir, se conduire*. It is striking that in translating such French reflexive verbs Russian did not use its own verbs in *-ся*, traditionally also called 'reflexive'.

³ In Lithuanian, this construction has a more restricted scope. It can be derived only from accomplishment verbs, and the effect of the construction is then to emphasize that though the action is carried out consciously, the result reached is in some way unexpected and unforeseen by the agent. Geniušienė [1987, 114–115]

cites Lithuanian *Per šventes duona susivalgė* 'During the holidays the bread got eaten up', where the action described is, of course, deliberate but the amount of bread consumed over a certain period turns out to be greater than foreseen. For details cf. Holvoet [2001, 177–181].

⁴ In Latvian, reflexive passive forms are attested as well, but they do not exist in the modern standard language. Their use in the dialects is comparable to their use in Lithuanian. Cf. Endzelin [1951, 949].

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E-mail: axel@ktl.mii.lt

АКСЕЛЬ ХОЛЬФУТ

Средний залог в славянских и балтийских языках: некоторые проблемы таксономии

В статье рассматриваются таксономические вопросы, связанные с описанием возвратных форм славянского и балтийского глагола. В функциональном и типологическом отношении эти формы, унаследовавшие функции древних форм среднего залога, и в синхронном плане следует считать не возвратными, а собственно медиальными. В новейших грамматиках славянских и балтийских языков преобладает словообразовательный подход к категории возвратности; в грамматике польского языка, кроме того, часть возвратных конструкций относится к синтаксису. В данной статье приводятся аргументы в пользу возвращения к словоизменительной концепции возвратности, т.е. к концепции возвратного или, точнее, среднего залога. Автор старается показать, что отказ от словоизменительной концепции возвратности не только не приносит удовлетворительных решений для некоторых существенных таксономических проблем, связанных с описанием возвратных форм, но и влечет за собой новые проблемы как для грамматического, так и для лексикографического описания славянского и балтийского глагола. Рассматриваются две возможные точки зрения на место возвратных форм в залоговой системе глагола: (1) возвратный (средний) залог в трехчленной залоговой системе (действительный : средний : страдательный), и (2) залоговая система с двумя независимыми противопоставлениями (действительный : страдательный и средний : несредний).