

ANNA BONDARUK

ON *SIĘ* WITH REFLEXIVE SUBJECT
EXPERIENCER VERBS IN POLISH*

Abstract. This paper examines the syntax of the reflexive marker *się*, found with Subject Experiencer (henceforth SubjEx) verbs in Polish. Those reflexive SubjEx verbs that alternate with Object Experiencer (henceforth ObjEx) verbs are analysed. The reflexive *się* does not have a reflexive interpretation and does not represent a bound variable, and neither does it act as an operator reducing the valency of alternating SubjEx verbs. The reflexive *się* of SubjEx verbs, analysed in Chomsky's Minimalist Program ("Minimalist inquiries: The framework," "Derivation by Phase," et seq., henceforth MP), is an element without a theta role, and hence not an argument. It merges in *v* and lacks ϕ -features. Since only *v* with ϕ -features can value accusative case, once *v* is filled with the ϕ -feature deficient *się*, *v* cannot value the accusative. Consequently, *się* in *v* blocks accusative case valuation with reflexive SubjEx verbs.

Keywords: reflexive Subject Experiencer verbs; unergative verbs; accusative case; Minimalist Program; the Polish language.

INTRODUCTION

Cross-linguistically, reflexive SubjEx verbs regularly alternate with ObjEx verbs (cf. for instance, Engelberg for German, and Sonnehauser for Russian). Reflexive SubjEx verbs differ from their ObjEx counterparts as regards the

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position in which they project their two arguments – the Experiencer and the other argument (typically a Target/Subject Matter (hence, T/SM), as in Pesetsky). Alternating SubjEx verbs additionally co-occur with the reflexive marker. The ObjEx/SubjEx alternation in Polish is illustrated in (1) below:¹

- (1) a. Podwyżki cen denerwują Ewę. ObjEx verb
 rises.NOM prices.GEN annoy Eve.ACC
 ‘Price rises annoy Eve.’
- b. Ewa denerwuje się podwyżkami cen. SubjEx verb
 Eve.NOM annoyed SE rises.INST prices.GEN
 ‘Eve is annoyed with price rises.’

The aim of the paper is to analyse the syntactic status and function of the reflexive marker *się*, found with alternating SubjEx verbs in Polish (cf. (1b)).² The analysis is couched within the Minimalist Program of Chomsky (“Minimalist inquiries: The framework,” “Derivation by phase,” et seq.). Although the multifunctional reflexive marker *się* in Polish has been extensively analysed in the literature (cf. Rivero and Milojević Sheppard; Malicka-Kleparska; Krzek; Mroczyńska), its syntactic status is far from being settled, and hence must be further analysed.

The paper consists of three sections. Section 1 briefly presents the ObjEx/SubjEx alternation in Polish, based on Rozwadowska and Bondaruk. Section 2 focuses on the syntactic status of *się*, found with alternating SubjEx verbs in Polish. It is shown that the reflexive marker in the structure analysed does not have the reflexive interpretation, does not reduce the verb’s valency, and does not function as an argument at all, but is rather merged in *v*, whereby it blocks the valuation of structural accusative case (cf. Goledzinowska). In section 3, a syntactic analysis of *się*, found with Polish SubjEx verbs, is put forward. The last part concludes the paper.

1. ObjEx/SubjEx VERB ALTERNATION IN POLISH

The ObjEx/SubjEx verb alternation in Polish has been recently analysed in Rozwadowska and Bondaruk, and in this section only those properties of the alternation will be mentioned that are relevant for the discussion carried out

¹ The following abbreviations have been used in the paper: ACC – accusative, FEM – feminine, GEN – genitive, IMPERF – imperfective, INST – instrumental, LOC – locative, NOM – nominative, PERF – perfective, SE – *się*, SG – singular.

² *Się* is glossed as SE throughout the paper.

in this paper. The ObjEx/SubjEx alternation in Polish, illustrated in (1) above, is additionally exemplified in (2):³

- (2) a. Sytuacja w kraju irytuje Marka. ObjEx verb
 situation.NOM in country irritates Mark.ACC
 ‘The situation in the country irritates Mark.’
- b. Marek irytuje się (sytuacją w kraju). SubjEx verb
 Mark.NOM irritates SE situation.INST in country
 ‘Mark is irritated with the situation in the country.’

Both (2a) and (2b) contain an Experiencer, which is either marked for nominative and realised in the subject position, as in (2b), or is marked for accusative and occupies the complement position, as in (2a). The other argument, beside the Experiencer, viz. the T/SM, is either nominative case marked, as in (2a),⁴ or bears instrumental, as in (2b). The instrumental case marked T/SM in (2b) (also in (1b)) is optional, and that is why it is put in brackets. First in section 1.1, bivalent reflexive SubjE verbs are analysed, which in addition to the nominative case marked Experiencer, host an instrumental case marked T/SM. Then in section 1.2, the focus is laid on monovalent reflexive SubjE verbs which do not take any instrumental case marked T/SM.

1.1 BIVALENT REFLEXIVE SubjE VERBS IN POLISH

As has been noted in section 1, the instrumental case marked nominal may be found with reflexive SubjE verbs, and it is optional with some verbs, as in (2b) (see also (1b)) and with some other it is obligatory, as in (3).

- (3) Marek interesuje się * (składnią).
 Mark.NOM interests SE syntax.INST
 ‘Mark is interested in syntax.’

³ Polish makes a distinction between perfective and imperfective verb forms. We do not make reference to the distinction between perfective and imperfective forms of psych verbs unless it is relevant for the discussion carried out in the paper (for aspectual properties of Polish psych verbs, cf. for instance, Rozwadowska and Bondaruk section 2). For the sake of clarity, the majority of the data analysed here (except for sentence (6c) below) contain the psych verb in the imperfective form.

⁴ Actually, the nominative case marked argument in (2a) may also be viewed as a Causer. However, as argued in Rozwadowska and Bondaruk, with alternating reflexive SubjEx verbs in Polish, as in (2b), only the T/SM argument is present, and the Causer is never realised as a nominal in instrumental case. Therefore, we restrict our attention here to the T/SM use of the nominative argument with ObjEx verbs as in (2a). The Causer use is analysed in detail in Rozwadowska and Bondaruk.

In (3), the omission of the instrumental case marked T/SM triggers ungrammaticality. In (2b) (and in (1b)), the instrumental case marked T/SM may be left unexpressed. However, in spite of being optional, the instrumental case marked T/SM acts as a complement, not an adjunct. The evidence for this claim may be obtained by comparing sentence (4a) with (4b), with an ObjEx verb *irytować* ‘to irritate’:

- (4) a. Programy polityczne irytują Marka wieczorami.
 programs.NOM political irritate Mark.ACC evenings.INST
 ‘Political programs irritate Mark in the evenings.’
- b. *Programy polityczne irytują Marka sytuacją w kraju.
 programs.NOM political irritate Mark.ACC situation.INST in country
 ‘*Political programs irritate Mark with the situation in the country.’

Both (4a) and (4b) contain an instrumental DP.⁵ However, the status of this phrase in each case is different. The instrumental DP in (4a) is an adjunct. In (4b), the instrumental DP functions as a T/SM, and the sentence is ungrammatical, as it contains two T/SM arguments – one realised as the nominative DP *programy polityczne* ‘political programs’ and the other as the instrumental DP *sytuacją w kraju* ‘the situation in the country’.⁶ The unaccept-

⁵ We remain agnostic as to whether Polish has a DP, and use the ‘DP’ label to refer to any nominal expression.

⁶ Reviewer 2 notes that sentences like (i) and (ii) below are perfectly licit:

- (i) Programy polityczne irytują Marka (swoim) brakiem jakiegokolwiek oryginalności.
 programmes.NOM political irritate Mark.ACC self’s lack.INST any originality.GEN
 ‘Political programmes irritate Mark with their lack of originality.’
- (ii) Tomek irytuje Monikę głupimi żartami.
 Tom.NOM irritates Monica.ACC stupid jokes.INST
 ‘Tom irritates Monica with stupid jokes.’

In (i), *irytować* ‘to irritate’ seems to be triadic, as it has three arguments, the nominative Causer *programy polityczne* ‘political programmes,’ the accusative Experiencer *Marka* ‘Mark’ and the instrumental T/SM argument *brakiem jakiegokolwiek oryginalności* ‘lack of any originality’. This would constitute a violation of the T/SM restriction of Pesetsky, as the Causer and the T/SM argument seem to co-occur in (i). However, the triadic status of *irytować* ‘to irritate’ in (i) cannot be maintained. Klimek and Rozwadowska argue that sentences like (i) should be analysed as having a dyadic psych verb with the T/SM argument split into two distinct items, i.e. *programy polityczne* ‘political programmes’ and *brakiem jakiegokolwiek oryginalności* ‘lack of any originality’. Some support for this claim comes from the fact that the instrumental DP in (i) may contain an anaphor *swoim* ‘self’s,’ co-referential with the nominative DP *programy polityczne* ‘political programmes’. No anaphor co-referential with the matrix external argument may be inserted to improve sentence (4b), as confirmed by the ungrammaticality of (iii) below.

- (iii) *Programy polityczne irytują Marka swoją sytuacją w kraju.
 programs.NOM political irritate Mark.ACC self’s situation.INST in country
 ‘*Political programs irritate Mark with the situation in the country.’

ability of (4b) may be confronted with the acceptability of (5), which exhibits a reflexive SubjEx alternant of the ObjEx verb in (4):

- (5) Marek irytuje się wieczorami sytuacją w kraju.
 Mark.NOM irritates SE evenings.INST situation.INST in country
 ‘Mark is irritated in the evenings with the situation in the country.’

Sentence (5) is acceptable with two instrumental DPs, because these two instrumental DPs are different – *wieczorami* ‘evenings’ is a time adverbial which functions as an adjunct, whereas *sytuacją w kraju* ‘the situation in the country’ acts as an argument with the T/SM theta role (cf. Rozwadowska and Bondaruk 87, for more evidence that the instrumental DP, found with reflexive SubjEx verbs, as in (2b), functions as a complement, not an adjunct, see also example (3), where the instrumental DP is obligatory, which additionally supports its complement status).

It has already been noted that SubjEx alternants of ObjEx verbs exhibit the reflexive marker *się*, and as expected, this reflexive marker is present with the SubjEx verb in (2b). The data in (2) show that the presence of *się* with alternating SubjEx verbs does not cause the reduction in the number of verb’s arguments, as the verb *irytować* ‘to irritate’, used as an ObjEx verb in (2a), and its SubjEx cognate, as in (2b), have exactly the same number of arguments, viz. two – an Experiencer and a T/SM. This issue will become relevant in section 2, where the syntactic status of *się* is examined.

1.2 MONOVALENT REFLEXIVE SubjE VERBS IN POLISH

Reflexive SubjEx verbs as in (2b) frequently occur without an optional instrumental argument. In the literature, monovalent reflexive SubjEx verbs are considered to be either unaccusative (Alexiadou and Iordăchioaia) or unergative (Reinhart, “The Theta System,” “Experiencing derivations”). In Rozwadowska and Bondaruk and Bondaruk, “Argument and case linking,”

Additional evidence that the T/SM is split in (i) comes from sentences like (iv) below, where the content of the instrumental DP from (i) is realised within the nominative DP.

(iv) Brak jakiegokolwiek oryginalności programów politycznych irytuje Marka.
 lack.NOM any originality.GEN programmes.GEN political irritates Mark.ACC
 ‘The lack of any originality of political programmes irritates Mark.’

Sentence (ii), in turn, contains the nominative external argument *Tomek* ‘Tom’, which serves as an Agent, the accusative Experiencer *Monikę* ‘Monica’ and the instrumental case marked Instrument argument *głupimi żartami* ‘stupid jokes’ (cf. Biały). Consequently, the verb *irytować* ‘to irritate’ in (ii) has an agentive interpretation.

evidence is provided that monovalent reflexive SubjEx verbs in Polish are in fact unergative, with their sole Experiencer argument occupying an external argument position. One crucial piece of evidence in favour of the unergative status of alternating reflexive SubjEx verbs in Polish is based on the fact that reflexive SubjEx verbs, like unergative verbs proper, can occur in impersonal passives ending in *-no/-to*, which however, can never host unaccusative verbs (see Cetnarowska). The relevant data are provided in (6), where the perfective verb form is adopted, since the contrast between unaccusative and unergative verbs does not hold for imperfective verb forms in *-no/-to* impersonals (cf. footnote 7 below):

- (6) a. *Wyrosnięto w atmosferze terroru.⁷ unaccusative
 grew.up.PERF-*no* in atmosphere.LOC terror.GEN
 ‘They grew up in an atmosphere of terror.’ (Cetnarowska 64)
- b. Krzyknięto głośno. unergative
 cried.PERF-*no* loudly
 ‘They cried loudly.’
- c. Zirytowano się. reflexive SubjEx verb
 irritated.PERF-*no* SE
 ‘They were irritated.’

The data in (6) demonstrate that the reflexive SubjEx verb in (6c) patterns with the unergative verb in (6b), as it can be licitly used in *-no/-to* impersonal passives. Unaccusatives, as in (6a), are disallowed in this kind of structure. Since reflexive SubjEx verbs behave like unergative verbs in the impersonal passive in *-no/-to*, they must be treated as unergative, as in Reinhart (“The Theta System,” “Experiencing derivations”), not as unaccusative, as proposed by Alexiadou and Iordăchioaia (for other arguments to support this conclusion, cf. Bondaruk, “Argument and case linking”). This observation will be relevant for the syntactic analysis of *się*, found with alternating SubjEx verbs in Polish, undertaken in section 3.

⁷ Sentence (6a) becomes grammatical once the perfective form of the verb is replaced with its imperfective variant (Cetnarowska 64, footnote 19), as in (i) below, which is associated with the iterative/habitual interpretation:

- (i) Wyrastano w atmosferze terroru.
 grew.up.IMPERF-*no* in atmosphere.LOC terror.GEN
 ‘They were growing up in an atmosphere of terror.’

2. SYNTACTIC STATUS OF *SIĘ*
WITH ALTERNATING SubjEx VERBS IN POLISH

The reflexive marker *się* in Polish is multifunctional (see Saloni; Laszkowski; Kupść; Rivero and Milojević Sheppard; Ferhmann *et al.*; Malicka-Kleparska; Krzek; Mroczyńska), in a way similar to SE-type reflexives (in the terminology of Reinhart and Reuland), found in other languages (see Labelle and Doron; Alexiadou; Schäfer, *The syntax of (anti-)causatives*, “Romance and Greek medio-passives”). It may be used to form reflexive verbs, as in (7) below, reflexively marked anti-causatives, as in (8), reflexive middles, as in (9), generic impersonal structures, as in (10), anti-passives, as in (11), inherently reflexive verbs (*reflexiva tantum*), as in (12), and infrequent reflexive passive structures, as in (13):

- (7) Marek goli się rano. reflexive verb
Mark.NOM shaves SE morning
‘Mark shaves in the morning.’
- (8) Szklanka zbiła się. reflexive anti-causative
glass.NOM broke SE
‘The glass has broken.’
- (9) Książki tego pisarza dobrze się tłumaczą. reflexive middle
books.NOM this writer.GEN well SE translate
‘The books of this writer translate well.’
- (10) W Polsce produkuje się dużo jabłek. reflexive impersonal
in Poland produce SE many apples.ACC
‘In Poland a lot of apples are produced.’
- (11) Marek się kopie. anti-passive
Mark.NOM SE kicks
‘Mark kicks others.’
- (12) Marek się śmieje/gapi. inherently reflexive
Mark.NOM SE laughs/looks
‘Mark is laughing/looking.’
- (13) Szkoła buduje się już osiem lat. reflexive passive
school.NOM builds SE already eight years
‘The school has been being built for eight years already.’ (Ferhmann *et al.* 205)

In the literature SE-type reflexives are treated as either quasi-arguments with the reflexive function (Rizzi; Pesetsky; Steinbach, *inter alia*) or valency-reducing operators which suppress an argument of the predicate (Reinhart, “Syntactic effects”; Reinhart and Siloni; Ferhmann *et al.*, among others). The

reflexive function of *się* is exemplified in (7). Argument suppression by *się* happens in reflexive anticausatives, reflexive middles, reflexive impersonals and reflexive passives (see (8), (9), (10), and (13), respectively), where the reflexive blocks the occurrence of an external argument, while in anti-passives like (11), *się* acts as a detransitiviser and absorbs the internal argument. Finally, inherent reflexives, like (12), do not have any alternants without *się*.

Turning to the reflexive marker *się*, found with alternating SubjEx verbs in Polish, it does not have the reflexive function. Neither (1b) nor (2b) above mean that the subject performs a certain action directed towards himself/herself. On the contrary, (1b) and (2b) simply refer to the state that the Experiencer is in. The reflexive interpretation arises only if instead of *się*, another reflexive element is used, namely *siebie* ‘oneself’, which corresponds to the SEFL-type anaphor in Reinhart and Reuland’s model. The contrast between *się* and *siebie* is shown in (14).

- (14) a. Marek irytuje się. reflexive SubjEx verb
 Mark.NOM irritates SE
 ‘Mark is irritated.’
 b. Marek irytuje siebie.
 Mark.NOM irritates himself.ACC
 ‘Mark irritates himself.’

Sentence (14b) has a reflexive interpretation in which Mark is an Agent that performs an action directed towards himself, whereas (14a) lacks the reflexive interpretation and just describes the state that the argument in the subject position experiences.⁸ Consequently, the reflexive *się*, found with alternating SubjEx verbs, cannot be associated with the reflexive interpretation, in contradistinction to the reflexive *siebie*. The two reflexive elements *się* and *siebie* may even sometimes co-occur, as in (15):

- (15) Marek irytuje się na siebie.
 Mark.NOM irritates SE on himself.ACC
 ‘Mark is irritated with himself.’

⁸ Reviewer 1 notes that *się* in sentences like (14a) may indicate the lack of control over the irritation of the Experiencer in the subject position, triggered by some uncontrollable force or cause, whereas in (14b) Mark consciously irritates himself. We fully agree that the use of *siebie* in (14b) to replace *się* from (14a) results in the change of meaning. Sentence (14b) refers to an action performed by the Agent, Mark, while in (14a), the focus is on the state affecting the Experiencer, Mark.

In (15), *siebie* within the PP, acting as a T/SM argument, has a bound variable reading, in which Mark is irritated with himself, while the role of *się* is far from being clear (the issue that we will come back to in section 3).

Another option to consider is to treat the reflexive *się* with SubjEx verbs in Polish as an operator reducing the verb's valency. This approach to *się* is also questionable, since it has been noted in section 1 that reflexive SubjEx verbs in Polish may appear with both their arguments – an Experiencer and a T/SM, illustrated in (1b) and (2b) above, and additionally exemplified in (16):

- (16) Marek smuci się (wynikiem meczu).
 Mark.NOM saddens SE result.INST match.GEN
 'Mark is sad with the match result.'

It has been argued in section 1 that in spite of being optional the instrumental DP *wynikiem meczu* 'the match result' functions in sentences like (16) as a T/SM argument, not an adjunct. Consequently, the verb *smucić się* 'to be sad' in (16) is bivalent when the instrumental T/SM is projected, which clearly argues against treating *się* as a valency reducer in this case. Once the instrumental DP is missing in (16), the verb *smucić się* 'to sadden' becomes monovalent, with its sole argument functioning as an Experiencer. With monovalent reflexive SubjEx verbs, the reflexive marker *się* does not reduce the verb's valency, either. This is because an overt T/SM is never blocked in such cases, and consequently, it may surface together with *się*, which indicates that no valency reduction has taken place in this case.

Since *się* found with SubjEx verbs, is not associated with any theta role, it is not an argument. We consider it to be an item blocking the assignment of accusative case by the verb (see Golezdzinowska). The way *się* blocks the valuation of accusative with SubjEx verbs is presented in the subsequent section.

3. SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS OF *SIĘ* WITH SubjEx VERBS IN POLISH

The reflexive *się*, found with SubjEx verbs, differs from the bound variable *się*, illustrated in (7) above, and repeated for convenience below:

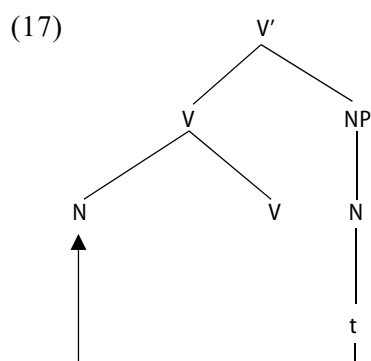
- (7) Marek goli się rano.
 Mark.NOM shaves SE morning
 'Mark shaves in the morning.'

In (7), the reflexive *się* is bound by *Marek* ‘Mark’, and therefore in the Minimalist Program, adopted here, the bound variable *się* is taken to have a full set of unvalued ϕ -features which get valued in the course of the derivation via the operation Agree for the bound variable interpretation to arise (cf. Schäfer, *Romance and Greek medio-passives and the typology of voice*, for how exactly Agree operates in bound variable contexts). As has been argued in section 2, the reflexive *się*, found with SubjEx verbs, lacks the bound variable interpretation, and therefore does not need to be bound. In fact, *się* with SubjEx verbs lacks a theta role, and therefore does not act as an argument. Following Marelj and Reuland (187), we posit that this type of *się* lacks ϕ -features altogether (cf. also Rivero and Milojević Sheppard, who claim that *się* in Polish is defective as it lacks ϕ -features; however, for them *się* has a theta role, and hence acts as an argument, which is different from our account), and it also lacks the case feature.

It has been proposed in section 1 that monovalent reflexive SubjEx verbs, as in (14a), repeated for convenience below, are unergative:

- (14) a. Marek irytuje się.
 Mark.NOM irritates SE
 ‘Mark is irritated.’

Although unergative verbs are often considered to be intransitive (see, for instance, Perlmutter), here we follow Hale and Keyser, for whom unergatives are denominal verbs, derived via incorporation into an abstract V of the nominal head N of its NP complement, as illustrated in (17), taken from Hale and Keyser (55), where *t* stands for the trace of N:



The structure in (17) makes it clear that unergative verbs are underlyingly transitive. In fact, unergative verbs may be used transitively in structures hosting cognate objects, as shown in (18):

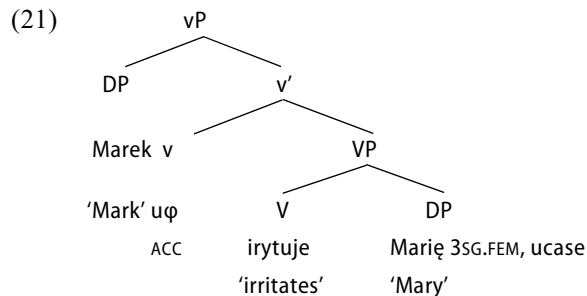
- (18) Marek śnił sny o potędze.
 Mark.NOM dreamt dreams.ACC of greatness
 ‘Mark was dreaming dreams of greatness.’

In (18), the unergative verb *śnić* ‘to dream’ appears with the cognate object *sny o potędze* ‘dreams of greatness’, which is associated with structural accusative case. Consequently, we assume that unergative verbs may have an ability to value accusative. However, unergative SubjEx verbs can never value accusative, as illustrated in (19) below:

- (19) Marek irytuje się (stratą pieniędzy)/ (*stratę pieniędzy).
 Mark.NOM irritates SE loss.INST money.GEN/ loss.ACC money.GEN
 ‘Mark is irritated with the money loss.’

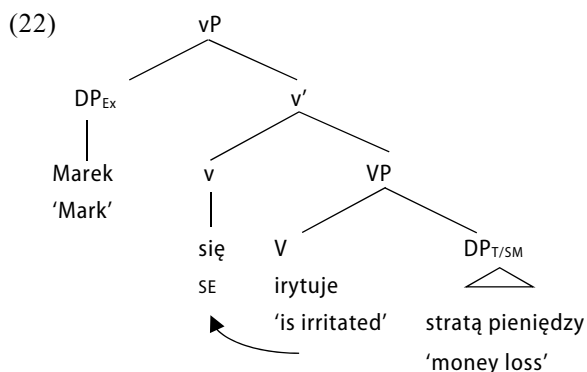
In (19), the reflexive SubjEx verb *irytować się* ‘to be irritated’ may only co-occur with the instrumental DP, and can never be found with an accusative case marked DP. The reason why accusative cannot be valued by unergative SubjEx verbs like *irytować się* ‘to be irritated’ is connected with the presence of *się*, which blocks the accusative case valuation. Before turning to the way *się* blocks the valuation of accusative case with SubjEx verbs, let us note that in the MP structural case valuation is a by-product of ϕ -feature valuation (Chomsky, “Minimalist inquiries: The framework,” “Derivation by phase”). To be precise, *v* can only value accusative on a DP if the unvalued ϕ -features of *v* have been valued by this DP. What is more, only *v* with a full set of ϕ -features can value accusative case. If *v* has no ϕ -features, it cannot value accusative. For instance in (20), where accusative is assigned, the derivation proceeds in the way illustrated in (21):

- (20) Marek irytuje Marię.
 Mark.NOM irritates Mary.ACC
 ‘Mark irritates Mary.’



In (21) *v* has a full set of unvalued ϕ -features ($u\phi$) and an accusative case feature. It functions as a probe looking for a matching goal in its c-command domain (Chomsky, “Minimalist inquiries: The framework,” “Derivation by phase”). The only matching goal is the DP *Marię* ‘Mary’, which has a full set of valued ϕ -features and an unvalued case feature ($ucase$). Agree is established between *v* and the DP, whereby the ϕ -features of *v* get valued as 3rd singular feminine, and the case feature of the DP is valued as accusative.

In contradistinction to regular transitive verbs like *irytować* ‘to irritate’ in (20) above, reflexive SubjEx verbs cannot value accusative case (cf. (19)), and we take *się* to be responsible for blocking accusative case valuation with these verbs. Since *się* is defective and lacks ϕ -features, once it merges in *v*, it deprives *v* of its ability to value accusative. The derivation of (19) with the instrumental DP, is depicted in (22) below.



In (22), the Experiencer is merged as an external argument, in Spec, *vP* and *się* is merged in *v*. Since *się* lacks ϕ -features, *v* is deprived of ϕ -features and the accusative case feature. Consequently, *v* cannot probe the T/SM argument merged in the complement position of *V* and cannot value its case feature as accusative. The T/SM complement ends up with inherent instrumental case. The *V* in (22) moves to *v*. However, since they do not form a complex word, *się* is free to move away from the verb, and can change its position in a sentence, as can be seen in (23):⁹

⁹ Sentence (23) satisfies the Excorporation Condition of Bošković, depicted in (i) below:

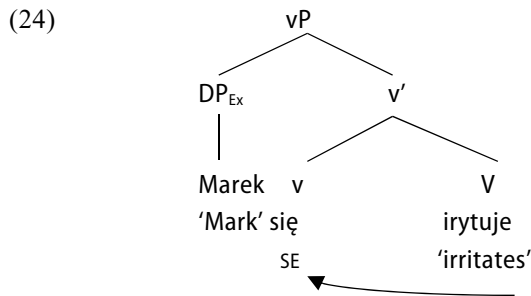
(i) Excorporation Condition

A phonologically non-deficient element *Y* cannot excorporate out of a complex X^0 -element *W* if *W* contains a phonologically deficient element. (Bošković 201)

In accordance with (i), once *V* moves to *v* in (23), *się* can excorporate and move on its own, because the *V* is not phonologically deficient.

- (23) Marek się irytuje stratą pieniędzy.
 Mark.NOM SE irritates loss.INST money.GEN
 ‘Mark is irritated with the money loss.’

In (14a), which contains a monovalent reflexive SubjEx verb, *się* again merges in *v*, depriving it of its ability to value accusative case. The Experiencer in (14a) occupies an external argument position, i.e. Spec, *v*P, within an unergative structure depicted in (24):



Just like in (22), the *v* in (24) is filled by *się* lacking ϕ -features, which blocks *v*'s accusative case valuing potential. In a way analogous to (23), *V* moves to *v* in (24) without forming a complex word and blocking the ability of *się* to move on its own.

The derivations in (22) and (24) show that *się* blocks accusative case valuation with SubjEx verbs in Polish. Since in the MP only *v* equipped with ϕ -features can value accusative, once *się*, lacking ϕ -features, is merged in *v*, *v* is deprived of its accusative case valuing potential. Hence, reflexive SubjEx verbs in Polish do not license an accusative argument at all. This way, they differ from ObjEx verbs which never co-occur with *się* and which can value accusative on the Experiencer, as shown in (25). In (25), *v* is equipped with a full set of ϕ -features and hence it can value the accusative on the Experiencer (due to space limitations, we omit the derivation of (25), the detailed derivation of sentences like (25) may be found in Bondaruk, “The syntax of accusative and dative” 198):

- (25) Strata pieniędzy irytuje Marka.
 loss.NOM money.GEN irritates Mark.ACC
 ‘The money loss irritates Mark.’

By analyzing *się* as a head, not a maximal projection, our account resembles Goledzinowska’s analysis, in which *się* found with SubjEx verbs is treated as a head of Transitive Phrase (TrP) (cf. Bowers). According to

Goledzinowska, *się* in Tr is ϕ -defective, and hence it cannot assign accusative. Likewise, Willim analyses *się* in personal middles in Polish, which do not assign accusative, as a head of VoiceP (which corresponds to vP in our account). However, our analysis of *się* with SubjEx verbs departs from Witkoś and Migdalski, who view *się* as a reflexive clitic, which is a maximal projection, not a head.

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, two approaches to the syntactic status of *się*, found with alternating SubjEx verbs in Polish, have been scrutinised and subsequently rejected. Firstly, it has been argued that the reflexive marker under scrutiny does not have the reflexive interpretation, and hence cannot be treated as a bound variable. Secondly, the reflexive *się* in question does not function as an operator reducing the verb's valency, because reflexive SubjEx verbs do not show the reduction in argument structure in comparison with the corresponding ObjEx verbs. The third approach to the status of *się* has been put forward in which the reflexive marker is not an argument at all. Instead *się* lacks ϕ -features and is merged in v, which blocks accusative case valuation by SubjEx verbs. Since in the MP only v with a full set of ϕ -features can value accusative, once v is filled with *się*, v's ability to value accusative case is blocked. This way, the analysis advanced here predicts that *się* acts an element blocking the accusative case valuation with alternating SubjEx verbs in Polish.

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O WYKŁADNIKU ZWROTNYM *SIĘ* Z CZASOWNIKAMI Z EKSPERIENCEREM
W POZYCJI PODMIOTU W POLSzczyźNIE

Streszczenie

Artykuł dotyczy analizy składniowej wykładnika zwrotnego *się*, występującego z czasownikami z Eksperiercerem w pozycji podmiotu w polszczyźnie. Analizowane są głównie te czasowniki zwrotne z Eksperiercerem w pozycji podmiotu, które regularnie alternują z czasownikami z Eksperiercerem w pozycji dopełnienia. Podane są dowody na to, że analizowane *się* nie ma interpretacji zwrotnej i dlatego nie może być uznane za zmienną związaną. Wykładnik zwrotny *się* również nie ma funkcji operatora redukującego walencję czasowników alternujących z Eks-

perienecerem w pozycji podmiotu. W analizie zaproponowanej w artykule, osadzonej w Programie Minimalistycznym Chomsky'ego (*Minimalist inquiries: The framework, Derivation by phase i dalsze*), *się* występujące z czasownikami z Eksperienecerem w pozycji podmiotu nie ma roli tematycznej, nie jest więc argumentem. Dodatkowo *się* nie ma cech ϕ i jest scalane w *v*. Ponieważ tylko *v* wyposażone w cechy ϕ może przypisywać cechę biernika, jeśli pozbawione cech ϕ *się* znajdzie się w *v*, *v* nie może przypisywać biernika. W rezultacie *się* w *v* blokuje przypisywanie biernika przez czasowniki alternujące z Eksperienecerem w pozycji podmiotu.

Słowa kluczowe: czasowniki zwrotne z Eksperienecerem w pozycji podmiotu; czasowniki nieergatywne; biernik; Program Minimalistyczny; język polski.

ON *SIĘ* WITH REFLEXIVE SUBJECT EXPERIENCER VERBS IN POLISH

S u m m a r y

This paper examines the syntax of the reflexive marker *się*, found with Subject Experiencer (henceforth SubjEx) verbs in Polish. Those reflexive SubjEx verbs that alternate with Object Experiencer (henceforth ObjEx) verbs are analysed. The reflexive *się* does not have a reflexive interpretation and does not represent a bound variable, and neither does it act as an operator reducing the valency of alternating SubjEx verbs. The reflexive *się* of SubjEx verbs, analysed in Chomsky's Minimalist Program (*Minimalist Inquiries: The Framework, Derivation by Phase, et seq.*), is an element without a theta role, and hence not an argument. It merges in *v* and lacks ϕ -features. Since only *v* with ϕ -features can value accusative case, once *v* is filled with the ϕ -feature deficient *się*, *v* cannot value the accusative. Consequently, *się* in *v* blocks accusative case valuation with reflexive SubjEx verbs.

Keywords: reflexive Subject Experiencer verbs; unergative verbs; accusative case; Minimalist Program; the Polish language.