

THE TRIGGERING OF STRUCTURAL CASE-MARKED OBJECTS IN OLD AND PRESENT-DAY RUSSIAN*

0. Introduction

This paper presents a case study on a change in the morphological case of some verbal complements in Middle Russian, which mirrors a change in grammatical case. Change in grammatical case will be claimed to stem from a new semantic relation between verbs and their arguments that arises in the learners' input; this relation will be formalized here as a conflict in theta-role assignment.

This claim will be illustrated through the analysis of the change in the selectional properties of certain Middle Russian verbs that shifted from a genitive-marking pattern to an accusative one. I will also suggest that a similar case-marking shift is still happening in the complements of the Present-day Russian verbs *bojat'sja* 'to be afraid' and *sluŝat'sja* 'to obey'.

Here is the outline of this paper: in section 1, I will overview the general framework and assumptions adopted in this work; section 2 is a brief description of the syntactic phenomenon under analysis; section 3 introduces the proposal made in this paper; section 4 is devoted to the detailed analysis of the change in the crucial Middle Russian verbs; and section 5 suggests the possible extensions of the analysis into some Present-day Russian verbs, which present striking similarities with the Middle Russian ones.

1. Formal diachronic syntax: some general assumptions

The framework of this paper is what Lightfoot (2006) called the *DIGS approach*, after the biennial *DI(achronic) G(enerative) S(yntax)* conference, which gathers many authors working on formal historical grammar. The DIGS approach can be briefly defined with the help of its central assumptions, which I will also adopt in this paper.

A mayor innovation of the DIGS approach with respect to previous historical analyses is the central role that language acquisition plays in grammar change. Changes in grammar or reanalyses are viewed as problems in processing the Primary Linguistic Data (PLD) a child receives while he/she is acquiring the corresponding grammar. These processing difficulties derive from conflictive or problematic PLD, and can be eliminated from a language or adapted to it namely during this language acquisition period.

In case a child innovates in this sense, a new structure will be acquired. The new structure triggers a grammar different than the one that gave rise to the PLD, which served as the input for the learner (Lightfoot 1999, 2002, 2006, Pintzuk, Tsoulas & Warner 2000, Uriagereka 2007). This is known as the discontinuity of transmission of a language between generations.

Together with some DIGS scholars, this paper adopts a particular model of acquisition, in which acquisition is not error-driven, but proceeds according to Lightfoot's (2002) "unambiguous cues" –the counterparts of Fodor's (1998) "unambiguous triggers". Cues or triggers in the PLD are very concrete portions of

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structure that a child detects during the acquisition period, and help him/her to fix the necessary structure or parameter of the grammar.

The main paradox that historical change poses to formal linguistics is that, from a generative perspective, grammars are not expected to change internally. According to this, the DIGS approach mostly assumes that changes in I-grammars are triggered outside the core syntax by E-language factors: sociologic, functional or stylistic factors, language contact etc.

Any external change that can partially condition the shape of an adult's output, can eventually give rise to new cues in the learner's PLD. According to Lightfoot (2002, 2006), it is just changes in these cues that eventually lead to grammar change. As a consequence, we assume that syntactic change happens randomly (Lightfoot 1999), because of the random nature and unexpectedness of the E-languages themselves.

In my analysis I will introduce a novelty in this general picture of grammar change: the possibility of needing more than one cue to fix certain structure, as explored in Madariaga (in progress). The DIGS works mostly concentrate on general parameters and simple cues. Here, I will rather focus on micro-parameters and language-specific structures, and crucially assume that a learner needs several cues of different nature (basically, morphological and second-order / distributional cues) in order to fix them.

Related to this, I want to notice that it is an empirical fact that grammar change can happen but do not need to. Irregular sequences in the PLD can be acquire as special lexical specifications, but this process requires an additional memory effort, fed only by robust positive evidence in the PLD (special cues or triggers – Lightfoot 2002, Fodor 1998).

As for the formal mechanism of reanalysis assumed here, it consists in a feature reassignment, as we will see in the paper: the child fails to apply the Operation of the Lexicon in the same way her parents did; therefore, a new relation between a feature and a lexical item arises (Pintzuk, Tsoulas & Warner 2000, Longobardi 2001).

2. Description of the phenomenon under analysis

This paper focuses on a group of Russian verbs that initially selected special complements marked with inherent genitive case, but later on, showed up combined with objects in structural accusative case.

The verbs involved in this change can be called the Old Russian “verbs of taking care”, because of their meaning: *bereči* ‘take care of’, *bljusti* ‘guard, observe’, *dozirati* / *stereči* ‘watch over’, *boroniti* ‘guard / prevent’, and *sъmotriti* ‘to look, to look after’ and *vědati* ‘to know, to administrate’, both in the sense of ‘take care of’.

As I said before, this group of verbs was characterized by their common meaning and case government (inherent genitive case assignment) until the 17th century (1a);¹ however, afterwards, the whole group change into an accusative pattern (Borkovskij 1978), as if they became similar to verbs selecting regular accusative objects (1b).

- | | | | |
|-----|----|---|----------------------------------|
| (1) | a. | Pače že bljudi <i>slovesъ</i> jeho.
moreover part. guard words _{GN} his
'And over all, observe his words.' | (<i>Anthology of 1076</i> , 15) |
| | b. | Sobljudaj <i>pravila</i> dorozhnogo dviženija.
guard rules _{AC} road movement
'Observe the traffic rules.' | (Present-day Russian) |

¹ The last few remnants of genitive objects with these verbs are found in the 18th century (Taubenberg 1967).

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I will claim, thus, that the change in the selectional properties of the verbs of “taking care” in Middle Russian was a diachronic answer to such a theta-role conflict. The process was as follows: learners could not parse inputs that were crucial to acquire the correct selectional properties of this group of verbs, because the cues to acquire them disappeared and new cues arose, pointing to a different set of selectional properties. Learners, finally, arranged new lexical entries, different from the previous generation’s ones, creating thus a “reanalysed grammar”.

4. The analysis

4.1. New cues in the PLD

As I said in the previous section, the semantic or theta-role conflict that arose in learners at some point of the history of Russian was triggered by a change in the cues present in the PLD.⁴ These cues can have different nature, depending on the status of the phenomenon in change. Here, syntactic and morphological case are involved, so we will find both first-order (morphological) and second-order (distributional) cues implied. Let us see the new cues one-by-one:

By the 15th century, a very prominent morphological cue can be detected in the Russian PLD: the process of morphological syncretism of genitive and accusative cases in masculine animate singulars and animate plurals of all genders in structural instances is completed (Gorškova & Xaburgaev 1981, Borkovskij 1978, Meillet 1965 [1924], Igartua 2005). This process started already in Old Church Slavonic (see example 4), and results in the coincidence of morphological material in genitive and structural animate cases.

- (4) a. Prizovi m□žb tvoi. (OCS: *Codex Marianus*, Jn. 4:16)
call [husband your]_{AC-NOM}
‘Call your husband.’
- b. Prizovi m□ža svoego. (OCS: *Codex Zographensis*, Jn. 4:16)
call [husband your]_{AC-GN}

As a result, the verbs of “taking care” with their lexical genitive object, as *bljusti kogo*_{GN} ‘to take care of someone’ became externally similar to verbs combined with regular accusative objects, for example, *videt’ kogo*_{ACC-GN} ‘to see someone’, and *ljubit’ kogo* ‘to love someone’.

On the other hand, new syntactic cues weakened the perception of the lexical genitive case associated to the verbs of “taking care” as inherent. This was due to a general change in the case system related to the morphological genitive case, namely, the loss of the old Indo-European system of inherent lexical genitive objects in favour of a new system of configurational (non-lexical inherent) genitive cases (see footnote 3) and lexical genitive cases inside overt PPs.

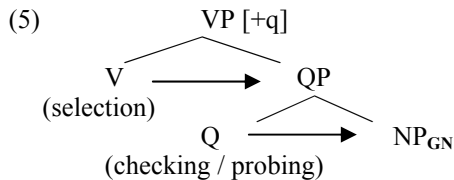
A non-lexical inherent genitive case arises or rather becomes prominent in a very specific configuration, represented in (5); it is the so-called quantificational genitive. Synchronic analyses of this genitive case show that it is valued “on merge” by a functional head, a Q head (Babby 1985, Bailyn 2004, Pereltsvaig 2006). This structure

and assigning theta role is a lexical head (V or P); or 2b) configurational or inherent non-lexical (Bailyn 2004, Woolford 2006): a functional head values case and assigns theta-role (Asp, Pred, Q...).

⁴ Recall that I crucially assume that more than one change in the cues is needed prior to micro-parametrical changes, as the one analysed here. This prevents syntactic change from happening all the time, whenever a little external change in the input is detected.

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depends on the presence of higher functional heads related to quantification, such as negation and quantificational preverbs, as we will see next.



Nowadays, one can find that this configuration underlies several environments where genitive case surfaces in Russian; all of them are namely dependent on the syntactic configuration of the sentence and not merely given by the selectional properties of the verb, unlike the old Indo-European pattern of lexical genitive reviewed in section 2. Let us see some of the instances of this non-lexical genitive case analysed by Bailyn (2004) and Pereltsvaig (2006):⁵

The most famous configuration is the one of the genitive of negation: this genitive case marks direct objects and intransitive subjects under negation. It is a relatively old pattern, found occasionally as early as in Old Church Slavonic, but its presence in the related configuration became systematic –that is, “compulsory”– after the 15th century in Russian (Borkovskij 1978: 347). It was at this time when it overgeneralized over almost all possible lexical items in the complement / intransitive subject position under negation. Before, its use was lexical-dependent and mostly facultative.

- (6)
- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| a. | Ne obretoša <i>ničto</i> že.
not found nothing _{AC} part.
‘They found nothing.’ | (Moscow Chronicle, 15 th c., 413) |
| b. | Ne našel on <i>ničego</i> / * <i>ničto</i> .
not found he nothing _{GN} / *AC
‘He found nothing.’ | (Present-day Russian) |

The verbs with the prefix *na-*, selecting a QP configurational genitive (Pereltsvaig 2006), became morphologically productive in this period.⁶

⁵ A more controversial configurational case related to Q is the adnominal genitive, according to Bailyn (2004); for example *dom brata_{GN}* ‘my brother’s house’. These adnominal genitives replaced the old adnominal datives (*bratu_{DT} dom*, same meaning) and possessive adjectives (*bratov dom*, same meaning) precisely by this time, in Old-Middle Russian (Zaliznjak 2004).

⁶ I assume that the accusative DP in examples such as (i) is an intensional (measure) accusative and not the real object of the *na-*verb; in other words, the thing we quantify over, the genitive DP inside the QP, is the real object (thanks to Luka Szucsich for bringing my attention to these examples). Intensional or measure accusatives are analysed in Fowler & Yadroff (1993). An example of a similar intensional accusative is given in (ii).

- (i) Al’bert nasobiral (*celuju*) *korzinu* cvetov.
Albert na-collected [(whole) basket]_{AC} flowers_{GN}
‘Albert collected a (whole) basket of flowers.’
- (ii) Al’bert rabotal *dva časa*.
Albert worked [two hours]_{AC}
‘Albert was working for two hours.’

There are some reasons to assume this: first, the *na-* prefixed verb quantifies over the flowers and not the basket (it is a lot of flowers that Albert collected and not a lot of baskets). Moreover, intensional accusative DPs are common in Russian, but are lexically restricted; only words denoting measure of some kind can bear this accusative case; other words, such as *kust* ‘bush’ in (iii) cannot.

- (iii) * Al’bert nasobiral (*celyj*) *kust* cvetov.
Albert na-collected [(whole) bush]_{AC} flowers_{GN}
(Meaning that Albert picked a bush with a lot of flowers.)

A final argument concerns word order: examples like (i) easily allow word order permutation between the accusative and genitive nominals (the genitive NP remaining in its ‘neutral’ objectual adverbial

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- (7) a. Al'bert sobiral cvety dlja Jaroslavy.
Albert collected flowers_{AC} for Yaroslava
'Albert was collecting flowers for Yaroslava'
b. Al'bert nasobiral cvetov dlja Jaroslavy.
Albert na-collected flowers_{GN} for Yaroslava
'Albert collected lots of flowers for Yaroslava.'

Finally, the verbs of “aim and desire”, such as *iskat* ‘to search’, *ždat* ‘to wait’, *xotet* ‘to want’ and *trebovat* ‘to demand’, began to select either accusative or genitive objects, depending on the semantics of that object (Straková 1961): thus, accusative surfaces on specific objects (8a), while genitive is preferred on non-specific and mass objects (8b).⁷

- (8) a. Ingeborga ždět pis'mo ot Igorja.
Ingeborga waits letter_{AC} from Igor
'Ingeborga is waiting for a letter from Igor.'
b. Viktor Coj ždal peremen.
Viktor Tsoi waited changes_{GN}
'Viktor Tsoi was waiting for changes.'

As a consequence of the extension of this system of configurational genitive cases, new morphological-distributional cues arise: the verbs of “taking care”, such as *bljusti kogo*_{GN} ‘to take care of someone’, become externally similar to any of the new instances of genitive non-lexical cases, for instance: *ne vižu kogo* ‘I do not see someone’, *nasobirat' cvetov*_{GN} ‘to collect a lot of flowers’, *ždat' otveta*_{GN} ‘to wait for an answer’, or *iskat' podderžki* ‘to seek for help’.

Roughly at the same time, the old pattern of lexical genitive cases related to verb heads, represented in example (3), is being replaced by genitive lexical cases inside PPs. This is part of a more general process of replacement of oblique “bare” objects by whole PPs with headed by an overt preposition (Borkovskij 1978, Lomtev 1954, Vinogradov 1938).

Černyx (1952: 269-70) reports on such replacement of genitive complements by whole PPs in the complements of verbs denoting “separation” (replaced by PPs headed by *ot / iz* ‘from’), and “direction” (replaced by PPs with *na* and *do* ‘to’). See the examples in (9), corresponding to a complement of separation and a complement of direction, respectively; then, compare them with their later counterparts in (10). The

position), as illustrated in (iva), while other constructions including accusative and genitive nominals do not allow inversion of the two elements without having an effect in the informational structure of the sentence (ivb):

- (iv) a. Al'bert nasobiral cvetov (celuju) korzinu.
Albert na-collected flowers_{GN} [(whole) basket]_{AC}
'Albert collected a (whole) basket of flowers.'
b. ?? Al'bert kupil cvetov kust.
Albert bought flowers_{GN} bush_{AC}

The last example is more or less acceptable with the meaning: ‘It was flowers Albert bought a bush of, but not: ‘Albert bought a bush of flowers’. In this case, neutral word order should be needed: *Al'bert kupil kust cvetov*. This contrast suggests that the accusative in (ivb) is the real object and the genitive is an apposition to it, while the situation in (iva) is the opposite way, as stated above.

⁷ I include this pattern in the group of configurational genitive cases, although it seems more lexical-dependent than the previous ones. The genitive here alternates in the same verbs with the regular accusative pattern, which could be explained, *a priori*, saying that the same verb has two different lexical specifications, ie. “select a specific DP and do not value case on it” alongside with “select a mass DP and value genitive case”. However, I would prefer a distributional account for this patterns, claiming that accusative valuing is the regular neutral pattern for these verbs, while some kind of sentential quantificational operator arises when a mass object is involved.

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following bare genitive NP complements were totally replaced by whole PPs by the 15th century:

- (9) a. Otstupi voleju *Kyeva*. (1st Novgorod Chronicle, 36)
 left by-will Kiev_{GN}
 ‘(Mstislav) moved away from Kiev of his own free will.’
 b. Da sluxъ *nasъ* totъ došelъ. (Historical acts 2, 333, ap. Černyx 1952: 270)
 and rumour us_{GN} this came
 ‘This rumour has come to us.’
- (10) a. Otstupi voleju *is* *Kyeva*. (1st Novgorod Chronicle Com, 112b)
 left by-will from Kiev_{GN}
 b. Došel *do* nas *odin* slux. (Present-day Russian)
 came to us_{GN} one rumour
 ‘This rumour has come to us.’

Some times, the Indo-European lexical genitive case got lost as early as by the time of Old Church Slavonic, being replaced by another bare oblique case. This is the case of the verbs of “governing” (meaning ‘to govern’, ‘to rule’); here, the genitive lexical case is replaced by another oblique, a bare instrumental case, already in OCS:

- (11) a. Kai *Iliou* iphi anassein. (Ancient Greek, Homer *Iliad*)
 and Troy_{GN} possible govern
 ‘And it is possible to govern Troy.’
 b. Vladъ štju s’ *irejъ* kirinъju. (OCS: *Codex Marianus* Lk. 2: 2)
 governing_{DT} Siria_{INST} Cyrenius_{DT}
 ‘When Cyrenius was the governor of Siria.’

Other verbs affected by a similar shift replaced the lexical genitive case with a PP including a case other than the genitive. This is the change undergone by the verbs of “held part” (the ones meaning ‘to grasp by’, ‘to hold by’). The old Indo-European genitive object (12a) was replaced in OCS by a PP headed by the preposition *za* ‘for, by’ + accusative case (12b):

- (12) a. *Kheiros* helōn Odysēa daifrona. (Ancient Greek, Homer *Odyssey*)
 hand_{GN} taking Ulysses brave
 ‘While taking Ulysses the brave by his hand.’
 b. Jeťъ jъ *za* rъkъ. (OCS: *Codex Marianus* Mt. 9: 25)
 took her_{AC} by hand_{AC}
 ‘He took her by her hand.’

Another example are the verbs of “thinking and saying”: the genitive complement (13a) disappeared in favour of an accusative regular object, or a PP with the preposition *o* ‘about’ + locative (13b); genitive can still be found in these contexts in Old Russian.

- (13) a. Jaroslavъ usumnēsja *brata svoego Jurgja*. (Laurentian Chronicle, 156)
 Jaroslav thought [brother his Georgi]_{GN}
 ‘Jaroslav thought about his brother Georges’
 b. Jaroslav podumal *o* svoēm brate Jurii. (Present-day Russian)
 Jaroslav thought about [his brother Yuri]_{LOC}
 ‘Jaroslav thought about his brother Yuri.’

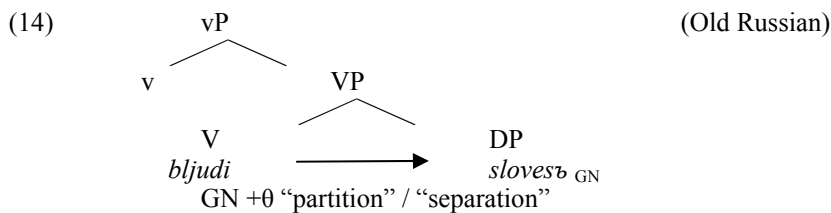
The last changes reviewed above also had an effect in the cues available for learners: the verbs of “taking care”, being part of the old disappearing system, e.g. *bljusti kogo*_{GN}, ‘to take care of someone’, strongly contrasted with the new PP / instrumental governments of other old genitive verbs, such as *izbavit’sja ot* +DP_{GN}, ‘to get rid of’,

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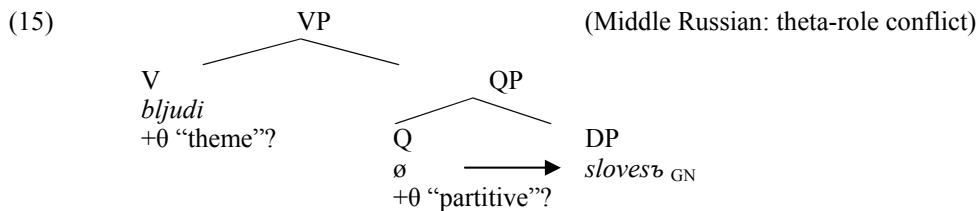
*praviti' čem*_{INST} 'to rule something', *deržat' za* + DP_{AC} 'hold by something', and *vspomnit' o* NP_{LOC} 'remember about something'.

4.2. The change process

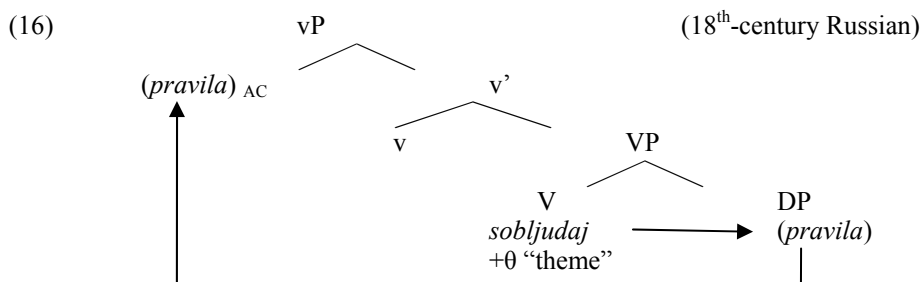
Summing up the previous section, we can talk about the weakening of the Old Russian system of inherent genitive objects, inherited from Indo-European and represented in (14), due to the replacement of these objects by whole PPs or configurational genitives inside QPs. The change represented in structure (14) through (16) correspond to example (1) in the paper.



Genitive morphemes as inherent cases became difficult to be acquired in Middle Russian, as the learner was confronted with a seemingly configurational case (selected by Q), but having a theta-role "theme", not the "quantification" role expected for Q. A theta role conflict arises, as represented in (15). By the "default" system of acquisition introduced in section 1, for a time, the "irregular" or "problematic" selectional properties of these verbs are learnt by heart as a special lexical specification of the verb.



These verbs were finally reinterpreted as c-selecting a structural DP, giving as a result the pattern we steadily find from the 18th century, which innovated with respect to previous grammars. The Middle Russian conflict was solved in this way: the offending intermediate Q projection is eliminated together with inherent genitive case, and little v values regular structural –acusative– case on the DP complement (16).



5. Extension: Present-day Russian psych verbs

The change reviewed above presents striking similarities with respect to the shift that two Russian verbs are undergoing in colloquial language nowadays. These verbs are the psych verbs *bojat'sja* 'to be afraid' and *sluшат'sja* 'to obey'.

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Here is an example: the verb *bojat'sja*, in its regular literary use selects a bare genitive complement (17a), while in colloquial language, accusative can be used instead (17b):⁸

- (17) a. On ne boitsja *ženy*. (Standard Russian)
 he_{NOM} not fear wife_{GN}
 'He is not afraid of his wife.'
 b. % On ne boitsja *ženu*. (Colloquial Russian)
 he_{NOM} not fear wife_{AC}
 'He is not afraid of his wife.'

According to Butorin (1966), the verb *bojat'sja* can be combined with accusative animate objects of the 1st and 2nd classes in colloquial Russian. Nowadays, we must say that the uses of the accusative with *bojat'sja* have extended even more: see the following examples extracted from the National Corpus of Russian Language (www.ruscorpora.ru): (i) not only animate nouns of the 1st declension class (in *-a/-ja*) can be accusative, but also inanimate ones, as shown in (18a); (ii) feminine nouns of the 3rd class (ending with a consonant) can also be found in this colloquial use (18b); and (iii) even inanimate masculine nouns of the 2nd class (ending with a consonant) surface in accusative case with *bojat'sja* (18c).

- (18) a. U nas inogda daže bojatsja *bumagu*. (Alešin *Vstreči na grešnoj zemle*)
 at us sometimes even fear paper_{AC.FEM}
 'In our country, they are sometimes afraid of some piece of paper.'
 b. Razve možno bojat'sja *myš'*? –udivilsja Biriukov. (Petkevič *Živye cvety zimoj*)
 maybe possible fear mouse_{AC.FEM} –surprised Biriukov
 'Is it possible to be afraid of a mouse? –asked Biriukov with surprise.'
 c. Ved' oni bojatsja ne pensionerov, a *Kreml'*. (*Russkij Newsweek* # 33, 2005)
 because they are afraid not pensioners_{GEN.MASC} but Kremlin_{AC.MASC}
 'Cause they are not afraid of the pensioners, but of the Kremlin.'

Thus, the standard uses of these verb is very similar to the Old Russian pattern of verbs of “taking care” I analysed in the previous sections: the verb *bojat'sja* assigns theta-role and values case on the complement “on-merge”. On the other hand, the colloquial examples in (17b) and (18) are instances of categorial-selection, just as the reanalysed Middle Russian verbs of “taking care”: no specific case is valued by the V, but the selected DP checks its case features with a higher functional head, surfacing as structural accusative case.

But if these two change processes are similar, why did the psych verbs change later than the verbs of “taking care”? The reason is to be found in the special morpho-syntactic properties of psych verbs *bojat'sja* ‘to be afraid’ and *slušat'sja* ‘to obey’: these two verbs are formed by adding the passive suffix *-sja / -s'* to an active form (see Madariaga –in progress for a detail historical account of these facts). Having a passive form, we do not expect them to take an accusative complement, because of the constraint called Burzio’s (1986) Generalization:

All and only the verbs that can assign a θ -role to the subject can assign accusative case to an object (Burzio 1986: 178).

A “subject” in Burzio’s stronger version is an agent. This generalization accounts for the fact that verbs without a specifier position (passives) lack an external agentive argument, so they are unable to assign accusative structural case to an object; the first argument merged (a theme) values the first case possible, nominative case.

⁸ The same holds for the verb *slušat'sja* ‘to obey’, though for space reasons I will not provide detailed examples here; a detailed account of this verb is provided in Madariaga (in progress), chapter 3.

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This could be the case of *bojat'sja* and *sluŝat'sja* until very recently: they did not assign any theta-role “agent” (they do not have an external subject), so their argument “theme” raised and valued nominative case. The other argument remains low and is marked with some oblique case (here, genitive case). The main argument of *bojat'sja* and *sluŝat'sja* (i.e. the one who fears or obeys somebody) was perceived as non-agentive (“theme”), as opposed to the other argument (the source of the fear or the source of the orders), more active or agentive.⁹

Therefore, there existed a tension in these verbs between the theta-role conflict introduced in this paper and Burzio’s generalization: on the one hand, lexical genitive cases were disappearing from the system (as objects started to be uniformly perceived as “themes”) but, on the other hand, passive morphology on the verbs suggested that there was no external subject and the “theme” object needed to be nominative, banning the possibility of having an additional accusative object.

The easiest way for learners to override this tension was acquiring the data in the input as irregular, learning it by heart their special lexical specification, as it has been done until nowadays, at least, in standard literary Russian.

But, why did they change eventually in colloquial language? According to Pesetsky (1987) and Dowty (1991), the class of psych verbs is variable in its theta-role properties. For instance, the arguments in *John fears dogs* and in *Dogs frighten John* are ambivalent with respect to their theta-roles; in each of them, *John* or the *dogs* could be agents, experiencer or patients, according to Dowty (1991). Let us imagine then that this range of possibilities in theta-role assignment by psych verbs makes possible reparsing them in a different way when a conflict arises in learners.

So perhaps a rearrangement of the theta array of this kind took place in the verbs *bojat'sja* and *sluŝat'sja* at some point in their evolution: the nominative argument (the one who fears or obeys) started to be perceived as an external subject, gaining a theta-role “agent” or “experiencer”, and was not the “theme” any more. The “theme” theta-role got free to be assigned to the other argument (the one who is feared or obeyed), which made accusative valuing possible. Thus, they got rid both of Burzio’s constriction and the theta-role conflict reviewed here.

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⁹ It makes sense from the viewpoint of the Indo-European morphological case system, where cases were tightly related to the semantic roles of the DPs in the sentences: if the “agents” of the verbal notions of “obey” and “fear” were perceived as sources, genitive marking on them followed straightforwardly.

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Vitoria-Gasteiz
nerea.madariaga@ehu.es

Nerea Madariaga