Chapter 11

Reflexive constructions in Polish

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Polish, an Indo-European language of the West Slavic sub-branch, has three types of reflexive constructions. The coreference between agent and patient participant roles can be expressed by one of the following reflexivizers: *siebie*, *swój*, or *się*. The first reflexive nominal *siebie* shares the inflectional pattern with the personal pronoun, which is uncommon from a crosslinguistic perspective. The second reflexive nominal *swój* is used in the context of the 3rd person to make a formal distinction between 3rd person reflexive possessive pronouns and their nonreflexive counterparts. Finally, the reflexive clitic *się* is verbal, modifying the syntactic and semantic value of the verbal valency. Even if *się* is particularly frequent in impersonal constructions, its omnipresence in middle or reflexive domains is also non-negligible. Like in many Slavic languages, *się* may also encode the antipassive function.

1 Introduction

1.1 Classification, distribution and dialects of Polish

Polish belongs to the Indo-European language family, which together with Atlantic-Congo, Austronesian and Sino-Tibetan is one of the most populous language families of the world. Within Indo-European, Polish belongs to the Slavic group which falls into three major sub-groups: East, West, and South. Together with Czech, Slovak, and Sorbian, Polish belongs to the West Slavic group. Compared to other members of West Slavic, Polish has the largest number of speakers. It is also the second most widely spoken Slavic language.

Polish is a well-documented and well-studied language. It is spoken mainly in Poland, where it is an official language (see Figure 1). Today's calculations indicate that there are 38.5 million people who speak Polish as their first language.

In the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, west Belarus, Ukraine, and central-west Lithuania, Polish is spoken by many people as a second language.

Figure 1: Subdivision of Polish dialects according to Stanisław Urbańczyk

Polish does not exhibit robust regional diversification. This refers to both grammar and lexicon. It attests four or five dialects, depending on whether Kashubian is included. The latter is spoken in the north-west of Poland around Gdańsk and presents characteristics typical for languages and dialects. Another dialectal area includes Great Poland in the west, centered around the cities of Poznań and Gniezno. The dialect spoken in this area served as the basis for the formation of literary Polish. Another area is Little Poland in the south-east, centered on

Kraków. This region greatly influenced the modern standard language. The third area is Mazovia. It encompasses the region around the capital city of Warsaw, extended to east and north-east Poland. The last area is Silesia in the south-west, with the major city of Katowice.

The chapter is organized as follows. In §1.2, I provide general remarks on Polish morphosyntax with special attention to clause structure, (§1.2.1), and noun phrase, (§1.2.2). I pass to pronouns in §2. I discuss personal pronouns in §2.1, reflexive pronouns in §2.2, and possessive pronouns in §2.3. §3 is dedicated to reflexive constructions, where I first I elaborate on reflexive constructions with *siebie*, (§3.1), then, I explore reflexive constructions with *się*, (§3.2), and finally a word of explanation is given to reflexive constructions with the reflexive possessive pronoun, (§3.3). In §4, I explore coexpression patterns displayed by the reflexive form *się*. I close the chapter with a note on diachronic development of the refleivizers, (§5).

1.2 General remarks on Polish morphosyntax

1.2.1 Clause structure

Polish clause structure has a flexible word order. The dominant pattern is SVO, the second most common word order type in the world (Dryer 2013b). Case encoding and gender-number agreement between a verb and its core arguments shape the language toward accusative alignment. It is a pro-drop language where the omitted pronoun can always be pragmatically or grammatically inferred from the context. Reflexive, middle, impersonal, and antipassive are verb-coded valency-changing operations signaled by *się*.

1.2.2 Noun phrase

Polish has a well-developed gender system. Among various categories, nouns systematically recognize grammatical gender distinction. It is based on three divisions: masculine, feminine, and neuter. All singular nouns are either masculine, feminine, or neuter. Within the class of singular masculine nouns, Polish offers a more fine-grained differentiation between masculine animate and masculine inanimate. By contrast, plural nouns recognize only a masculine (or "virile") and non-masculine (or "non-virile") gender distinction. Gender plays a prominent role in agreement. Specifically, noun gender is relevant to noun-adjective agreement patterns and past tense agreement. Even if the noun gender is inherent in Polish, one cannot deduce its specific value from the noun form alone. It is only possible after determining the class declension to which a noun belongs.

Polish has a relatively rich case system, including nominative, accusative, genitive, dative, locative, and instrumental. Unlike Bulgarian and Macedonian, it did not develop articles corresponding to the English definite *the* and indefinite *a/an*. In this respect, Polish does not differ much from many languages of the world. Building on the sample of 620 languages provided by Dryer (2013a), Polish belongs to 198 languages that lack definite and indefinite articles. The noun phrase is thus vague in terms of definiteness, and whether a particular noun receives a definite or indefinite interpretation is either deduced from the context or resolved by demonstratives.

2 Pronouns

Polish has a rich set of pronouns, including personal, reflexive, possessive, demonstrative, interrogative, distributive, relative, and indefinite. In the present section, I will focus only on those that are relevant to reflexive constructions, namely personal pronouns §2.1, reflexive pronouns §2.2, and possessive pronouns §2.3.

2.1 Personal pronouns

The paradigm of the Polish independent personal pronouns with their clitic counterparts is illustrated in Tables 1 and 2. The former illustrates the 1st person and 2nd person personal pronouns, while the latter shows the 3rd person personal pronouns.

Table 1: 1st and 2nd personal pronouns in Polish based on Swan (2002: 153)

	1SG	2SG	1PL	2PL
NOM	*ja*	*ty*	*my*	*wy*
GEN	*mnie/mię*	*ciebie/cię*	*nas*	*was*
DAT	*mnie/mi*	*tobie/ci*	*nam*	*wam*
ACC	*mnie/mię*	*ciebie/cię*	*nas*	*was*
LOC	*mnie*	*tobie*	*nas*	*was*
INS	*mną*	*tobą*	*nami*	*wami*

As can be seen from Tables 1 and 2, Polish personal pronouns clearly distinguish between 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person. They are also sensitive to the number

Table 2: 3rd personal pronouns in Polish based on Swan (2002: 156)

	3SG(M)	3SG(F)	3SG(N)	3PL(VIR)	3PL(NVIR)
NOM	*on*	*ona*	*ono*	*oni*	*one*
GEN	*jego*/*go*	*jej*	*jego*/*go*	*ich*	*ich*
DAT	*jemu*/*mu*	*jej*	*jemu*/*mu*	*im*	*im*
ACC	*jego*/*go*	*ją*	*je*	*ich*	*je*
LOC	*nim*	*niej*	*nim*	*nich*	*nich*
INS	*nim*	*nią*	*nim*	*nimi*	*nimi*

and case of a noun or a noun phrase they substitute. The 3rd person pronouns additionally distinguish gender. Specifically, the singular form of a 3rd person pronoun is based on the masculine, feminine and neuter distinction, whereas its plural counterpart opposes only masculine vs. non-masculine. Like in English, the declension of personal pronouns in Polish is quite peculiar as the nominative form differs from other cases i.e., *ja* 'I' vs. *mnie* 'me', etc.

The nominative 1st and 2nd person pronouns are typically omitted. Their realization is, however, necessary when one emphasizes the importance of the subject, as in (1),[1] or seeks for clarification of meaning, as in (2), or contrasts the pronominal subjects, as in (3).

(1) *Tylko ja   pracuję   w weekendy.*
only 1SG.NOM work.PRS.3SG in weekend.PL(NVIR).ACC
'Only I work on the weekends.'

(2) *Czy my   się   znamy?*
Q   1PL.NOM SELF know.PRS.1PL
'Do we know each other?' (Sadowska 2012: 267)

(3) *Jeśli ty   się teraz zabawiasz,   to ja   sobie*
if   2SG.NOM SELF now have.fun.PRS.2SG then 1SG.NOM SELF.DAT
idę.
go.PRS.1SG
'If you're having fun now, then I'm on my way.'

Deleting the nominative 3rd person pronouns is possible when their referent is easily inferred from the context. They are, however, expressed when used for

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[1] Unless specified otherwise, I am the author of all examples.

the first time in a paragraph. In the subsequent text, they can be omitted as long as their referent remains clear.

Another peculiarity of the Polish personal pronouns is that some show a long vs. short opposition. In Tables 1 and 2, the short forms appear after the slashes. Represented by the six forms *mię*, *mi*, *cię*, *ci*, *go*, and *mu*, they behave like clitics. The short forms can neither carry their own stress nor appear sentences initially, as in (4). They also manifest distributional restrictions: unlike their long counterparts, the short forms cannot appear after a preposition, as in (5).

(4) a. *Szukam   cię.   Kogo szukasz?*
         look.for.PRS.1SG 2SG.ACC who search.for.PRS.2SG
         'I'm looking for you. Who are you looking for?' (Swan 2002: 155)

     b. *Ciebie   / *Cię   szukam.*
         2SG.ACC   2SG.ACC look.for.PRS.1SG
         'I am looking for you.'

(5) a. *Patrzy   na mnie   / *mię.*
         look.PRS.3SG on 1SG.ACC   1SG.ACC
         'He is looking at me.'

     b. *Myślę   o   tobie   / *ci.*
         think.PRS.1SG about 2SG.DAT   2SG.DAT
         'I am thinking of you.'

The longer forms: *mnie* (vs. *mi*, *mię*), *ciebie* (vs. *cię*), *tobie* (vs. *ci*), *jego* (vs. *go*), *jemu* (vs. *mu*) are called emphatic pronouns and are used when emphasis is required (Bielec 1998). They obligatorily carry the stress. Like the remaining independent pronouns, *mnie*, *ciebie*, *tobie*, *jego*, and *jemu* can also occur at the beginning of the clause and after a preposition. The contrast between 1st person short clitic form *mi* and its longer equivalent *mnie* is illustrated in (6).

(6) a. *Nauczyciel   dał   mi   książkę.*
         teacher.SG(VIR).NOM give.PST.3SG 1SG.DAT book.SG(F).ACC
         'The teacher gave me the book.'

     b. *Nauczyciel   dał   mnie   książkę.*
         teacher.SG(VIR).NOM give.PST.3SG 1SG.DAT book.SG(F).ACC
         'I was the one the teacher gave the book to.' (Feldstein 2001: 65)

The independent personal pronouns which do not recognize the short vs. long opposition can be stressed, depending on whether they are emphasized or not.

Despite their name, the referent of the personal pronouns in Polish may also denote animals or inanimate objects. This is illustrated in (7), where the inflected 3rd person masculine pronoun *nim* [3SG(M).LOC] corefers with the masculine noun *stół* 'table'.

(7) *Książki   leżą   na stole   i   pod*
    book.NOM.PL(NVIR) lie.PST.3PL(NVIR) on table.SG(M).LOC and under
    nim.
    3SG(M).LOC
    'The books are on the table and under it.' (Sadowska 2012: 265)

Polish personal pronouns share many properties with their English equivalents. For instance, they form a paradigm, are not morphologically transparent and exhibit restricted possibilities in terms of modification. However, they are necessarily referential, in particular definite. Thus, they cannot have a non-specific or generic interpretation. Neither can the Polish personal pronouns be used as bound variables. Example (8) illustrates the last point.

(8) a. *Każda   kobieta$_i$ uważa,   że ona$_j$*
        every.SG(F).NOM woman.SG(F).NOM consider.PRS.3SG that 3SG(F).NOM
        jest   mądra.
        be.PRS.3SG clever.SG(F).NOM
        'Every woman$_i$ thinks that she$_j$ is clever.'

    b. *Każda   kobieta$_i$ uważa,   że jest$_i$*
        every.SG(F).NOM woman.SG(F).NOM consider.PRS.3SG that be.PRS.3SG
        mądra.
        clever.SG(F).NOM
        'Every woman$_i$ thinks that she$_i$ is clever.' (Siewierska 2004: 11)

In (8a), the anaphoric pronoun *ona* can be construed as coreferential only with some entity outside the clause. Since personal pronouns in Polish are necessarily referential, they cannot be interpreted as bound variables. As pointed out by Siewierska (2004), a bound variable interpretation is only possible if the person-number properties are expressed solely on the verb, as in (8b).

The contrast in the interpretation illustrated in (8) corresponds to two kinds of coreference recognized in the literature: discourse-referential interpretation and co-varying interpretation. Example (8a) exemplifies the discourse-referential reading because the anaphoric pronoun *ona* denotes a particular woman the referent of which can only be identified in the discourse. In contrast, (8b) exemplifies

a co-varying interpretation. The person inflected on the verb can be construed as bound by the quantified subject *każda kobieta* 'every woman' of the main clause.

Polish personal pronouns share one nominal feature based on sociolinguistic implications (cf. Siewierska 2004). Using the 3rd person pronouns is highly informal among adults. Thus, the system of the language developed special 3rd person pronouns with a formal flavor: *Pan, Pani*, and *Państwo*, which function as honorific 2nd person pronouns. They serve as alternatives to the informal 2nd person singular *ty* and plural *wy* forms. The 3rd person pronouns of polite, formal address is still visible in the agreement of the verb, as shown in (9).

(9) *Pani   powinna   przeprosić   za swoje*
    Madam should.prs.3sg(f) apologize.inf for 3sg(n).refl.poss.acc
    zachowanie.
    behaviour.sg(n).acc
    'Madam, (you) should apologize for your behaviour.'

Polish speakers use honorific pronouns when they address a stranger, someone they do not know well, or someone of authority in order to express respect and distance. In the system, the honorific pronouns *Pan, Pani*, and *Państwo* function in parallel with their corresponding grammaticalized nouns, meaning 'gentleman', 'lady', and 'ladies and gentlemen or Madam and Sir' accordingly.

2.2 Reflexive pronouns

Polish has two reflexive forms, *siebie* and *się*, which display different formal and functional characteristics. In what follows, I will briefly summarize their similarities and differences. I will discuss them in detail in §3.1 and §3.2 respectively.

Regarding morphosyntactic characteristics, neither *się* nor *siebie* signals a gender distinction. They are also indifferent to the number category. Both, however, inflect for case. While *siebie* distinguishes all the cases except nominative, *się* realizes only genitive, dative, and accusative dative. Both forms thus constitute an incomplete ('defective') pronominal paradigm, given in Table 3.[2]

Since the reflexive pronoun *siebie* has the same inflectional pattern as the 1st person and 2nd person personal pronoun (cf. Table 3), undoubtedly they belong to the same paradigm. In addition to the similar inflectional paradigm, *siebie* exhibits other pronoun-like features. For instance, it cannot be modified or possessed. Coordination of the reflexive pronoun with the (personal) pronouns

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[2]Table 3 has been adopted from Wiemer (2007: 517) and slightly modified.

Table 3: The reflexive forms in Polish

Case	Reflexive clitic	Independent reflexive pronoun	2sg independent personal pronoun	1sg independent personal pronoun
NOM	-	-	*ty*	*ja*
GEN	*się*	*siebie*	*ciebie*	*mnie*
DAT	*(se)* *	*sobie*	*tobie*	*mnie*
ACC	*się*	*siebie*	*ciebie*	*mnie*
LOC	-	*sobie*	*tobie*	*mnie*
INS	-	*sobą*	*tobą*	*mną*

rather than with nouns is rare crosslinguistically. This is a particularity of western Indo-European languages in particular of the Slavic and Germanic groups.

The difference between *siebie* and *się* also involves morpho-phonological variation. *Siebie* is defined as an independent pronoun. Hence, it is realized as a separate word and, what is more important, it takes the primary word stress. It also manifests syntactic independence because it may occur in isolation as an elliptical answer. Example (10) illustrates this possibility.

(10) a. *Komu kupiłaś   lody?*
          whom buy.PST.2SG ice.cream.ACC.PL(NVIR)
          'For whom did you buy ice cream?'

      b. *Sobie.*
          SELF.DAT
          'Myself.' (Sadowska 2012: 278)

By contrast, the grammatical features of the reflexive form *się* show the properties of clitics. Even if *się* occurs as a separate word, it is phonologically and morphologically dependent on the host. For instance, it lacks prosodic independence i.e., it cannot be stressed. The presence of *się* does not affect the place of the stress of words to which it is adjacent. Finally, *się* shows little, if any, syntactic independence. It has a restricted distribution relative to the independent form. For instance, it cannot appear in isolation or after a preposition. Consequently, the reflexive forms *siebie* and *się* belong to two different paradigms.

The morpho-phonological variation between *siebie* and *się* corresponds to what Kemmer (1993) calls the heavy vs. light distinction. The form of *siebie* is defined as heavy because it contains more phonological 'body' or 'material' that can be measured in terms of a number of segments. By contrast, *się* is considered

to have a light form. This means that like many other languages with a heavy vs. light opposition in the reflexive domain (e.g. Djola, Old Norse, Surselvan, Slavic), *się* is a dependent form that demonstrates reduced phonological material.

The difference between *siebie* and *się* reflects a nominal vs. verbal distinction. The possibility of occurring in non-object position or in isolation can be taken as an indication of the (pro)nominal features that are manifested by *siebie. Się* is more of the verbal type. It cannot appear in the non-object position. Its combination with a transitive verb may result in the modification of the syntactic structure of the verbal predicate. Moreover, both reflexive forms demonstrate functional differences. In contrast to *siebie* the use of which is primarily limited to express the coreferential meaning, *się* is highly polyfunctional with a wide scope beyond the coreference domain. Nevertheless, both the reflexive forms are diachronically related, where *się* is claimed to originate from the pronoun *siebie*.

2.3 Possessive pronouns

Polish has independent possessive pronouns that agree in gender, number, and case with the noun they refer to. Table 4[3] and Table 5 offer their forms with differential and coreferential interpretation respectively.

Table 4: The differential possessive pronouns in nominative case in Polish

	1SG	1PL	2SG	2PL
M	*mój*	*moi*	*twój*	*twoi*
F	*moja*	*moje*	*twoja*	*twoje*
N	*moje*	*moje*	*twoje*	*swoje*

The peculiarity of the Polish possessive pronouns is a formal split at the level of the 3rd person pronoun, leading to the distinction between coreference vs. disjoint interpretation. Since the 3rd person possessive pronouns: *swój* [3SG(M)], *swoja* [3SG(F)], *swoje* [3SG(N)] (together with their plural equivalents) corefer with the subject participant of the clause, they are labeled reflexive possessive pronouns. They contrast with their possessive nonreflexive equivalents: *jego* [SG.M/N] and *jej* [SG(F)] (also with their plural equivalents, see 5). These pronouns signal that a possessor referent is different than subject. The formal split based on reflexive vs. nonreflexive possessive opposition is rare crosslinguistically. Many

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[3]Tables 4 and 5 have been adopted from (Wiemer 2007: 519) and slightly modified.

Table 5: The coreferential possessive pronouns in nominative case in Polish

	3SG	3PL	3SG	3PL
M	*swój*	*swoi*	*jego*	*ich*
F	*swoja*	*swoje*	*jej*	*ich*
N	*swoje*	*swoje*	*jego*	*ich*

languages lack this distinction, thereby leading to referential ambiguity. A textbook example comes from English where in the clause *She went to her room*, the possessive pronoun *her* oscillates between coreference reading (*She went to her own room*) and a disjoint one (*She went to somebody else's room*).

3 Reflexive constructions

Polish distinguishes reflexive constructions with the independent reflexive pronoun *siebie*, reflexive constructions with the clitic form *się*, and reflexive constructions with the possessive reflexive pronoun *swój*. Since the general morphosyntactic characteristic of these three reflexive forms has already been introduced in §2, in what follows i.e., in §3.1, §3.2, and §3.3, I discuss their functional aspects and idiosyncratic properties.

3.1 Reflexive constructions with the reflexive independent pronoun *siebie*

Reflexive constructions with the reflexive independent pronoun *siebie* display peculiar properties in Polish. In the first part of the present section, I discuss their functional characteristics (§3.1.1), and the domain of coreference (§3.1.2). In the second part, I have a closer look at coreference of the subject with the beneficiary role (§3.1.3). In the final part, I explore the formal aspects of *siebie* with special attention given to its dative and accusative form (§3.1.4).

3.1.1 Functions

Depending on the subject, *siebie* is translated as 'myself', 'yourself', 'herself', 'himself', 'itself', 'ourselves', 'yourselves', or 'themselves'. It primarily performs two functions. In the first place, the pronoun *siebie* corefers with a singular subject, leading to the reflexive interpretation, as shown in (11).

(11) a. *Oskarżony   bronił   siebie   zaciekle.*
      accused.SG(M).NOM defend.PST.3SG(M) SELF.ACC fiercely
      'The accused defended himself fiercely.'

   b. *Matka   chroniła   siebie   i*
      mother.SG(F).NOM protect.PST.3SG(F) SELF.ACC and
      swoje   dzieci.
      PL(NVIR).REFL.POSS.ACC child.PL(NVIR).ACC
      'The mother protected herself and her children.'

The independent reflexive pronoun *siebie* can also be coreferential with the subject participant in the plural form. Here, it performs a reciprocal function, carrying the meaning of 'each other' and/or 'one another'. In fact, many Polish clauses with a plural subject and the reflexive pronoun *siebie* are ambiguous, situated at the interface of reflexive and reciprocal interpretations. Thus, in (12a–12b), both the reflexive and reciprocal readings are equally acceptable, and a broader context is required to resolve an interpretative ambiguity.

(12) a. *Przyjaciele   bronili   siebie   długo.*
      friend.NOM.PL(VIR) defend.PST.3PL(VIR) SELF.ACC for.a.long.time
      i. 'The friends were defending themselves for a long time.'
      ii. 'The friends were defending each other for a long time.'

   b. *Magda   i Marta   lubiły   siebie.*
      Magda.NOM and Marta.NOM like.PST.3PL(NVIR) SELF.ACC
      i. 'Magda and Marta liked themselves.'
      ii. 'Magda and Marta liked each other.' (Nedjalkov 2007: 263–264)

However, not all clauses with a plural subject and pronoun *siebie* in object function are ambiguous. The pragmatic context may occasionally help to provide disambiguation, as illustrated in (13).

(13) *Przyjaciele   obudzili   siebie.*
      friend.NOM.PL(VIR) wake.PST.3PL(VIR) SELF.ACC
      i. *'The friends woke themselves up.'
      ii. 'The friends woke each other up (e.g. by snoring).' (Nedjalkov 2007: 264)

3.1.2 Domain of coreference

Example (14) illustrates the distribution of the reflexive *siebie* in various syntactic contexts.

(14)   a.   *Marek   szanuje   tylko siebie.*
        Marek.NOM respect.PRS.3SG only SELF.ACC
        'Marek respects only himself.'

     b.   *Dziewczyny   lubią   tylko siebie.*
        girl.NOM.PL(NVIR) like.PRS.3PL(NVIR) only SELF.ACC
        'The girls like only themselves.'

     c.   *Często mówicie   do siebie   na głos.*
        often   talk.out.PRS.2PL to SELF.GEN on voice.SG(M).ACC
        'You often talk out loud to yourselves.'

     d.   *Zawsze noszę   na sobie   czyste ubrania.*
        always wear.PRS.1SG on SELF.LOC clean cloth.PL(NVIR).ACC
        'I always wear clean clothes.'

     e.   *Zamknij   drzwi   za   sobą.*
        close.IMP.2SG door.PL(NVIR).ACC behind SELF.INS
        'Close the door behind you.'

     f.   *Szybko znalazł   sobie   nową   dziewczynę.*
        quickly find.PST.3SG(M) SELF.DAT new.SG(F).ACC girl.SG(F).ACC
        'He quickly found a new girl.'

Example (14) shows that *siebie* accepts two antecedent domains. The first is an autopathic domain (cf. Haspelmath 2023: §8 [this volume]) that refers to the coreference relation between subject and object in a monotransitive clause, as in (14a–14b). The second is recognized in the literature as the oblique domain and indicates the coreferential relation between the subject and an oblique participant of the same minimal clause. This can be observed in (14c–14f).

Unlike Turkish, Kashmiri and some other languages, Polish disallows coreference of the independent reflexive pronoun *siebie* with the grammatically less salient antecedent i.e., the dative object, as in (15). To express the coreference between the complement of the PP and the object, the language makes use of the pronominal nonreflexive anaphoric pronoun, e.g. *nim*, as in (16).

(15)   *Jan$_i$ opowiedział Piotrowi$_j$ o   sobie$_{i,*j}$.*
     Jan.NOM tell.PST.3SG(M) Peter.DAT about SELF.LOC
     'John$_i$ told Peter$_j$ about himself$_{i,*j}$.'

(16)   *Jan$_i$ opowiedział Piotrowi$_j$ o   nim$_{*i/j/k}$.*
     Jan.NOM tell.PST.3SG(M) Peter.DAT about 3SG(M).LOC
     'John$_i$ told Peter$_j$ about him$_{*i/j/k}$.' (Siewierska 2004: 193)

3.1.3 Coreference of the subject with the beneficiary

Another type of context relevant to the present discussion involves a coreference between the subject and a non-patient participant such as beneficiary.

Benefactive events refer to the event wherein the subject participant performs an action that is of benefit either for himself or for a distinct participant. This leads to a 'self-benefactive' and 'other-benefactive' distinction. In self-benefactive events, the subject argument, therefore, assumes two semantic roles, that of the agent and that of the beneficiary, and the coreference between these two participants can be signaled in languages in multiple ways. For instance, in English, the agent-beneficiary coreference can be expressed either through the reflexive pronoun alone, as in *Paula bought herself a book* or by a reflexive pronoun coupled with the preposition: *Paula bought a book for herself.* By contrast, the clause such as *Paula bought a book for John* exemplifies a benefactive event where *John*, construed as the beneficiary, takes advantage of the action performed for him by the agent participant. Like English, Polish also expresses the coreference of subject with a beneficiary through the reflexive pronoun that may occur in two syntactic configurations. While the first involves the reflexive pronoun in dative form, (17a), in the second, the reflexive pronoun is in the accusative form and accompanied by the preposition *dla* 'for', (17b).

(17)   a.   *Dziecko   kupiło   sobie   lizaka.*
            child.SG(N).NOM buy.PST.3SG(N) SELF.DAT lollipop.SG(M).ACC
            'The child bought herself a lollipop.'

      b.   *Dziecko   kupiło   lizaka   dla siebie.*
            child.SG(N).NOM buy.PST.3SG(N) lollipop.SG(M).ACC for SELF.ACC
            'The child bought a lollipop for herself.'

The alternation in coding the beneficiary coreference is common for all Slavonic languages. Even if it is subject to free variation in Polish, there is a tendency to favor a morphologically less complex beneficiary expressed by the dative form rather than a prepositional phrase. This goes hand in hand with Swan's (2002) observation and corpus-based study. A survey of the National Corpus of Polish shows, for instance, that the verbal form *kupił* [buy.PST.3SG(M)] occurs with the dative reflexive beneficiary form 287 times against 4 occurrences wherein the same participant is expressed through a prepositional phrase *dla siebie* [for SELF.ACC]. Building on the text-frequency criterion for markedness, Kemmer (1993) argues that self-benefactive constructions of the type (17a) are expected to happen far more frequently than their prepositional equivalents (17b).

The author reports two pieces of evidence in support of this prediction. The first comes from Surselvan (Indo-European). Stimm (1973: 50), who carried out a corpus-based study for this language, found only two examples of self-benefactive construction of the type (17b), against several hundred constructions of the type (17a). The second piece of evidence comes from English. Kemmer (1993: 76) extracted benefactive self-forms from a British written corpus, where the constructions of the type (17a) vastly outnumbered those corresponding to (17b).

3.1.4 Dative and accusative form of *siebie*

The dative form of *siebie* is used in many contexts optionally with a colloquial flavor. The pronoun adds a nuance of casualness, volitionality, subjectivity, aimlessness, perverseness, or even disregard. The omission of *siebie* makes the register less informal. Compare (18a) with (18b).

(18)   a. *Jak sobie   chcesz.*
            as   SELF.DAT want.PRS.2SG
            'As you want.'

       b. *Jak chcesz.*
            as   want.PRS.2SG
            'As you want.'

Concerning the accusative form of *siebie*, it may compete with its light equivalent *się* in formal speech. Their analysis reveals some differences in the accusative context. Sadowska (2012) specifically underlines the emphatic (19a) and contrastive (19b) function performed by the heavy reflexive form alone. In other accusative contexts, the light form *się* is particularly favored, as shown in (19c).

(19)   a. *Tylko SIEBIE / *się widzę   w lustrze.*
            only SELF.ACC   SELF see.PRS.1SG in mirror.SG(N).LOC
            'I see only myself in the mirror.'

       b. *Widzę   siebie   / *się, ale ciebie   nie widzę.*
            see.PRS.1SG SELF.ACC   SELF but 2SG.ACC NEG see.PRS.1SG
            'I see myself, but I don't see you.'

       c. *Widzę   się w lustrze.*
            see.PRS.1SG SELF in mirror.SG(N).LOC
            'I see myself in the mirror.'

3.2 Reflexive constructions with the reflexive clitic form *się*

Reflexive constructions with the reflexive clitic form *się* are widely used in Polish. In the present section, I first approach this form from the functional perspective, (§3.2.1), with particular attention given to its non-standard but still productive dative use, (§3.2.2). Then, I discuss the unstable position of the form *się* in the clause, (§3.2.3). Finally, I propose a typology of reflexive verbs accompanied by the form *się*, (§3.2.4).

3.2.1 Functions

The reflexive form *się* means 'self'. One of the functions it performs is to signal the coreference between two participants in the minimal clause. This situation is illustrated in (20), where the agent *oskarżony* 'the accused' in subject function, instead of defending a distinct participant, performs the act of defense on himself. The coreference is signaled through the reflexive clitic *się*.

(20) *Oskarżony   bronił   się w sądzie.*
      accused.SG(M).NOM defend.PST.3SG(M) SELF in court.SG(M).LOC
      'The accused defended himself in a court.'

Like the corresponding independent reflexive form *siebie*, the clitic form *się* can also signal the reciprocal meaning in a clause. This observation holds particularly for the *się*-constructions with the plural subject. In Polish, such constructions are frequently ambiguous, oscillating between reflexive and reciprocal interpretations, as shown in (21).

(21) *Asia   i   Janek   czesali   się codzienne.*
      Asia.NOM and Janek.NOM comb.PST.3PL(VIR) SELF every.day
      i. 'Every day Asia and Janek combed each other.'
      ii. 'Every day Asia and Janek combed themselves.' (Wiemer 2007: 515)

To disambiguate such clauses, either an extended context or the use of a specific adverb is required. For instance, in (21), the reciprocal interpretation becomes evident if one of the two synonymous adverbs *nawzajem* 'one another' or *wzajemnie* 'each other' is added.

3.2.2 Dative form

I have already mentioned in §2.2 that in formal registers *się* only displays an accusative-genitive syncretism. However, linguistic descriptions occasionally mention the dative use of the form *se*, limited to colloquial use. The dative status of

się is intriguing. Since it has gone out of use in standard Polish, many grammars do not discuss it explicitly (Feldstein 2001; Swan 2003; Sadowska 2012). Nevertheless, *se* appears nowadays to be very productive in colloquial usage. In this respect, Swan (2002) mentions that in informal communication, the dative form *se* is highly marked stylistically. It adds to the communication a flavor of peasants' talks. This is because using the non-standard *se* is a distinctive feature of rural dialects. We observe that nowadays this form is widely accepted even by well-educated people, who employ it to color their utterances. The colloquial use of dative *se* in Polish contrasts with other Slavic languages like Czech or Bulgarian, in which such a form does not carry any stylistic and sociolinguistic implications and is perfectly acceptable in formal registers.

3.2.3 Positioning

The position of the reflexive form *się* within a clause is not stable. As a clitic form, it may have different hosts, preceding or following them. Even if different syntactic and stylistic factors condition this variable position, some clear tendencies can be distinguished. For instance, *się* favors the second position in a clause, as shown in (22–23).

(22) *Dzieci   się źle czują.*
      child.NOM.PL(NVIR) SELF bad feel.PRS.3PL
      'Children feel bad.' (Bielec 1998: 59)

(23) *Janek   się chce   popatrzyć na ogród.*
      Janek.NOM SELF want.PRS.3SG look.INF at garden.SG(M).ACC
      'Janek wants to have a look at the garden.' (Sussex & Cubberley 2006: 391)

Even if in (23) *się* is hosted by the infinitive *popatrzyć* 'to look' of a subordinate clause, it still occupies the second position of the main clause. This possibility results from the fact that in Polish, a subordinate clause may shift the reflexive clitic to the left to meet the preference of this form for the second position. However, the configuration in which *się* is immediately adjacent to its host *popatrzeć* is also acceptable, as shown in *Janek chce się popatrzyć na ogród.*

According to Swan (2003), the position of *się* with regard to its verbal host is subject to language register. While in formal contexts the reflexive clitic favours the post-verbal position, as in (24a), in colloquial speech, it tends to precede the verb, as in (24b).

(24) a. *Bardzo spieszę   się.*
          very   hurry.up.PRS.1SG SELF
          'I am in a big hurry.'

      b. *Bardzo się   spieszę.*
          very   SELF hurry.up.PRS.1SG
          'I am in a big hurry.'

Swan (2002) goes one step further and formulates the correlation between language register, the positioning of *się*, and the length of the verbal host: the less formal the style, and the shorter the verb, the more likely it is that *się* will take the position before the verb.

Another context in which *się* demonstrates to some extent a more or less stable position involves clauses in which it co-occurs with an enclitic (i.e., unstressed) personal pronoun. In this environment, the reflexive form tends to follow the pronoun rather than to precede it, as in (25).

(25) *On   mi   się nie podoba.*
      3SG(M).NOM 1SG.DAT SELF NEG like.PRS.3SG
      'I don't like him.' (Swan 2002: 318)

Finally, *się* shows a strong regularity in the context of verb-initial-clauses. The clitic systematically occupies the position after the verb. The imperative clause illustrated in (26) may serve as an illustration of this type of structural configuration.

(26) *Śpiesz   się powoli!*
      hurry.up.IMP.2SG SELF slowly
      'Hurry up slowly.'

In some contexts, the employment of *się* may be optional. This is particularly noticeable when multiple reflexive verbs are used within a single clause, where there is a strong tendency not to repeat the final *się*, as in (27).

(27) a. *Chłopcy   myją   się i ubierają   (się).*
          boy.NOM.PL(VIR) wash.PRS.3PL SELF and dress.up.PRS.3PL(VIR) SELF
          'The boys are washing and dressing (themselves).'

      b. *Kasia   uczy   się i bawi   (się).*
          Kasia.NOM learn.PRS.3SG SELF and play.PRS.3SG SELF
          'Kasia learns and plays.' (Bielec 1998: 60)

Another context worth mentioning involves preposition phrases, in which the occurrence of *się* is prohibited. In (28), the only possible way to express the coreference of the subject is to use the reflexive pronoun *siebie*.

(28)   *Patrzę*   *na siebie*   / **się*   *w lustrze.*
       look.PRS.1SG on SELF.ACC   SELF in mirror.SG(N).LOC
       'I look at myself in the mirror.'

3.2.4 Reflexive verbs

The term 'reflexive verb' refers to any verb accompanied by the form *się*, without necessarily implying a meaning of coreference (e.g. *spieszyć się* 'to hurry up'). Reflexive verbs recognize a three-fold partition in Polish. The first group involves reflexive verbs that have active counterparts and where the presence of *się* does not affect the lexical meaning of the verb (*myć* 'to wash sb.' vs. *myć się* 'to wash oneself', *zginać* 'to bend sth.' vs. *zginać się* 'to bend oneself').

The second class encompasses reflexive verbs called deponents, which do not have nonreflexive counterparts (Kemmer 1993: 251), such as *bać się* 'to fear', *bawić się* 'to have a good time', *śmiać się* 'to laugh', *opiekować się* 'to look after', *kłócić się* 'to argue', *uśmiechać się* 'to smile'. Another characteristic of this group is that even if they combine with the reflexive clitic *się*, it is difficult to assign any particular function to this form. Finally, in Polish, deponent verbs often demonstrate a complex morphological form, being derived either from verbs, adjectives, or nouns. When derived from verbs, they carry one of the following prefixes: *do-, na-, o-(ob-), od-, po-, prze-, przy-, roz-, u-, w-, wy-, z-, za-* (Brooks Zagórska 1975: 256).

The last group involves lexicalized reflexive forms i.e., verbs with active counterparts, but in which the presence of *się* shifts the lexical meaning of the base verb. The meaning of the lexicalized verbs is related in one way or another to the original meaning of the initial verb, as in *uczyć* 'to teach' vs. *uczyć się* 'to learn', *czuć* 'to detect a smell' vs. *czuć się* 'to feel', *chwalić* 'to praise' vs. *chwalić się* 'to boast'.

Reflexive verbs occur in all conjugations and follow the same tense rules as their active counterparts. Both syntactically intransitive and transitive verbs accept the reflexive form *się*. As far as intransitive forms are concerned, the language imposes restrictions on possible combinations that are difficult to encapsulate in a general rule (but see §4.2 on impersonal use of *się*). Hence, this constellation must be learnt individually, on a case-by-case basis. Regarding transitive

verbs with *się*, many of such verbs occur with the reflexive form without any constraints. In such cases, the clitic *się* may function as a valency-changing operator that reduces the syntactic transitivity of the input verb (cf. §4). The fact that the *się*-verb does not retain the syntactic structure of the core verb may serve as an indication of this reduction, as shown in (29).

(29)   a.   *Chłopiec   chwycił   gałąź.*
           boy.SG(M).NOM grab.PST.3SG(M) branch.SG(F).ACC
           'The boy grabbed the branch (to hold onto it).'

         b.   *Chłopiec   chwycił   się gałęzi.*
           boy.SG(M).NOM grab.PST.3SG(M) self branch.SG(F).GEN
           'The boy grabbed the branch (to hold onto it).' (Janic 2016: 176–177)

In (29b), the object argument of the reflexive verb *chwycić się* differs from the one associated with the transitive verb *chwycić* 'to grab', (29a). It is no longer coded like a core argument since it carries the oblique i.e., genitive case.

In Polish, it is not only verbs that can host *się*. Deverbal nouns can also perform this function. Hence, expressions such as *mycie się zimną wodą* 'washing oneself with cold water', where the reflexive noun *mycie się* relates to the verb *myć się* 'to wash oneself', are perfectly acceptable. A similar observation holds for the non-clitic form *siebie*. The ability to combine deverbal nouns with the reflexive forms seems to be rare in the languages of the world. Among Slavic languages, only Polish seems to attest this possibility (Sussex & Cubberley 2006).

3.3 Reflexive constructions with the reflexive possessive pronoun *swój*

As indicated in §2.3, Polish makes a formal distinction between 3rd person reflexive possessive pronouns and their nonreflexive counterparts. This split leads to a coreference vs. disjoint-reference opposition, as illustrated in (30–31).

(30)   *Marek   odwiedza   swojego   brata,   a   nie*
       Marek.NOM visit.PRS.3SG SG(M).REFL.POSS.ACC brother.SG(M).ACC but NEG
       jego   brata.
       SG(M).POSS.GEN brother.SG(M).GEN
       'Mark is visiting his (own) brother and not his (someone else's) brother.'

(31) *Dzieci   nie mają   swoich*
       child.PL(NVIR).PL NEG have.PRS.3PL 3PL(NVIR).REFL.POSS.GEN
       paszportów,   my   mamy   ich
       passport.PL(NVIR).GEN 1PL.NOM have.PRS.3PL 3PL(NVIR).POSS.ACC
       paszporty.
       passport.PL(NVIR).ACC
       'The children do not have their (own) passports, we have their passports.'
       (Bielec 1998: 162)

In (30), the accusative form *swój* 'his own' corefers with the subject, which is not the case with its nonreflexive anaphoric counterpart *jego*. The same contrast holds in (31) between *swoich* and *ich*, meaning 'their'. In the context of the 1ˢᵗ person and 2ⁿᵈ person possessive pronouns, the referential ambiguity no longer holds and the choice between reflexive and nonreflexive forms is in general stylistically determined (Feldstein 2001: 73). Consider (32–33).

(32) *Mam   moją   / swoją   książkę.*
       have.PRS.1SG 1SG(F).POSS.ACC 1SG(F).REFL.POSS.ACC book.SG(F).ACC
       'I have my/my own book.'

(33) *Masz   twoją   / swoją   książkę.*
       have.PRS.2SG 2SG(F).POSS.ACC 2SG(F).REFL.POSS.ACC book.SG(F).ACC
       'You have your/your own book.' (Feldstein 2001: 73)

Unlike English and many other languages, Polish is not very prone to code the possessive relation overtly. This applies to both inalienable and alienable possession. When the context is transparent, there is a tendency to omit the possessive pronoun. This is clear in the following two examples: in (34), it is self-evident that the addressee can only close his/her own eyes and that in (35) the agent could only defend the dissertation that she is the author of.

(34) *Zamknij   oczy.*
       close.IMP.2SG eye.ACC.PL(NVIR)
       'Close (your) eyes.'

(35) *Obroniłam   doktorat   pod koniec   2013 roku.*
       defend.PST.1SG thesis.SG(M).ACC under end.SG(M).ACC 2013 year.SG(M).GEN
       'I defended my dissertation at the end of 2013.'

However, some contexts ask for explicit coding of the possessive relation. When the possessor is not the subject, a possessive pronoun serves to clarify the meaning, as shown in (36).

(36)   *Jadę   odwiedzić jego   babcię.*
       go.FUT.1SG visit.INF   3SG(M).POSS.ACC grandmother.SG.(F).ACC
       'I am going to visit his (not mine) grandma.'

The possessive relationship is also explicitly coded in the context of contrastive emphasis. Comparison of (37a) with (37b) illustrates this contrast.

(37)   a. *Weź*   *ubrania*   *i   daj*   *mi*
           take.IMP.2SG clothes.PL(NVIR).ACC and give.IMP.2SG 1SG.DAT
           święty   *spokój.*
           sacred.SG(M).ACC peace.SG(M).ACC
           'Take (your) clothes and leave me in peace.'
       b. *Weź*   *SWOJE*   *ubrania*   *a*
           take.IMP.2SG PL(NVIR).REFL.POSS.ACC clothes.PL(NVIR).ACC and
           MOJE   *zostaw*   *w spokoju.*
           PL(NVIR).POSS.ACC leave.IMP.2SG in peace.SG(M).LOC
           'Take your clothes and leave mine in peace.'

Finally, the reflexive possessive pronoun *swój* 'one's own' is also used when a speaker intends to highlight the greater specificity of the possessed item. Contrast (38a) with (38b).

(38)   a. *Ewa*   *jeździ*   *do pracy*   *samochodem.*
           Ewa.NOM go.PRS.3SG to work.SG(F).LOC car.SG(M).INS
           'Ewa drives to work by car.'
       b. *Ewa*   *jeździ*   *do pracy*   *swoim*
           Ewa.NOM go.PRS.3SG to work.SG(F).LOC SG(M).REFL.POSS.INS
           samochodem.
           car.SG(M).INS
           'Ewa drives to work in her own car.' (Sadowska 2012: 180)

4 Related functions performed by the reflexive form *się*

The functional scope of the reflexive clitic form *się* goes far beyond the coreference meaning. This grammaticalized form is nowadays highly polysemous, per-

forming a range of valency-reducing operations, including middle §4.1, impersonal §4.2, and antipassive §4.3.

4.1 Middle function

Middle formations denote events in which the subject participant is viewed not only as the doer of the action but also as the place on which this action is performed (see Benveniste 1966; Kemmer 1993; and Creissels 2006). Both the doer and the place of the event are construed as one single inseparable entity. This contrasts with the reflexive type of events, in which the subject assumes two semantic roles, agent and patient, the referents of which are conceived as distinct entities.

In Polish, the reflexive clitic *się* often participates in middle derivations. Swan (2003: 20) specifically mentions that the reflexive and reciprocal use of *się* is definitely not as frequent as its use to express middle types of events. The author reports the particularly frequent presence of *się* in grooming actions e.g. *czesać się* 'to comb oneself', *myć się* 'to wash oneself', *kąpać się* 'to bathe oneself', as in (39), or *golić się* 'to shave oneself', as in (40).

(39) *Codziennie się   kąpię.*
      every.day   SELF bathe.PRS.1SG
      'I take a bath every day.'

(40) *Golę   się   przed śniadaniem.*
      shave.PRS.1SG SELF before breakfast.SG(N).INS
      'I shave before breakfast.' (Swan 2003: 584)

Grooming verbs may denote actions performed either on the whole body or only on its part. In Polish, the coding of whole-body actions may differ from body-part actions. For instance, when the action targets a particular body part, the language calls for a transitive construction with a body-part referent expressed as object. Compare (41) with (42).

(41) *Muszę   się   umyć.*
      have.to.PRS.1SG SELF wash.INF
      'I have to wash up.'

(42) *Muszę   umyć   ręce.*
      have.to.PRS.1SG wash.INF hand.PL(NVIR).ACC
      'I have to wash my hands.' (Swan 2003: 584)

Within a middle domain, the clitic form also productively encodes change of body posture as in *kłaść* 'to lie down' vs. *kłaść się* 'to lie down oneself', *podnieść* 'to uplift' vs. *podnieść się* 'to get up', *opierać* 'to lean' vs. *opierać się* 'to lean against'. Another type of middle event with *się* involves non-translational motions like *obrócić* 'to turn' vs. *obrócić się* 'to turn oneself'. The reflexive form *się* is also highly productive in expressing emotional reactions or mental agitation: *złościć* 'to make sb. angry' vs. *złościć się* 'to get angry', *rumienić* 'to brown sth' vs. *rumienić się* 'to blush', *martwić* 'to make sb. worry' vs. *martwić się* 'to worry oneself', *denerwować* 'to make sb. angry' vs. *denerwować się* 'to get angry'. Finally, *się* derivations also allow a decausative reading. The latter refers to verbs that express a change of state or physical process with no clearly implied agent, as shown in (43).

(43) *W tym   czajniku   woda   gotuje   się*
      in this.SG(M).LOC kettle.SG(M).LOC water.SG(F).NOM boil.PRS.3SG SELF
      bardzo szybko.
      very   quickly
      'In this kettle, the water boils very quickly.'

In Polish, decausative formations alternate with impersonal reflexive derivations (cf. §4.2). Both remain in a close semantic affinity, revealing, however, a slight semantic difference. Unlike impersonal reflexive verbs, as in (44a), decausative ones, as in (44b), do not imply any potential agent, which would be necessarily involved in the development of an action denoted by a verb.

(44) a. *Kawę   się   gotuje.*
          coffee.SG(F).ACC SELF boil.PRS.3SG
          'The coffee is being boiled.'

      b. *Kawa   się   gotuje.*
          coffee.SG(F).NOM SELF boil.PRS.3SG
          'The coffee is boiling.' (Swan 2002: 320)

4.2 Impersonal function

Polish has a well-developed impersonal system. It recognizes three kinds of impersonal constructions, including impersonal reflexive, impersonal passive and impersonal with dedicated verbal *-no/-to* forms. Impersonal reflexive constructions, (45), select a verb in an invariable 3$^{\text{rd}}$ person singular form. The sentence lacks a grammatical subject, which leads to the impersonal interpretation. Polish

employs reflexive impersonal constructions extensively, which constitutes one of the peculiarities of the grammatical system of this language.

(45) *Rozumie   się.*
      understand.PRS.3SG SELF
      'It is understandable.'

When referring to past events, impersonal reflexive verbs occur invariably in the 3rd person neuter singular past-tense indicative form, suffixed with *-ło*, as in (46). When denoting present events, they are in the 3rd person singular present-tense form, as in (47). Finally, in the context of future events, predicates are complex, consisting of an auxiliary in the 3rd person singular future-tense form and the 3rd person neuter singular past *-ło* form, as in (48).

(46) *Kiedyś wyłącznie pisało   się listy.*
      once   exclusively write.PST.3SG(N) SELF letter.PL(NVIR).ACC
      'In the past only letters were written.'

(47) *Teraz pisze   się listy   i   e-maile.*
      now   write.PRS.3SG SELF letter.PL(NVIR).ACC and email.PL(NVIR).ACC
      'Now letters and emails are [being] written.'

(48) *W przyszłości   będzie   się pisało   tylko*
      in future.SG(F).LOC be.FUT.3SG SELF write.PST.3SG(N) only
      e-maile   lub SMSy.
      email.PL(NVIR).ACC or sms.PL(NVIR).ACC
      'In the future only emails or SMS will be written.' (Sadowska 2012: 428)

Another distinctive feature of Polish impersonal reflexive constructions is that their verbs accept a direct object much in the same way as corresponding active verbs. However, what is atypical for them and what distinguishes these constructions from their equivalents in other languages (e.g. Serbo-Croatian) is that this noun phrase occurs in the accusative rather than the nominative, and that a verb invariably remains in the 3rd person singular form. This type of construction is an approximate equivalent of English clauses translated by 'one', 'you', or 'they'. Example (49) illustrates this point.

(49) a. *Owe przesądy   dzisiaj inaczej   się interpretuje.*
         such prejudice.PL(NVIR).ACC today differently SELF interpret.PRS.3SG
         'One interprets such prejudices differently nowadays.'

b. *Sprawę   załatwi   się   od   ręki.*
matter.SG(F).ACC fix.PRS.3SG SELF from hand.SG(F).GEN
'One will fix the matter without any problems.' (Siewierska 1988: 262, 246)

Impersonal reflexive constructions may also occur with dative arguments. The latter can be either represented by a personal pronoun e.g. *ci*, (50), or by a noun phrase e.g. *ludziom*, (51).

(50) *Jak ci   się   spało?*
how 2SG.DAT SELF sleep.PST.3SG(N)
'How did you sleep?' (lit. How was sleeping to you?)

(51) *Czy ludziom   się   tu   dobrze mieszka?*
Q   people.DAT.PL(NVIR) SELF here well   live.PRS.3SG
'Do people live happily here?' (lit. Is living happy to people here?) (Bielec 1998: 60)

When compared to the corresponding active constructions, impersonal reflexives occurring with dative may imply a nuance of involuntary act, as in (52b) or disclaim responsibility, as in (53b). The semantic difference is, however, very subtle and difficult to grasp by English translations.

(52) a. *Dobrze śpię.*
well   sleep.PRS.1SG
'I sleep well.'

b. *Dobrze mi   się   sypia.*
well   1SG.DAT SELF sleep.PRS.3SG
'I sleep well.'

(53) a. *Tak tylko powiedziałem.*
so   only say.PST.1SG(M)
'I only said that (i.e., I did not mean it).'

b. *Tak mi   się   tylko powiedziało.*
so   1SG.DAT SELF only say.PST.3SG(N)
'I only said that (i.e., I did not mean it).' (Swan 2002: 312)

In the past tense, impersonal reflexive clauses, (54a), may alternate with dedicated *-no/-to* impersonals i.e., constructions with the neutral singular past indicative verbal form, (54b). Both types of impersonal clauses remain in strong semantic affinity and are subject to free variation.

(54) a. *Wymieniło   się kilka   nazwisk.*
          mention.PST.3SG(N) SELF few.PL(NVIR).ACC name.PL(NVIR).ACC
          'Several names were mentioned.'

      b. *Wymieniono   kilka   nazwisk.*
          mention.PST.3SG(N) few.PL(NVIR).ACC name.PL(NVIR).ACC
          'Several names were mentioned.' (Swan 2002: 316)

The occurrence of *się* in the impersonal context is very high. This may result from the fact that active verbs that normally do not combine with the reflexive clitic realise this restriction in the impersonal context. Practically, any non-*się*-verbs can admit the reflexive clitic to express the impersonal meaning as *być* 'to be' and *mieć* 'to have' in (55), or *spać* 'to sleep' in (56).

(55) *Jak się było   młodym,   to się miało   więcej*
      how SELF be.PST.3SG(N) young.SG(M).INS then SELF have.PST.3SG(N) more
      czasu.
      time.SG(M).ACC
      'As you were young, you had more time.'

(56) *Tutaj się dobrze śpi.*
      here SELF well   sleep.PRS.3SG
      'One sleeps well here.' (Bielec 1998: 60)

Impersonal reflexive clauses are particularly frequent in the interrogative context, as shown in (57).

(57) a. *Jak tam się jedzie?*
          how there SELF go.PRS.3SG
          'How does one get there?'

      b. *Co   się mówi   w takiej sytuacji?*
          what SELF say.PRS.3SG in such situation.SG(F).LOC
          'What does one say in such a situation?' (Swan 2002: 320)

In impersonal reflexives, the implicit subject receives a human, indefinite interpretation. Thus, it may be unknown, generic and/or of a low degree of specificity. Logically such clauses cannot occur with overtly expressed subject and can only refer to the situations based on human activities, leading to a three-fold distinction: requests, as in (58a), commands, as in (58b), and statements, as in (58c).

(58) a. *Jak się jedzie   do Łodzi?*
          how SELF go.PRS.3SG to Łódź.GEN
          'How do you get to Łódź? (Swan 2002: 583)

      b. *Tak się   mówi.*
          SO   SELF say.PRS.3SG
          'That's how it is said.' (Bielec 1998: 60)

      c. *Tutaj się   tańczyło.*
          here SELF dance.PST.3SG(N)
          'There was dancing here.'

Whether impersonal reflexive constructions are indeed subjectless is in fact a matter of controversy in linguistic discussions. For instance, Comrie (1985) approaches this type of constructions as impersonal passive clauses with no overt subject and where the implied human agent is represented as a demoted underlying subject. On the other hand, Siewierska (1988) mentions that in the Polish linguistic tradition, impersonal reflexives are often viewed as fully active clauses where the implied human agent is both the underlying and surface subject. The description by Swan (2003: 538) aligns with this observation. The author argues that *się* occupies a quasi-nominal position, functioning thereby as subject.

4.3 Antipassive function

The reflexive clitic *się* may also perform the antipassive type of valency-changing operation. This means that it operates on a transitive verb without affecting the semantic roles of the associated arguments. The resulting construction is syntactically intransitive and the P argument loses the properties of a core argument. The syntactically downgraded P argument can either be realized as oblique, as in (29), repeated here for convenience as (59b), or is eliminated from the surface structure of a verb, as in (60b).

(59) a. *Chłopiec   chwycił   gałąź.*
          boy.SG(M).NOM grab.PST.3SG(M) branch.SG(F).ACC
          'The boy grabbed the branch (to hold onto it).'

      b. *Chłopiec   chwycił   się gałęzi.*
          boy.SG(M).NOM grab.PST.3SG(M) SELF branch.SG(F).GEN
          'The boy grabbed the branch (to hold onto it).' (Janic 2016: 176–177)

(60) a. *Wasz   syn   bije   dzieci.*
          2SG(M).POSS.NOM son.SG(M).NOM beat.PRS.3SG child.PL(NVIR).ACC
          'Your son beats up the children.'

b. *Wasz   syn   bije   się.*
   2SG(M).POSS.NOM son.SG(M).NOM beat.up.PRS.3SG SELF
   'Your son has a tendency to beat up [others].' (Janic 2016: 153)

Polish antipassive constructions with omitted P argument are characterized by the fact that this argument is in fact suppressed (or syntactically 'blocked'). Hence, it cannot be overtly realized. This type of antipassive construction is known in the literature under the label 'absolutive antipassive'. In Polish, the suppressed argument of absolutive antipassive clauses systematically receives a human interpretation. Unless explicitly specified by the context, it tends to display a low degree of specificity, triggering a generic, indefinite and/or non-referential reading. The verb denotes an irrealis, generic type of event, whereas the agent participant is viewed as having a special inclination or tendency to perform a denoted action.

Polish reveals a strong correlation between lexical meaning of a verb and the type of antipassive structure in which it occurs. Specifically, only verbs expressing an antagonistic action such as *kopać* 'to kick', *szczypać* 'to pinch', *pchać* 'to push' *przezywać* 'to nickname', *bić* 'to beat up', *drażnić* 'to annoy', *drapać* 'to scratch' *chlapać* 'to splash', *gryźć* 'to bite' and *pluć* 'to spit' can occur in absolutive antipassive constructions (Janic 2016: 157).

5 Diachronic development

In her discussion of the middle voice, Kemmer (1993) classifies languages according to whether they express reflexive and middle functions through the same form. In case where they do, the author raises the question of whether these forms are related diachronically. Subsequently, she divides languages into three types: i) those with a one-form middle system, ii) those with a two-form cognate system, and iii) those with a two-form non-cognate system. Polish belongs to the second type, which is considered to be rare crosslinguistically. Among other languages with a two-cognate system, one can also mention Jola (Atlantic-Congo) with -ɔrɔ and ɔ distinctive though diachronically related forms, and other Slavic languages.

Kemmer (1993) argues that a two-form cognate system results from a diachronic process of repartition (Bréal 1897). The outcome of such an evolution is a division of a single form into two distinct, heavy and light forms. The heavy form usually displays (pro)nominal features, whereas the latter, due to grammaticalization, shares the characteristic of clitics. The occurrence of the light form

results from renewing or reinforcing of the heavy form. This form is reintroduced to a language system as a relatively independent element. Then, due to coalescence or erosion, it undergoes phonological reduction. Thus, at the synchronic level, the light form is viewed as a reduced form of the heavy form. The formal split of a single form converges with the semantic division of labour. The light form is typically assigned to the middle domain, in contrast to its heavy counterpart, which maintains its initial coreference meaning.

The analogous development took place in Polish, where the light form *się* that demonstrates the properties of clitics originated in the heavy form *siebie*. The formal split aligned with the semantic extension. The grammaticalized form *się* extended the functional scope to the middle domain, preserving, however, the initial reflexive function. The next step of grammaticalization involves desemanticization (or 'semantic bleaching') where in some contexts the clitic *się* loses the semantic content and starts to operate on a structural basis alone (e.g. impersonal or antipassive). In Polish, the encroachment of *się* into a more structural-based field did not, however, lead to its total desemanticization. Even if *się* is particularly frequent in impersonal contexts, its omnipresence in middle or reflexive domains is also non-negligible.

Acknowledgements

Abbreviations

This chapter follows the Leipzig Glossing Rules (Comrie et al. 2008). Additional abbreviations used are:

NVIR non-virile   VIR   virile

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