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## Those notorious Polish reflexive pronouns: a plea for Middle Voice

### Preliminaries.

The paper is a fragment of a larger "work in progress", which has also been presented elsewhere (Tabakowska, in print). A general outline of the problem is given below as an attempt to draw the attention of scholars dealing with Slavic languages within the cognitive framework to an aspect of grammar which has been found notoriously difficult to deal with and as such often tends to be swept under the proverbial carpet.

The analysis presented below was inspired by, on the one hand, a theoretical account of Middle Voice in Kemmer (1993, MS), and on the other, a study of English, German, Russian and Bulgarian translations of *Emigranci* - an influential theatre play by the Polish playwright Sławomir Mrożek (Tabakowska & Schultze 2002). The latter deals with specific problems involved in translating a text whose interpretation depends crucially on the specific use of the Polish reflexive pronoun *sobie* in the idiolect of one of the protagonists; the former provides theoretical tools that make it possible to explain the complex semantics of the lexeme within the framework of cognitive linguistics by postulating the category of Middle Voice, whose existence in Polish has been either overtly denied or marginalized by most contemporary linguists (cf. e.g. Chachulska and Górski, MS; Laskowski 1984, 1998; Wróbel 2001). While the translation study - limited as it was - revealed some interesting similarities and differences between Slavic and non-Slavic languages, the theoretical cognitive approach offered some promising ways to deal with the category of Polish (or Slavic) Middle Voice in general.

In the following account, the analysis is limited to a single item, traditionally classified as a reflexive pronoun, whose defective paradigm includes the Accusative form *się* (with the corresponding heavy form *siebie*), as in (1a) and (1b):

- (1a) *Chłopiec widzi się w lustrze*  
 Boy sees SIĘ in mirror  
 "The boy sees himself in the mirror"
- (1b) *Chłopiec widzi siebie na zdjęciu*  
 Boy sees SIEBIE in picture  
 "The boy sees himself in the mirror"

and the Dative form *sobie* (with the corresponding light form *se*, classified as substandard), as in (2a):

- (2a) *Stoję sobie i myślę*  
 (I)stand SOBIE and think  
 "I am standing (quietly and for my own pleasure) and thinking"
- (2b) \**Stoję se i myślę*  
 (I)stand SE and think  
 "I am standing (quietly and for my own pleasure) and thinking"

I will not discuss in detail any of the numerous earlier descriptions of the pronoun (as listed below in bibliography; cf. for *się*: Bogusławski 1977, 1984; Kępińska 2001, Klemensiewicz 1985 [1961-72]; for *sobie*: Koneczna 1948; Łojasiewicz 1992; Safarewiczowa 1961; Szupryczyńska 1996; Weise 1968; for generative accounts Chachulska & Górski MS, Laskowski 1984, 1898; for cognitive descriptions Dąbrowska 1997 (*się*) and Rudzka-Ostyn 1992; Wierzbicka 1999 (*sobie*)), making direct reference to particular sources only when it will be required by my own analysis. However, in the following discussion I will try to justify the claim that none of these descriptions either manages to capture the entire semantico-pragmatic complexity of the pronoun or allows for making important distinctions of a more general significance. Therefore I begin my own discussion with a list of assumptions shared by analyses conducted outside the framework of cognitive linguistics:

- both *się* and *sobie* are homophonous items, with coreference as a necessary requirement for all their uses;

- the Accusative *się* is alternatively classified as a "personal pronoun in the Accusative"; "a derivational morpheme in verb morphology"; "a functionally empty verbal particle", and, simply and rather charmingly, as "a little word" (*wyrazek*, Bogusławski 1997);

- the Dative *sobie* is described, by various authors, as "a reflexive", "a derivational morpheme", "an inflectional lexeme" (Łojasiewicz 1992 ) "a conventional pronoun" whose use is "optional and purely stylistic" (Koneczna 1948); "a pseudo-Dative" (Szupryczyńska 1996:21);

- the distribution of particular forms is shown as conditioned by binary oppositions of lexical categories (transitive vs. intransitive verbs) or grammatical categories (active vs. passive voice).

In the following presentation no cross-linguistic comparisons will be made, although there can be no doubt about their potential contribution to general theory (cf. Kemmer 1993).

Moreover, I will exclude the reciprocal use of reflexive pronouns, although it could obviously be incorporated into the system. Reference to verb semantics and aspect/tense differentiations will be made only when directly relevant. Similarly, no attention will be paid to word order alterations (i.e. meaning distinctions between pre- and postposition of *się* and *sobie* in the nominal phrase). Finally, all types of usage will be excluded in which the reflexive pronoun in cases other than Accusative or Dative marks oblique semantic roles, thus reducing a scene participant to an element of the setting, as in (3):

(3) *Jan zobaczył ją blisko siebie*

Jan saw her close SIEBIE-Gen

"Jan saw her close to himself",

which is a reference-point construction, with the phrase "close to himself" constituting an element of the setting.

### Assumptions

In agreement with the tenets of cognitive linguistics, it will be assumed that binary oppositions only grasp grammatical prototypes: although "transitive" and "intransitive" are the two basic event types (Kemmer 1993, MS), they are in fact just two opposite extremes of a continuum, along which particular "intermediate" uses may be placed. Semantic (as different from purely formal) transitivity is an inherently scalar phenomenon: it is a matter of degree.

Moreover, no analysis can be complete without considering diachronic factors: as is the case with all other areas of grammar, a description of relative pronouns reveals that diachrony and synchrony are intertwined.

Following these general assumptions, I would like to make the following claims:

- *się* and *sobie* are polyphonous radial categories;
- Accusative and Dative forms are semantically related; both are realizations of the role of Patient as opposed to that of a (coreferential) Agent, with the latter specified as either Recipient or Beneficiary; the two roles are semantically distinct, as was convincingly argued by Maldonado, who discusses the differentiation in the context of Spanish (Maldonado 2002);<sup>1</sup>
- cliticization of reflexive pronouns is diagnostic of their meaning, and the distribution of heavy and light forms (i.e. "full" pronouns vs. pronominal clitics) is iconic;
- a cognitive analysis of (contemporary) Polish justifies postulating the existence of the category of Middle Voice, which - as was said above - is only exceptionally acknowledged by Polish grammarians (among rare exceptions there is an inconclusive and rather cursory mention in Laskowski 1998:190 - 91; cf. below);
- *się* and *sobie* are the exponents of Middle Voice (with *się* as a direct, and *sobie* as an indirect exponent, cf., respectively, sections 3.2. and 3.3. below).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. in this connection the distinction between the semantics of *to+NP* and *for+NP* in English; e.g. *I wrote a letter to my boss* vs. *I wrote a letter for my boss*.

## Analysis

The above claims will be substantiated (in sections 3.2, 3.3. and 3.4.) following a brief and general outline of the semantics of Middle Voice in section 3.1.

### *The semantics of Middle Voice*

In classical definitions (cf. Lyons 1969, Laskowski 1998) Middle Voice is described as expressing the notion of "subject [ or Agent - E.T.] affectedness", which, when applied to the meaning of Polish (Slavic) reflexives, covers the meaning of both the Accusative and the Dative forms. In Maldonado the general definition of the category is related to the thematic role of Experiencer and narrowed down to "experiencer's affectedness in his dominion" (Maldonado 2002: fn.11). Finally, in Kemmer, further specification is made which differentiates between various degrees of "affectedness": the Patient either "enters the sphere of control" of the (coreferential) Agent (and becomes coded as the Dative, or the indirect object), or is "directly and completely affected" (and becomes coded as the Accusative, or the direct object; cf. Kemmer 1993: 50). But even this definition proves too general, as it makes no semantic distinction between the Reflexive and the Middle. Therefore Kemmer claims that it should be based upon a classification of "basic contrasting types of events to which human beings are sensitive" (Kemmer MS: 1). Those, in turn, are defined by the choice of and mutual relations between the main elements of the event structure, i.e. the participants and the setting. In Kemmer's analysis of "Middle" and "Reflexive" events this fundamental distinction (as originally postulated by Ronald Langacker) underlies the choice of the crucial parameter, which is defined as the "degree of distinguishability of participants", ( i.e. the Agent and the Patient, Kemmer 1993, MS). Since the Agent-Patient distinction underlies the semantics of transitivity, all relevant semantic distinctions build up a paradigm, which reveals a "scale of transitivity". This is given below as a modification of a language-comparative schema, which can be found in Kemmer (1993:2 11; cf. also Tabakowska, in print):

Table 1.

	Transitive (Active/Passive V.) Intransitive(Active/Passive V.)	Reflexive	Middle
mono-:	2 participants P1 $\neq$ P2	P1 = P2.....P1/2	2 participants 1 participant
di-:	3 participants P1 $\neq$ P2 $\neq$ P3	P1(Ag) = P3(Pat)...P1/3	3 participants

As can be seen from the table, the Middle Voice expresses the degree of participant (notional) distinguishability intermediate between conceptualizations involving a clear distinction between two participants, who perform, respectively, the semantic roles of Agent and Patient (either non-coreferential for transitive events employing active or passive voice construals or coreferential for reflexive events), and a total conceptual "merger" of the two roles, which results in prototypically intransitive construals. It is this semantic description of the Middle that underlies the analysis of the Polish data presented further in this section.

*się*

The Accusative form of the reflexive pronoun, *się*, prototypically occurs in structures which are traditionally classified as *reflexives proper* (or *sensu stricto*), illustrated as (1a) (repeated below for convenience) and (4):

(1a) *Chłopiec widzi się w lustrze*  
 Boy sees SIĘ in mirror  
 "The boy sees himself in the mirror"

(4) (L)<sup>2</sup> *Basia myje się w łazience*  
 Basia washes SIĘ in bathroom  
 "Basia washes in the bathroom"

<sup>2</sup> Capital letters in brackets mark sources of examples: (L) - Laskowski 1984, (£) - Łojasiewicz 1992, unless thus marked, the examples quoted are my own.

Laskowski (1984, 1998) makes no distinction between (1) and (4). But it will be noticed that in (1a) the Agent acts as he might act on any other entity, and the coreference is "incidental", cf. (1c):

- (1c) *Chłopiec widzi swój pokój (odbity) w lustrze*  
 Boy sees his room (reflected) in mirror  
 "The boy can see his room reflected in the mirror".

The two participants are notionally distinct, which allows for the use of the heavy form in (cf. section 1 above):

- (1b) *Chłopiec widzi siebie na zdjęciu*  
 Boy sees SIEBIE in picture  
 "The boy sees himself in the mirror".

By contrast, (4) employs a verb which belongs to "grooming"/"body care" verbs (term from Kemmer 1993), and therefore the Agent-Patient coreference is pragmatically expected: our (experiential) knowledge about "what things are like" imposes the interpretation in which both semantic roles "refer to a single holistic entity" (Kemmer 1993: 63). Hence (4a) comes closer to a one-participant (intransitive) event than (1a). To mark an alternative conceptualization, the third person singular personal pronoun *sama* ('herself, alone')<sup>3</sup> may be added, in order to inform the listener that the event is to be construed contrary to his pragmatically based expectations:

- (4b) *Basia myje się sama*  
 Basia washes SIĘ alone  
 "Basia washes (all by) herself"

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. analogous use of *lui-meme* in French.

(4b) may be used, for example, to express the conceptualizer's admiration of a little Basia's achievement. On the other hand, the heavy form is used to indicate the notional "separation" (individuation) of participants:

- (4c) *Basia myje siebie i dzieci w łazience*  
 Basia washes SIEBIE and children-Acc in bathroom  
 "Basia washes herself and the children in the bathroom"

Compare

- (4d) ? *Basia myje siebie w łazience*  
 Basia washes SIEBIE in bathroom  
 "\*Basia washes her(coref.) in the bathroom"

The comparison of (1a) and (1b) on the one hand and (4a), (4c) and (4d) on the other suggests the existence of a semantic difference between the Reflexive and the Middle meanings within the category of *reflexives proper*.

Another group of structures involves the use of reflexive pronouns with *reflexiva tantum* (cf. in Kemmer (1993, MS) the class of *deponents*, or verbs lacking unmarked counterparts), which Polish grammarians characterise as unmotivated. It is illustrated below as

- (5) *Jan boi się [\*siebie] własnego cienia*  
 Jan fears SIĘ own-Gen shadow-Gen  
 "Jan is afraid of his own shadow"

On diachronic scrutiny, most *reflexiva tantum* prove to be, in earlier stages of language, semantically (and formally) transitive; moreover, they may be considered as a step in the historical development of language (as compared to basic, experiential meanings exemplified in (4)). Events exemplified by (5) are defined by Kemmer as "mental events"; it has often been claimed that emotions and cognitive processes tend to be conceptualized as one-participant events, and the corresponding structures show "progressively lower participant distinguishability" (Kemmer (1993: 73). Body and soul

are naturally conceived of as a unity; on the other hand, when a mental event requires a "schizophrenic" conceptualization, the use of the Reflexive (i.e. the heavy form) proves to be the only possibility:

(6a) *Jan nienawidzi (sam) siebie [\*się]*  
 Jan hates (alone) SIEBIE [\*SIE]  
 "Jan hates himself"

(6b) *Jan rozumie (sam) siebie [\*się]*  
 Jan understands (alone) SIEBIE [\*SIE]  
 "Jan understands himself"

In (6a) and (6b) the Agent and the Patient are conceptualized as two notionally distinct (though coreferential) entities. Moreover, there is no expectation (or pragmatic predictability) of coreference, and this results in the transitive construal:

(6c) *Jan nienawidzi Marysi*  
 Jan hates Marysia-GEN  
 "Jan hates Marysia"

Among verbs that take reflexive pronouns Polish linguists list further two classes: denominal or deverbal derivatives, as in:

(7) *Nasz pies starzeje się [\*siebie]*  
 Our dog makes-old SIE [SIEBIE]  
 "Our dog is getting old"

and verbs referring to the so-called "spontaneous processes", as in:

- (8a) (L) *Drzwi się (same) [\*siebie] otwierają*  
 Door SIĘ (alone) [\*SIEBIE] open  
 "The door opens (all by itself)"

While the former class is defined by formal criteria, the latter appeals to verb semantics; it will be noticed that in fact both groups of verbs concern spontaneous events, in which a change of state is perceived, but the Agent is not coded, because it is either unknown (as in (7)) or not identified (as in (8)). A direct cause would naturally require a transitive construction:

- (8b) *Ktoś otwiera drzwi*  
 Somebody opens door  
 "Somebody opens/is opening the door"

With unknown agenthood, processes are conceptualized as autonomous occurrences. Unknowable or mysterious agency, considered as characteristic of "nonrationalist ethnophilosophy", is sometimes believed to constitute an element of Slavic culture (cf. e.g. Wierzbicka 1999, Katan 1999); more universally, structures like (9) below are common with "natural processes":

- (9a) *Błyska się [\*siebie]*  
 Lightens-3sg neut SIĘ [\*SIEBIE}  
 "It lightens, there are flashes of lightning"
- b. *Ściemnia/rozwidnia się [\*siebie]*  
 Darkens/lights-3sg neut SIĘ [\*SIEBIE]  
 "It is getting dark/it dawns"

(9a) and (9b) are described in grammars of Polish as formally "subjectless" constructions (with the verb occurring in the most neutral 3sg neuter). Since agency can only be inferred from the effects of an activity, it is only the "end-point" participant that is

marked; the meaning can be paraphrased as "some (unidentified or unidentifiable) entity made itself act upon itself". I propose to relate such constructions to what I call "endocentric" conceptualizations (see Tabakowska in print).

Finally, reflexive pronouns occur in the so-called impersonal constructions:

- (10) (L) *We wsi buduje się [\*siebie] nową szkołę*  
 In village builds-3sg neut SIĘ [\*SIEBIE] new-Acc school-Acc  
 "In the village a new school is being built"

In such structures the Agent (although potentially) identifiable is not salient; in Laskowski (1984) this is a case of *dezagentyzacja* ("agent demotion"). Semantically, they come close to the Passive Voice, with the Agent uncoded, as in:

- (11a) *Ta książka dobrze się [\*siebie] czyta*  
 This book well SIĘ [\*SIEBIE] reads  
 "This book reads well"

In (11a) the action is seen as involving a single participant because of the low degree of agency identifiability: reference to a specific Agent is communicatively irrelevant.

Let us compare (11a) with (11b):

- (11b) *Ta książka znajduje się [\*siebie] na górnej półce*  
 This book finds SIĘ [\*SIEBIE] on top shelf  
 "This book is to be found on the top shelf"

The verb *znajdować się* ('to be found') is classified as a *reflexivum tantum* (cf. above) and listed in dictionaries as a separate entry, besides the non-reflexive transitive counterpart, *znajdować (coś)* ('to find smth')

A natural extension of nonidentifiable agency involves the concept of generic Agents (Bogusławski calls this type of construal as *Anonymisierung* - anonymisation;

1984: 51); in consequence, the agency is semantically demoted to give a one-participant event structure, as in:

- (12) *Tak się [\*siebie] nie robi*  
 So SIĘ [SIEBIE] not does  
 "This is not done"

As seen from (12), construals of this kind typically include norms, commands, prohibitions, etc., which associate agency with "everyone and anyone".<sup>4</sup>

Finally, those authors who recognize certain constructions as exponents of the category Middle (*medialne*) include on their lists such expressions as (13):

- (13) (based on L) *Jan się (\*sam) [\*siebie] ubiera w Vistuli*  
 Jan SIĘ (\*alone) [SIEBIE] dresses in Vistula  
 "Jan has his clothes made at Vistula"

While the Agent remains non-salient, the Patient (or, strictly speaking, the Recipient) is conceptualized as being in control of the process. The action is then performed by the Agent "for himself (for his own well-being)" (Laskowski 1998: 192). However, in fact in (13) there is no overt Agent at all: the Patient (Recipient or Beneficiary) causes a non-salient (unknown?) Agent to act upon himself.

As seen from (1) - (13), the opposition between *siebie* and *się* is in fact that between the Reflexive and the Middle: whenever the latter (the light form) cannot be replaced with the former (the heavy form), the construction is a case of semantic Middle. Of the examples given above, it is only (1) that may be given a Reflexive meaning.

In this connection, one more point should be made. First, the opposition between deponents and corresponding transitive verbs results in a change of meaning, which is exemplified in (14):

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<sup>4</sup> In some grammars *się* as used in (12) is classified as the grammatical subject.

(14) *zdradzić się* (ITV) vs. *zdradzić siebie* (TV; cf. (4b),(4c))  
 "to give oneself away" "to betray oneself"

(14) is thus a case of grammaticalization of the Middle meaning.

One further point concerns verbs expressing the so-called "involuntary states":

(15) (L) *Wygodnie mi się [\*siebie] siedzi na tym krześle*  
 Comfortably me-Dat SIĘ [\*SIEBIE] sits-3sg neut on this chair  
 "I find this chair comfortable (to sit on)"

Kemmer considers such structures as being "peculiar to the Slavic languages" and calls them "perpensative" (Kemmer 1993: 150). The Experiencer appears in the Dative: he is affected, though unvoluntarily; the coreferential Agent is identified but considered totally out of control and granted no responsibility for his own actions.<sup>5</sup> Semantically, this is a case of what is defined as indirect Middle, which will be discussed in the next section.

*sobie*

The Dative form of the reflexive pronoun occurs less frequently than its Accusative counterpart, which may perhaps explain why the cliticized light form *se* is still a feature of substandard Polish. Moreover, it will be less frequently given the Middle interpretation, since indirect (Dative) objects are only partially affected by actions undertaken by Agents, which is how they differ from direct (Accusative) objects.

In the literature, three basic types of the lexeme *sobie* are differentiated (cf. Łojasiewicz 1992). *Sobie* as a reflexive pronoun proper occurs in constructions exemplified by (16a) below:

(16a) (Ł) *Teraz znów sobie przeczysz*  
 Now again SOBIE (you) deny  
 "Now you are contradicting yourself once again"

<sup>5</sup>In fact this interpretation agrees with the semantics of the Polish Dative (cf. e.g. Rudzka-Ostyn 1992, D<sup>1</sup>browska 1997).

The Agent *chooses* to act upon himself, but he might just as well act upon any other entity:

- (16b) *Teraz znów przeczysz nauczycielowi*  
 Now again (you)deny teacher-Dat  
 "Now you are contradicting your teacher once again"

Semantically, both are Reflexive: the Agent conceptually distinct from the Patient (Recipient), although - as implied by the Dative semantics - the action implies entering the Recipient's sphere of control.

The second type of use involves *sobie* as a "morph belonging to the verbal lexeme"<sup>6</sup>, as in:

- (17) (Ł) *Wyobrażam sobie tę scenę*  
 (I)imagine SOBIE this scene  
 "I can imagine that scene"

Because of the nature of the (mental) process, the Agent can only act upon himself. As was the case of *reflexiva tantum*, the verb is derived from its transitive counterpart, compare:

- (18) (Ł) *Statuetka wyobrażała siedzącą kobietę*  
 Statue-Dim represented sitting woman  
 "The little statue represented a sitting woman"

Finally, the last type of *sobie* is described as an uninflected lexeme that may be "attached to various verbs" (Łojasiewicz 1992: 509):

- (19) *Czytała sobie (subst. se) książkę (TV) cf. Czytała Marii*  
 (She)read SOBIE (SE) book (She)read Mary-Dat

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. the discussion of *reflexiva tantum* (deponents) in 3.2.

"She was reading a book (quietly and for pleasure)" vs. "She as reading a book to Mary"

(20)<sup>7</sup> *Stoję sobie* (subst. *se*) *i myślę* (ITV) cf. *\*Stoję Marii*

(I)stand SOBIE (SE) and think I stand Mary-Dat

"I am standing (quietly and for my own pleasure) and thinking" vs. "\*I am standing to (for?) Mary"<sup>8</sup>

It should be pointed out that, depending on the degree of affectedness, the Recipient/Benefactor may be conceptualized as either a participant (as in (19) or (20)), or as an element of setting (as in (1) above). As can be seen from the English glosses, E. (like many other languages) conceptualizes a relatively low degree of involvement as an element of setting (cf. adverbials: *quietly, leisurely, bloß, einfach*).

Most authors stress that the action must be "beneficial", "favourable", etc. for the Agent; hence it is often voluntary and comes as a result of an obvious pragmatic limitation: one does not, under normal circumstances, want to cause damage to oneself. Conceptually - as was the case with the direct Middle (3.2.) - the Agent-cum-Patient is conceived as "a single holistic entity". Once again the semantic opposition between the first two types of *sobie* and the last usage is that between the Reflexive and the Middle.

*się* vs. *sobie*

The analysis presented in sections 3.2. and 3.3. above shows - predictably - that the Accusative and the Dative forms of the reflexive pronoun are semantically related in the Reflexive vs. the Middle uses. It is also possible to formulate some crucial parameters that define the semantics of the Reflexive as opposed to that of the Middle. The conceptual passage from the former to the latter is marked by:

- a diminishing degree of distinguishability of participants in the event (an observation which remains in agreement with Kemmer 1993 and MS);

- a diminishing degree of Agent identifiability (an observation supplementing Kemmer's model);

<sup>7</sup> Cf. ex. (2a) and (2b) above.

<sup>8</sup> The English translation reveals the ambiguity involved in the Recipient vs. Benefactive interpretation.

- a growing degree of the "receiving end" participant affectedness.

As an appendix, under (20) some examples are given to illustrate the function of verb prefixation in expressing the opposition between the direct and the indirect Middle:

<u>direct Middle</u>	<u>indirect Middle</u>
(20) a. <i>zamyślić się</i> (ITV) "to be lost in thought"	<i>myśleć sobie</i> "to think=make an opinion"
b. <i>zasiedzieć się</i> (ITV) "to lose count of time on a visit"	<i>siedzieć sobie</i> "to sit (comfortably,leisurely)"
c. <i>zagadać się</i> (TV) "to lose count of time when talking"	<i>gadać sobie</i> "to babble away"
d. <i>myć się</i> (TV) "to wash"	<i>myć sobie (ciało)</i> "to wash one's body"

### Conclusions:

The analysis presented in section 3 justifies the following conclusions:

- the "real world" coreference, while indeed a *necessary* condition of reflexivity (which is of course a matter of general consensus) is not *sufficient*: reflexivity is a scalar concept, and in the conceptualization of basic events the borderline between one- and two-participant conceptualizations is fuzzy;

- in coreferential conceptualizations, pragmatic factors influence the speaker's choice of either the Reflexive or the Middle: particular construals are chosen depending on our knowledge of what things are like and what things should be like in our reality;

- cultural (pragmatic) conditionings can be decisive when conceptualizers talk about events that are expected or required to involve notional as opposed to "material" coreferentiality.

As far as general implications go, the addition of Polish data (which Kemmer does not cover in her work) corroborates the cognitivist description of the Middle as given in Kemmer (1993), thus providing further evidence pointing to the universality of the concept.

In terms of practical application, a better understanding of the Reflexive and the Middle semantics has already proved valuable in analyzing a translational problem, showing, once again, that the overall impact of a (literary) text may depend crucially on seemingly irrelevant linguistic minutiae. A plea for the recognition of linguistic theory (and the model of language and grammar offered by cognitive linguistics in particular) in the theory and practice of translation was made in Tabakowska & Schultze 2002, which hopefully takes a little step in the right direction. Linguistic pedagogy seems another promising area, offering numerous topics for further research.

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