

Anna Bondaruk

*John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin*

Bożena Rozwadowska

*University of Wrocław*

Wojciech Witkowski

*University of Wrocław*

## Passivisation of Polish Object Experiencer Verbs vs. the Unaccusativity Hypothesis (Part 1)

### Abstract

The paper aims to verify Landau's (2010) claim that the inability of stative Object Experiencer (OE) verbs to form verbal passives is directly linked to their unaccusativity. In the first part of the article it is shown that given the polysemous nature of OE verbs in Polish, the collected corpus data confirm that unambiguously stative OE verbs do not form verbal passives in Polish. However, it is argued that this fact cannot be taken as evidence for the unaccusativity of these predicates. A number of arguments are provided against the claim that Polish stative OE verbs are unaccusative. Firstly, in contrast to their English equivalents, stative OE verbs in Polish cannot co-occur with an expletive subject. Secondly, the accusative case of the Experiencer is clearly structural in Polish, as it is affected by the Genitive of Negation. The second part of the article (to be published in a forthcoming issue of this journal) focuses on the mutual hierarchy of the two arguments of OE verbs: the Experiencer and the Target/Subject Matter (T/SM). The evidence based on Condition A, pronominal variable binding, and Condition C effects is inconclusive, and hence does not allow us to determine which of the two arguments is projected higher in the structure. For this reason, it is assumed after Landau (2010) that the Experiencer is projected higher than the T/SM. The overall conclusion reached in the paper is that stative OE verbs in Polish are not syntactically unaccusative, and therefore their immunity to the verbal passive must be sought elsewhere. The answer to the question why stative OE verbs do not form verbal passives crucially relies on their having a complex ergative structure as in Bennis (2004), where both arguments are internal, while the external argument is missing altogether.

### Keywords

Object Experiencer verbs, unaccusatives, passivisation, expletives, Polish

### Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest zweryfikowanie hipotezy Landaua (2010), że brak możliwości tworzenia strony biernej czynnościowej od polskich czasowników stanu z nosicielem stanu w pozycji dopełnienia wynika z nieakuzatywnej struktury tych czasowników. W pierwszej części artykułu, ze względu na polisemiczną naturę omawianych czasowników, do badań wykorzystano dane korpusowe, na podstawie których nie wykazano występowania strony biernej czynnościowej dla tych czasowników. W pracy postawiono jednak hipotezę, że niewystępowanie strony biernej czynnościowej nie jest wykładnikiem nieakuzatywnej natury omawianych predykatów. Hipotezę tę poparto następującymi obserwacjami: (i) w języku polskim, w odróżnieniu od języka angielskiego, czasowniki stanu z nosicielem stanu w pozycji dopełnienia nie występują z pustym semantycznie elementem w pozycji podmiotu; (ii) biernik, w którym występuje nosiciel stanu, jest przypadkiem strukturalnym, ponieważ ulega zmianie na dopełniacz w zdaniach przeczących (dopełniacz negacji). Druga część artykułu (która ukaże się w kolejnym numerze czasopisma) jest poświęcona wzajemnej strukturze hierarchicznej obu argumentów: nosiciela stanu oraz argumentu T/SM. Efekty wiązania zaimków anaforycznych, zmiennych zaimkowych oraz wyrażeń referencyjnych (warunki A i C teorii rzędu i wiązania) nie pozwalają na uzyskanie jednoznacznej odpowiedzi na to, który z dwóch argumentów – nosiciel stanu czy argument T/SM – zajmuje wyższą pozycję w zdaniu. Przyjmuje się więc za Landauem (2010), że to nosiciel stanu jest generowany wyżej w strukturze niż argument T/SM. W wyniku przeprowadzonej analizy stwierdzono, że polskie czasowniki stanu z nosicielem stanu nie są nieakuzatywne pod względem składniowym, a brak strony biernej czynnościowej dla tych czasowników jest pochodną ich złożonej struktury ergatywnej zaproponowanej przez Ben-nisa (2004), w której nie występuje argument zewnętrzny, a oba wybierane argumenty są argumentami wewnętrznymi.

### Słowa kluczowe

czasowniki z nosicielem stanu w pozycji dopełnienia, nieakuzatywność, strona bierna, semantycznie puste podmioty, język polski

## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

The question whether OE verbs can undergo passivisation has played an important role in the debate concerning the syntactic structure of these predicates. The inability of OE verbs to form verbal passives is taken by Belletti and Rizzi (1988) to be an argument in favour of their unaccusative status. This stance is maintained by Legendre (1989, 1993), Grimshaw (1990), Roberts (1991) and Herschensohn (1992, 1999). Pesetsky (1995) offers a refinement of Belletti and Rizzi's (1988) analysis by observing that only a subset of OE verbs, namely stative OE verbs, fail to give rise to verbal passives, whereas agentive and eventive OE verbs do form verbal passives, which clearly argues against the unaccusative structure, at least for agentive and eventive OE verbs.

---

<sup>1</sup> This research was funded by grant 2014/15/B/HS2/00588 from National Science Centre, Poland. We are most grateful to two anonymous SPL reviewers, whose insightful comments significantly contributed to the final shape of the paper. All errors remain our responsibility.

Combining the insights of Belletti and Rizzi (1988), on the one hand, and Pesetsky (1995), on the other, Landau (2010) claims that agentive and eventive OE verbs are syntactically transitive, since they form verbal passives, whereas stative OE verbs, which resist verbal passivisation, are syntactically unaccusative. Most radically, Grafmiller (2013) argues that even stative OE verbs can form verbal passives, and hence are syntactically transitive. All in all, in the literature the (in)ability to form a verbal passive by an OE verb is taken to testify to its unaccusative/transitive structure.

The aim of the first part of the paper is to test whether there is a close correlation between the passivisability of Polish OE verbs and their syntactic structure. In particular, an attempt is made to check whether the passive structures that Polish OE verbs form provide support for the unaccusative structure of the stative OE verbs.<sup>2</sup> Section 2 focuses on Landau's (2010) account of OE verbs' passivisation, which explicitly derives the immunity of stative OE verbs to form verbal passives from the unaccusative structure they have. Section 3 examines the various passivisation options that exist for Polish OE verbs and confronts them with the predictions of Landau's (2010) analysis. Section 4 addresses the question whether the failure of Polish stative OE verbs to form verbal passives results from their having an unaccusative status. Two main arguments are provided against the unaccusative structure of stative OE verbs in Polish – one relating to the nature of the accusative case of the Experiencer, and the other concerning the impossibility for stative OE verbs to host expletive subjects. Section 5 concludes Part 1 of the paper and anticipates the analysis of the structure of Polish stative OE verbs elaborated in Part 2, which crucially relies on their having a complex ergative structure, as in Bennis (2004).

## 2. Landau's (2010) analysis of OE verb passivisation

Landau (2010) distinguishes two types of languages, depending on the status of passives derived from OE verbs:

- (1) Type A languages: Only eventive (non-stative) Class II verbs have verbal passive. (English, Dutch, Finnish)

Type B languages: Class II verbs have no verbal passive. (Italian, French, Hebrew)  
(Landau 2010: 47)

It transpires from the typology in (1) that only eventive Class II psych predicates from Belletti and Rizzi's (1988) classification can give rise to verbal

<sup>2</sup> Żychliński (2013) extensively argues that OE verbs in Polish are not different from other transitive verbs, yet he does not take into account different interpretations of OE verbs. We would like to address the issue of the contrast between eventivity and stativity of OE verbs and examine the way this distinction is reflected in the passivisation options they allow.

passives in a restricted set of languages, whereas stative Class II psychological predicates do not form verbal passives at all.<sup>3</sup> Landau (2010) argues that stative Class II verbs do not passivise because they lack an external argument, and hence are unaccusative. Landau (2010: 49) proposes the following two generalisations:

- (2) Universally, stative Class II verbs do not passivise.
- (3) Universally, stative Class II verbs are unaccusative.

Landau (2010) derives the unaccusative status of stative Class II psychological predicates from two premises. The first one concerns the fact that the accusative case associated with the Experiencer of Class II verbs is inherent, not structural (cf. Belletti and Rizzi 1988). Landau (2010: 55–56) makes the following claims:

- (4) Universally, non-nominative Experiencers bear inherent case.
- (5) Inherent case is only assigned to internal arguments.

Since the accusative case on the Experiencer found with Class II psychological predicates is inherent (see (4)), it is assigned VP-internally, which means that accusative case marked Experiencers represent internal arguments, not external ones (see (5)), in a way analogous to Belletti and Rizzi's (1988) proposal. The second premise in support of the unaccusative structure of stative Class II psychological verbs that Landau (2010) relies on is closely linked with the first one. Since the Experiencer appears in the VP internal position, and the other argument, corresponding to the T/SM of Pesetsky (1995), is lower on the thematic hierarchy than the Experiencer (cf. (6) below), both arguments of stative Class II verbs must be VP internal, and thus represent internal arguments. The thematic hierarchy that Landau (2010: 55) adopts is reproduced in (6) below:

- (6) Causer >> Experiencer >> T/SM

Since in the case of stative Class II predicates, both the Experiencer and the T/SM argument are generated inside the VP, the resulting structure must lack an external argument, and hence must be unaccusative. This way, the interplay between the nature of the case assigned to the Experiencer, as in (4) and (5), and the thematic hierarchy in (6), allows Landau (2010) to derive the unaccusativity of Class II verbs, which, in turn, is responsible for their failure to form verbal passives (cf. (1)). Nevertheless, Landau (2010) emphasizes that the unaccusative behaviour, and the consequent lack of verbal passives, are typical

---

<sup>3</sup> According to Belletti and Rizzi (1988), Class II OE verbs have an accusative Experiencer and a nominative Theme (or T/SM in Pesetsky's (1995) and Landau's (2010) accounts).

only of those Class II verbs that are unambiguously stative, such as *concern*, *interest*, *depress*, *worry*, etc. He underlines the fact that the thematic grid of these verbs is deprived of a Causer argument, which is responsible for the eventive interpretation. Landau (2010: 76) takes the inability of stative OE verbs to form verbal passives in languages like English, Dutch and Finnish to constitute a core psych property.

### 3. Passivisation patterns of Polish OE verbs

A thorough examination of passivisation patterns of Polish OE verbs found in the National Corpus of Polish ([www.nkjp.pl](http://www.nkjp.pl)) shows that eventive (non-stative) OE verbs in Polish can easily form verbal passives.<sup>4</sup> There are two ways of signaling verbal passives in Polish: (i) by means of the auxiliary *zostać* 'become', followed by the perfective passive participle, and (ii) by means of the auxiliary *być* 'to be', accompanied by the imperfective passive participle (cf. Zabrocki 1981).<sup>5</sup> The data in (7), (8), and (9) show that the verbal passive with the auxiliary *zostać* 'become' can be found with an eventive OE verb such as *zaskoczyć* 'surprise':<sup>6,7</sup>

- (7) Zostali oni zaskoczeni zachowaniem przywódcy.  
 became they<sub>NOM</sub> startled<sub>PERF</sub> behaviour<sub>INSTR</sub> leader<sup>8</sup>  
 'They were startled with the leader's behaviour.'

- (8) Zostali zaskoczeni przez dwutlenek węgla.  
 became startled<sub>PERF</sub> by dioxide carbon  
 'They were startled by carbon dioxide.'

<sup>4</sup> Although throughout the paper, reference is made to Polish OE in general, we restrict our attention to Class II OE verbs, i.e. those OE verbs that require an accusative case marked Experiencer argument.

<sup>5</sup> Adjectival passives in Polish are built with the auxiliary *być* 'to be', followed by the perfective passive participle, as in (i) below:

- (i) Marek jest poirytowany.  
 Mark<sub>NOM</sub> is irritated<sub>PERF</sub>  
 'Mark is irritated.'

Both eventive and stative OE verbs can form adjectival passives in Polish.

<sup>6</sup> The division of Polish OE verbs into eventive (non-stative) and stative is adopted after Biały (2005: 75–76). In Biały's classification eventive OE verbs comprise *irytować* 'irritate', *straszyć* 'scare', *obrazić* 'insult', *oczarować* 'spellbind', *rozbawić* 'amuse', *rozgniewać* 'annoy', etc. Stative OE verbs, in turn, consist of *interesować* 'interest', *intrygować* 'intrigue', *martwić* 'worry', *niepokoić* 'upset', *poruszyć* 'move', *przygnębiać* 'depress', *przytłaczać* 'overwhelm', *trapić* 'plague', *zasmucać* 'grieve', etc.

<sup>7</sup> The data provided in this section come from the National Corpus of Polish.

<sup>8</sup> The following abbreviations have been used in the paper: DAT – dative, GEN – genitive, IMPERF – imperfective, INSTR – instrumental, NOM – nominative, PERF – perfective, PL – plural, REFL – reflexive, and SG – singular.

- (9) A tu nagle został zaskoczony grzechem Adama.  
 and here suddenly became startled<sub>PERF</sub> sin<sub>INSTR</sub> Adam<sub>GEN</sub>  
 'And here suddenly he was startled by Adam's sin.'

Whereas sentence (7) contains a demoted Causer realized as the instrumental case marked DP,<sup>9</sup> the Causer in (8) is expressed by means of *przez* 'by'-phrase. Sentence (9) contains the adverb *nagle* 'suddenly', marking the punctual past, and typical of eventive passives (cf. Pesetsky 1995; Grafmiller 2013). Likewise, other eventive OE verbs in Polish can figure in *zostać*-passives, as can be seen in (10), (11) and (12) below:

- (10) Polacy zostali przestraszeni informacjami, które do nich  
 Poles<sub>NOM</sub> became scared<sub>PERF</sub> information<sub>INSTR</sub> which to them  
 dotarli.  
 reached  
 'Poles were scared by the information which reached them.'

- (11) Niekomunistyczną partią lewicową wyborcy zostali  
 non-communist party<sub>INSTR</sub> leftist electorate<sub>NOM</sub> became  
 rozczarowani.  
 disappointed<sub>PERF</sub>  
 'The electorate was disappointed by the non-communist leftist party.'

- (12) Motosuwa został przerażony tą opowieścią.  
 Motosuwa<sub>NOM</sub> became frightened<sub>PERF</sub> this tale<sub>INSTR</sub>  
 'Motosuwa was frightened by this tale.'

The data in (10)–(12) above contain eventive OE verbs such as (*prze*)*straszyć* 'scare', *rozczarować* 'disappoint', and *przerazić* 'frighten', used in the verbal passive with the auxiliary *zostać*, in which the Causer argument is realised as an instrumental case-marked DP.

Moreover, Polish eventive OE verbs can be found in verbal passives with the auxiliary *być*, followed by the imperfective passive participle. This is the case in (13), (14), and (15) below:

- (13) Poszczególne kraje są notorycznie nękanie przez kryzysy  
 particular countries<sub>NOM</sub> are notoriously bothered<sub>IMPERF</sub> by crises  
 walutowe.  
 monetary  
 'Particular countries are being notoriously bothered by monetary crises.'

- (14) Ciągłe są zaskakiwani wahaniami cen.  
 continuously are startled<sub>IMPERF</sub> fluctuations<sub>INSTR</sub> prices<sub>GEN</sub>  
 'They are continuously startled by price fluctuations.'

<sup>9</sup> We remain agnostic as to whether Polish has a DP or just an NP, and we use the label 'DP' only for the sake of convenience.

- (15) Od dwóch tygodni inwestorzy są irytowani wypowiedziami  
 for two weeks investors<sub>NOM</sub> are irritated<sub>IMPERF</sub> statements<sub>INSTR</sub>  
 polityków.  
 politicians<sub>GEN</sub>  
 'For two weeks, investors have been irritated by politicians' statements.'

The passive sentences in (13), (14), and (15) contain the following eventive OE verbs: *nękać* 'bother', *zaskakiwać* 'startle', and *irytować* 'irritate', respectively. The Causer argument is realized in these sentences as either *przez* 'by'-phrase, as in (13), or an instrumental DP, as in (14) and (15). Additionally, (13) and (14) exhibit adverbs such as *notorycznie* 'notoriously' and *ciągle* 'continuously', which are typical of the iterative progressive aspect, and are commonly found in verbal passives (cf. Pesetsky 1995).

Having demonstrated that eventive OE verbs form two types of verbal passives in Polish, let us now turn to stative OE verbs and test how they behave with respect to passivisation. Our corpus data search shows that stative OE verbs quite frequently form verbal passives with *zostać*. That this is indeed the case can be seen in (16), (17), (18), and (19):

- (16) Został poruszony przez ostatnie wydarzenia polityczne.  
 became moved<sub>PERF</sub> by latest events political  
 'He was moved by the latest political events.'
- (17) Pewnego dnia wrażliwi Aborygeni zostali zaniepokojeni  
 one day sensitive Aborigines<sub>NOM</sub> became upset<sub>PERF</sub>  
 stanem umysłu najśłynniejszego obywatela.  
 state<sub>INSTR</sub> mind<sub>GEN</sub> the-most-famous citizen  
 'One day sensitive Aborigines were upset about the state of mind of the most famous citizen.'
- (18) Ponieważ sytuacją w nowotarskim oddziale został  
 because situation<sub>INSTR</sub> in Nowy Targ branch became  
 zainteresowany również szczebel ministerialny.  
 interested<sub>PERF</sub> also level<sub>NOM</sub> ministerial  
 'Because the ministerial level was also interested in the situation in the Nowy Targ branch.'
- (19) Chłopak został zachwycony nową nauczycielką.  
 boy<sub>NOM</sub> became enchanted<sub>PERF</sub> new teacher<sub>INSTR</sub>  
 'The boy was enchanted with the new teacher.'

Note that *zostać*-passives require the perfective passive participle and thus correspond to the verb with the inceptive interpretation, as in (20), and not to the stative durative meaning associated with the imperfective form of the verb, as in (21). Since the classification of the OE verbs into two classes (stative vs. eventive) is based on the lexical meaning of the verb root (i.e., without taking into account the perfective/imperfective distinction), we take this

classification as our starting point. In the course of our analysis we will modify it to accommodate the aspectual differences.

(20) Nowa nauczycielka zachwyciła chłopaka swoją wiedzą.  
 new teacher<sub>NOM</sub> enchanted<sub>PERF</sub> boy<sub>ACC</sub> self's knowledge<sub>INSTR</sub>  
 'The new teacher enchanted the boy with her knowledge.'

(21) Nowa nauczycielka zachwyca(ła) chłopaka swoją wiedzą.  
 new teacher<sub>NOM</sub> enchanted<sub>IMPERF</sub> boy<sub>ACC</sub> self's knowledge<sub>INSTR</sub>  
 'The new teacher enchants/(enchanted) the boy with her knowledge.'

The OE verbs with the stative roots which the passive sentences in (16)–(19) host are *poruszać/poruszyć* 'move', *(za)niepokoić* 'upset', *(za)interesować* 'interest', and *zachwycać/zachwycić* 'enchant'. Although the English translations of the sentences in (16)–(19) in all but one case contain an idiosyncratic preposition, typical of adjectival passives (cf. Pesetsky 1995; Landau 2010; Grafmiller 2013), the Polish passive sentences in question represent true verbal passives. The meaning that is associated with sentences such as (16)–(19) is either agentive (as in (18)) or eventive (as in (16), (17), and (19)). The stative meaning of the stative OE verbs is not preserved under passivisation in sentences such as (16)–(19). As mentioned above, this is due to the nature of the *zostać*-passives, which co-occur only with the perfective participle, which in turn describes the onset to a state and not the state itself (cf. Rozwadowska 2012).<sup>10</sup> Moreover, out of the unambiguously stative OE verbs such as *martwić* 'worry', *przygnębić/przygnębiać* 'depress', *(za)niepokoić* 'concern', only the verb *(za)niepokoić* 'concern' can be found in *zostać* passives, as shown in (17). However, the meaning of this verb in (17) is no longer stative, but refers to an onset of the state (cf. Marín and McNally 2011; Rozwadowska 2012), and hence is eventive, not stative.

Furthermore, stative OE verbs only marginally give rise to the other type of verbal passive in Polish, i.e. *być* + imperfective passive participle. Actually, only three stative verbs, such as *trapić* 'plague', *niepokoić* 'concern', and *przytłaczać* 'overwhelm', can be found in this type of passive. Out of these three verbs, only *niepokoić* 'concern' appears in a large number of passive sentences, while the two remaining verbs are attested only in a few instances (i.e. at most 3 hits in the corpus). The majority of the passive sentences with *być* + imperfective and the verb *niepokoić* 'concern' found in the corpus have an agentive meaning, as in (22) below:

<sup>10</sup> Marín and McNally (2011) develop a similar claim about the complex event structure for Spanish reflexive psychological verbs, i.e., onset plus the following state.



- (22) Sędziowie nie będą niepokojeni przez kibiców czy media.  
 referees<sub>NOM</sub> not will-be bothered<sub>IMPERF</sub> by fans or media  
 'Referees won't be bothered by fans or media.'

Sentence (22) contains an agentive *przez* 'by'-phrase, and therefore it has an agentive interpretation. A different example has been provided by Żychliński (2013: 109) and is quoted in (23):

- (23) Miejscowa ludność jest wciąż niepokojona przez ciągle  
 local citizens<sub>NOM</sub> is still worried<sub>IMPERF</sub> by constant  
 podwyżki cen żywności.  
 rises prices food  
 'Local citizens are still being worried by the constant rises of food prices.'

In (23) the complement of *przez* 'by'-phrase is inanimate, and hence cannot be associated with agentive interpretation, as in (22). The verb *niepokoić* in (23) is translated after Żychliński (2013) as 'worry', but it would be more adequate to translate it as 'bother', as sentence (23) has an eventive interpretation, involving recurrent change of state or onset of a state. Since sentence (23) refers to an event, not to the state, its grammaticality cannot lead to the conclusion that stative OE verbs form verbal passives, contra Żychliński (2013). The fact that sentence (23) is acceptable only proves that the verb *niepokoić* on its eventive interpretation can form a verbal passive. Some corpus examples of *niepokoić* used in *być* + imperfective passive with the eventive interpretation are provided in (24) and (25) below:

- (24) Cassie coraz częściej jest niepokojona nawracającymi  
 Cassie<sub>NOM</sub> more often is bothered<sub>IMPERF</sub> recurrent  
 wizjami i halucynacjami.  
 visions<sub>INSTR</sub> and hallucinations<sub>INSTR</sub>  
 'Cassie is more and more often bothered by recurrent visions and hallucinations.'
- (25) nie jesteś niepokojony przez strach, wątpliwości...  
 not you-are bothered<sub>IMPERF</sub> by fear doubts  
 'you are not bothered by fear, doubts...'

The verb *niepokoić* in (24) and (25) is rendered in English as 'bother', not as 'concern', as it has clearly an eventive, not stative meaning. The Causers are expressed as either an instrumental DP (cf. (24)) or as *przez* 'by'-phrase (cf. (25)).

The data provided above show that stative OE verbs can form verbal passives in Polish only if they are associated with an agentive or eventive interpretation, which results from their polysemous nature. However, truly stative OE verbs such as *martwić* 'worry' and *przygnębić* 'depress' resist verbal passives altogether (Szupryczyńska 1973: 90 notes that *martwić* 'worry', with the stative interpretation, does not passivise; as pointed out to us by one of the reviewers). This observation seems to lead to the conclusion that Polish is a Type A

language in Landau's (2010) typology, depicted in (1). It seems that Polish is similar to English, Dutch and Finnish in that it forms verbal passives of eventive OE verbs only, whereas stative OE verbs are totally immune to verbal passives in this language. Having shown that Polish represents a Type A language in Landau's (2010) account, let us now turn to the problem of whether the failure to form the verbal passive by stative OE verbs in Polish results from their unaccusative status, the way it has been posited for a number of different languages by Landau (2010). In section 4 we verify whether Polish stative OE verbs pass the standard tests for unaccusativity, whereas in Part 2 of our paper (Bondaruk *et al.* to appear) we investigate the hierarchical structure of the two arguments: the position of the Experiencer with respect to the T/SM argument.

## 4. Are Polish stative OE verbs unaccusative?

In order to test the unaccusativity hypothesis in relation to Polish stative OE verbs we rely on a number of tests, including the presence of a non-thematic subject and the nature of the accusative case of the Experiencer.

### 4.1. Do stative OE verbs have a non-thematic subject?

It has been pointed out in section 2, after Landau (2010), that stative OE verbs, being unaccusative, do not passivise. The incompatibility of unaccusative predicates with verbal passives follows from the following two claims, reproduced after Marantz (1984: 144–149):

- (26) a. Passive morphology absorbs the *external*  $\theta$ -role.
- b. Vacuous dethematisation is impossible.

Since unaccusative predicates lack an external argument, there is no external  $\theta$ -role to be absorbed by passivisation, and that is why unaccusatives do not passivise.

If OE verbs are to be treated as unaccusative, they must lack an external argument. One piece of evidence to support this claim comes from the fact, noted by Reinhart (2001), and Chi-Han Cheung and Larson (2015), that OE verbs in English can surface with an expletive subject, when they co-occur with a clausal argument, as in (27) below:

- (27) It angered/surprised/scared/excited him [that he failed]. (Reinhart 2001: 19)

The possibility of having an expletive subject in (27) serves as evidence for the non-thematic status of the subject of OE verbs, as originally postulated by Belletti and Rizzi (1988).

Bondaruk (2015) observes that Polish OE verbs can also appear with clausal arguments, as illustrated in (28):

- (28) [To, że Maria wydaje dużo pieniędzy] martwi go.  
 this that Mary<sub>NOM</sub> spends lots money worries him<sub>ACC</sub>  
 'That Mary spends lots of money worries him.'

The word *to*, glossed as 'this' in (28),<sup>11</sup> functions as a pronominal shell that introduces clausal arguments in Polish. The word *to* 'this' can be separated from the clause it is associated with, as in (29) below, or it can be extraposed together with the clause, as in (30).

- (29) To go martwi [że Maria wydaje dużo pieniędzy].  
 This him<sub>ACC</sub> worries that Mary<sub>NOM</sub> spends lots money  
 'It worries him that Mary spends lots of money.'

- (30) Martwi go [to, że Maria wydaje dużo pieniędzy].  
 worries him<sub>ACC</sub> this that Mary<sub>NOM</sub> spends lots money  
 'It worries him that Mary spends lots of money.'

Although at first glance it might seem that *to* resembles the English expletive *it*, after closer scrutiny, it appears that treating *to* as an expletive is in fact untenable (for a similar conclusion, based on arguments other than those provided in the text below, cf. Giełgo 1981; and Kardela 1986: 109). In Bondaruk (2000a, b), a number of arguments are provided against the expletive status of *to* introducing clausal arguments in Polish.<sup>12</sup> One such argument relates to the fact that *to* can be focused, as in (31):

- (31) Martwi go właśnie [to, że Maria wydaje dużo pieniędzy]  
 worries him<sub>ACC</sub> exactly this that Mary<sub>NOM</sub> spends lots money  
 'It is exactly the fact that Mary spends lots of money that worries him.'

Moreover, the pronominal shell *to* can be replaced with a lexical DP, such as *fakt* 'fact', as in (32):

- (32) Martwi go [fakt, że Maria wydaje dużo pieniędzy].  
 worries him<sub>ACC</sub> fact that Mary<sub>NOM</sub> spends lots money  
 'The fact that Mary spends lots of money worries him.'

The fact that *to* can be focused, as in (31), or replaced with a lexical DP, as in (32), strongly argues against treating it as an expletive (for more evidence to support this claim cf. Bondaruk 2000a, b). Consequently, an example such as

<sup>11</sup> The word *to*, introducing clausal arguments, is homophonous with the demonstrative pronoun meaning 'this' in Polish.

<sup>12</sup> Pesetsky and Torrego (2001) suggest treating *to* in Polish subject clauses as a realization of interpretable T moved to C, on a par with English *that*. They also propose that *to że* may be viewed as a form of the complementiser *że* that contains T-features or  $\phi$ -features.

(28) cannot be viewed on a par with the English sentence in (27), and therefore Polish does not seem to offer any evidence to the effect that OE verbs can appear with expletive subjects.

Another argument provided by Landau (2010: 48) in favour of the unaccusativity of stative OE verbs in English is based on the fact that stative OE verbs do not form middles, as in (33):

(33) \*Great ideas elude/escape/concern/interest easily. (Landau (2010: 50))

Sentence (33) contains two Class III OE verbs such as *elude* and *escape*, which are unquestionably unaccusative (Belletti and Rizzi 1988; Pesetsky 1995, *inter alia*),<sup>13</sup> alongside two Class II stative OE verbs such as *concern* and *interest*. Since both these types of OE verbs are unacceptable in the middle construction as in (33), Landau (2010) concludes that stative class II OE verbs are unaccusative, just like Class III verbs. When the test based on middles is applied to Polish stative OE verbs, it seems to yield the results similar to English. See sentence (34) below:

(34) \*Ci ludzie martwią się /interesują się łatwo.  
 these people<sub>NOM</sub> worry REFL interest REFL easily  
 'These people are easily worried/interested.'

The middle structure in (34) with the stative OE verbs such as *martwić* 'worry' and *interesować* 'interest' is unacceptable on the intended interpretation. However, the unacceptability of (34) cannot be linked with the unaccusative status of OE verbs, the way proposed by Landau for the English data in (33). Actually middles formed of stative verbs are cross-linguistically unacceptable, as pointed out by Fagan (1992) and Ackema and Schoorlemmer (2005). That this is indeed the case can be seen in (35):

(35) \*Ci ludzie /te miasta lubią się łatwo.  
 these people<sub>NOM</sub> /these cities<sub>NOM</sub> like REFL easily  
 'These people/these cities are easily liked.'

Sentence (35) contains a Subject Experiencer (SE) verb *lubić* 'like', which is unquestionably transitive (cf. Belletti and Rizzi 1988). Nonetheless, this verb resists the middle formation and thus patterns in the same way as stative OE verbs in (34). Consequently, the data in (34) and (35) clearly demonstrate that it is stativity of SE and OE verbs that blocks the middle formation, not their alleged unaccusativity.

To sum up, it has been shown that Polish lacks evidence for the presence of an overt expletive in the subject position of stative OE verbs. It has also been emphasised that the resistance of stative OE verbs to the middle formation is not indicative of their unaccusative status, but rather follows from their stativity.

<sup>13</sup> Class III OE verbs take a dative Experiencer, not an accusative one, like Class II OE verbs.

Let us now turn back to another premise that Landau relies on to derive the unaccusativity of stative OE verbs (cf. section 2), and examine it in relation to Polish. In section 4.2, the claim that the accusative case of an OE is inherent is tested against the relevant Polish data.

## 4.2. Is the accusative on the Experiencer of stative OE verbs inherent in Polish?

Both Biały (2005: 84) and Żychliński (2013: 111) argue that the accusative case marked on the Experiencer argument of Polish stative OE verbs is structural. The strongest piece of evidence in support of this claim is the fact that the accusative Experiencer obligatorily turns into the genitive under sentential negation, the way regular objects with the structural accusative do in Polish (cf. Willim 1990; Witkoś 1998, 2006; Błaszczak 2001, *inter alia*). Sentence (36) below shows that the sentential negation affects the accusative case marked object, but not the dative case marked one, whereas (37) demonstrates that the accusative Experiencer behaves like an ordinary accusative case marked object in that it must change into the genitive under clausal negation.

- (36) a. Marek wysłał Marcie kwiaty.  
 Mark<sub>NOM</sub> sent Martha<sub>DAT</sub> flowers<sub>ACC</sub>  
 'Mark sent Martha flowers.'
- b. Marek nie wysłał Marcie/\*Marty \*kwiaty/kwiatów.  
 Mark<sub>NOM</sub> not sent Martha<sub>DAT</sub>/\*Martha<sub>GEN</sub> \*flower<sub>ACC</sub>/flowers<sub>GEN</sub>  
 'Mark did not send Martha flowers.'
- (37) a. Problemy rodzinne martwiły Martę.  
 problems<sub>NOM</sub> family worried Martha<sub>ACC</sub>  
 'Family problems worried Martha.'
- b. Problemy rodzinne nie martwiły Marty/\*Martę.  
 problems<sub>NOM</sub> family not worried Martha<sub>GEN</sub>/\*Martha<sub>ACC</sub>  
 'Family problems did not worry Martha.'

Both the accusative object in (36a) and the accusative Experiencer in (37a) obligatorily turn into the genitive under sentential negation in (36b) and (37b), respectively.<sup>14</sup> Landau (2010: 25) notes that "inherent Case is fixed in the lexicon; GN (Genitive of Negation) which is a syntactic rule, cannot override this

<sup>14</sup> Polish is different from Russian, in which the accusative case marked Experiencer of a stative OE verb remains unaffected by the Genitive of Negation. This is illustrated in (i) below, taken from Landau (2010: 5):

(i) Šum ne ogorčil ni odnu devočku/\*odnoj devočki.  
 noise<sub>NOM</sub> not upset no one girl<sub>ACC</sub>/\*one girl<sub>GEN</sub>  
 'The noise didn't upset a single girl.'

Since the accusative case marked Experiencer in (i) is not affected by the Genitive of Negation, the accusative case of the Experiencer must be inherent in Russian.

Case.” Since the accusative case of the Experiencer argument of a stative OE verb in (37) is overridden by the genitive under negation, it must represent structural, not inherent case.

The structural nature of the accusative case associated with Experiencers of stative OE verbs in Polish strongly argues against the treatment of Polish stative OE verbs as unaccusative. In accordance with Burzio’s Generalisation, quoted in (38) below, unaccusative verbs cannot assign the accusative case to their argument, as they lack an external argument:

- (38) Case is assigned to the object iff a  $\theta$ -role is assigned to the subject. (Burzio 1986: 178)

Since unaccusative verbs lack a thematic subject, they are incapable of assigning case to their object. Belletti and Rizzi’s (1988: 332) interpretation of Burzio’s Generalisation is as follows:

- (39) V is a structural Case assigner iff it has an external argument.

Consequently, in accordance with (39), Polish stative OE verbs cannot be unaccusative, as they can license the structural accusative case.

In section 4, arguments have been provided that stative OE verbs in Polish are not unaccusative. However, the question still remains why these predicates do not form verbal passives, as has been shown in section 3. We believe that the reason why verbal passives cannot be formed of stative OE verbs in Polish relates to the fact that these predicates lack an external argument (cf. (26) in section 4.1 above), but since they are not unaccusative (with two arguments generated VP-internally as in Belletti and Rizzi 1988 and Landau 2010), they must have a different kind of structure. The structure in question seems to be the complex ergative one, proposed by Bennis (2004). The relevance and usefulness of this analysis for Polish will be explored in Part 2 of our paper.

## 5. Conclusions

The paper has aimed to check whether the inability to form verbal passives by stative OE verbs in Polish can be derived from the fact that they have an unaccusative structure. An analysis that clearly links the failure of stative OE verbs to passivise with their unaccusative status has been first proposed by Belletti and Rizzi (1988), and then adopted by Landau (2010). An attempt has been made here to test the predictions of Landau’s analysis against the relevant Polish data. First of all, it has been shown that Polish represents a Type A language in Landau’s typology, because eventive OE verbs can form verbal passives in this language, in contradistinction to stative OE verbs, which resist verbal passives altogether. However, the inability of Polish stative OE verbs to

form verbal passives does not seem to point towards their having an unaccusative structure. It has been demonstrated that Landau's claim that the accusative case of the Experiencer is inherent, which provides support for the unaccusative status of stative OE verbs, is unjustified for Polish. The accusative case of the Experiencer of stative OE verbs in Polish is structural, not inherent, which clearly argues against the unaccusativity of stative OE verbs in this language. Furthermore, stative OE verbs in Polish cannot co-occur with expletive subjects, which casts doubts on their alleged unaccusative status. Thus, we conclude that failure to form verbal passives with these verbs must lie elsewhere. In Part 2 of this paper, we address the issue of the mutual hierarchy of the two arguments of Polish stative OE verbs and then adopt Bennis' (2004) complex ergative structure for Polish stative OE verbs to account for their inability to form verbal passives. The complex ergative structure is seemingly reminiscent of the unaccusative structure put forward for OE verbs by Belletti and Rizzi (1988). However, the former differs from the latter by positing that *v* in the complex ergative structure is capable of checking the accusative case of an OE, in violation of Burzio's Generalisation, and hence it is well-suited to account for the structural accusative case borne by OEs, found with stative OE verbs in Polish.

## References

- ACKEMA Peter, SCHOORLEMMER Maike (2005). Middles. In *The Blackwell Companion to Syntax*, vol. III. Martin EVERAERT, Henk VAN RIEMSDIJK, Rob GEOGEMANS and Bert HOLLEBRANDSE (eds.), 131–203. Oxford: Blackwell.
- BELLETTI Adriana, RIZZI Luigi (1988). Psych-verbs and  $\theta$  theory. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 6, 291–352.
- BENNIS Hans (2004). Unergative adjectives and psych verbs. In *The Unaccusativity Puzzle. Explorations of the Syntax-Lexicon Interface*. Artemis ALEXIADOU, Elena ANAGNOSTOPOULOU and Martin EVERAERT (eds.), 84–114. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- BIAŁY Adam (2005). *Polish Psychological Verbs at the Lexicon-syntax Interface in Cross-linguistic Perspective*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- BŁASZCZAK Joanna (2001). Covert movement and the Genitive of Negation in Polish. *Linguistics in Potsdam* 15, 1–85.
- BONDARUK Anna (2000a). Subject clauses in English and Polish. In *PASE Papers in Language Studies. Proceedings of the 8th Annual Conference of the Polish Association for the Study of English*. Bożena ROZWADOWSKA (ed.), 61–71. Wrocław: Aksel.
- BONDARUK Anna (2000b). Zdania podmiotowe i dopełnieniowe ze słowem *to* w języku polskim. *Polonica* XX, 71–81.
- BONDARUK Anna (2015). Subjects or objects? – The syntax of clausal subjects in Polish. In *Slavic Grammar from a Formal Perspective. The 10th Anniversary FDSL Confer-*

- ence, *Leipzig* 2013. Gerhild ZYBATOW, Peter BISKUP, Marcel GUHL, Claudia HUR-  
TIG, Olav MUELLER-REICHAU and Maria YASTERBOVA (eds.), 77–92. Frankfurt am  
Main: Peter Lang.
- BONDARUK Anna, ROZWADOWSKA Bożena, WITKOWSKI Wojciech (to appear). Pas-  
sivisation of Polish Object Experiencer verbs vs. the unaccusativity hypothesis  
(Part II). *Studies in Polish Linguistics* 12(3).
- BURZIO Luigi (1986). *Italian syntax: A Government and Binding Approach*. Dordrecht:  
Reidel.
- CHI-HAN Cheung, Candice, LARSON Richard K. (2015). Psych verbs in English and  
Mandarin. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 33(1), 127–189.
- FAGAN Sarah (1992). *The Syntax and Semantics of Middle Constructions: A Study with  
Special Reference to German*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- GIEJGO Janina (1981). Movement rules in Polish syntax. Ph.D. dissertation. University  
College London.
- GRAF MILLER Jason (2013). The semantics and syntactic choice. An analysis of English  
emotion verbs. Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, Stanford, CA.
- GRIMSHAW Jane (1990). *Argument Structure*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- HERSCHENSOHN Julia (1992). Case marking and French psych-verbs. *Linguisticae In-  
vestigaciones* XVI(1), 21–40.
- HERSCHENSOHN Julia (1999). What does zero syntax add to an analysis of French  
psych-verbs? In *Semantic Issues in Romance Syntax*. Esthela TREVIÑO and José  
LEMA (eds.), 105–119. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- KARDELA Henryk (1986). *Wh-movement in English and Polish. Theoretical Implica-  
tions*. Lublin: UMCS.
- LANDAU Idan (2010). *The Locative Syntax of Experiencers*. Cambridge, MA: MIT  
Press.
- LAVINE, James, FRANKS Steven (2008). On accusative first. In *Formal Approaches to  
Slavic Linguistics* 16. Andrei ANTONENKO, John F. BAILYN, Christina Y. BETHIN and  
Jindrich TOMAN (eds.), 231–247. Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications.
- LEGENDRE Geraldine (1989). Inversion with certain French Experiencer verbs.  *Lan-  
guage* 65, 752–782.
- LEGENDRE Geraldine (1993). Antipassive with French psych-verbs. In *Proceedings of  
WCCFL* 12. Erin DUNCA, Donka FARKAS and Philip SAELTI (eds.), 373–388. Stan-  
ford: CSLI Publications.
- MARANTZ Alec (1984). *On the Nature of Grammatical Relations*. Cambridge, MA: MIT  
Press.
- MARÍN Rafael, MCNALLY Louise (2011). Inchoativity, change of state, and telicity: Evi-  
dence from Spanish reflexive psychological verbs. *Natural Language and Linguistic  
Theory* 29, 467–502.
- PESETSKY David (1995). *Zero Syntax: Experiencers and Cascades*. Cambridge, MA:  
MIT Press.
- PESETSKY David, TORREGO Esther (2001). T-to-C movement: Causes and consequenc-  
es. In *Ken Hale A Life in Language*. Michael KENSTOWICZ (eds), 355–426. Cam-  
bridge, MA: MIT Press.
- REINHART Tanya (2001). Experiencing derivations. Paper presented at SALT 11, 11–13  
May, New York.



- ROBERTS Ian (1991). NP-movement, crossover and chain formation. In *Representation and Derivation in the Theory of Grammar*. Hubert HAIDER and Klaus NETTER (eds.), 17–52. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- ROZWADOWSKA Bożena (2012). On the onset of psych eventualities. In *Sound, Structure and Sense. Studies in Memory of Edmund Gussmann*. Eugeniusz CYRAN, Henryk KARDELA and Bogdan SZYMANEK (eds.), 533–554. Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL.
- SZUPRYCZYŃSKA Maria (1973). *Syntaktyczna klasyfikacja czasowników przybiernikowych*. Warszawa and Poznań: PWN.
- WILLIM Ewa (1990). On Case-marking in Polish. *Papers and Studies in Contrastive Linguistics* 25, 203–220.
- WITKOŚ Jacek (1998). *The Syntax of Clitics. Steps towards a Minimalist Account*. Poznań: Motivex.
- ZABROCKI Tadeusz (1981). *Lexical Rules of Semantic Interpretation*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. A. Mickiewicza w Poznaniu.
- ŻYCHLIŃSKI Sylwiusz (2013). On some aspects of the syntax of Object Experiencers in Polish and English. Ph.D. dissertation, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań.

Anna Bondaruk  
Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II  
Al. Raławickie 14  
20-950 Lublin  
[bondaruk(at)kul.pl]

Bożena Rozwadowska  
Uniwersytet Wrocławski  
Instytut Filologii Angielskiej  
Kuźnicza 22  
50-138 Wrocław  
[bozena.rozwadowska(at)uwr.edu.pl]

Wojciech Witkowski  
Uniwersytet Wrocławski  
Instytut Filologii Angielskiej  
Kuźnicza 22  
50-138 Wrocław  
[wojciech.witkowski(at)uwr.edu.pl]