Binding by objects in Polish DOCs and *podobać się* 'to please'-type double object unaccusatives - testing theoretical accounts

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Binding by objects in Polish double object constructions (DOCs) is argued possible only for pronoun bindees; anaphors, possessive and reflexive, cannot be bound by objects (Willim 1989; Reinders-Machowska 1991; Witkoś 2003, 2007; Bondaruk and Szymanek (B&S) 2007, a.o.). Our experiment on possessive binding by objects in Polish DOCs (Exp1), serves to test these accounts. We divide the tested data into 16 conditions, based on four binary factors: a) predicate type (polecić 'to recommend' vs. pokazać 'to show', assumed to project a small clause), b) object order (IO\,DAT>DO\,ACC vs. DO\,ACC>IO\,DAT), c) bindee type (anaphor vs. pronoun), d) bindee embedding (presence vs. absence).

(2) presents one of the tested contexts. 79 Polish university students (67 women and 12 men, \(M_{\text{age}}=22.92, \text{SD}=2.62\)) rated acceptability of the data. The mean scores confirm the findings in the literature – a significant main effect of bindee type (\(F(1,32)=106.859, p=.000\)) was reported, supporting views on complementarity of anaphors and pronouns (Reinders-Machowska 1991).

Moreover, statistical analysis indicates correlations not mentioned in the literature - two-way and three-way ANOVAs showed a significant interaction between case order and bindee type (\(F(1,32)=8.202, p=.008\)), with clearly better ratings for pronoun binding, as opposed to anaphora binding, in the IO\,DAT>DO\,ACC order, and less so in DO\,ACC>IO\,DAT.

Exp1’s findings raise questions w.r.t. a ditransitive unaccusative analysis of the Polish *piacere*-type verb *podobać się* ‘to please’, exemplified in (3), proposed in Miechowicz-Mathiasen and Scheffler (MM&S) (2008). MM&S argue no external argument projection for *podobać się*; the verb is taken to be unaccusative. Two argument orderings are licensed - Ex(periencer)\,DAT-verb-Th(eme)\,NOM and Th\,NOM-verb-Ex\,DAT NOM - whichever argument surfaces in the preverbal position, serves as the subject.

Moreover, drawing on similarities between *podobać się* and DOCs, MM&S argue that the verb is a double object unaccusative. Following MM&S we assume that the Ex\,DAT of *podobać się* corresponds to IO\,DAT of DOCs and Th\,NOM to DO\,ACC of DOCs. In the light of Exp1’s findings, we ask in Exp(eriment) 2 to what extent binding by objects in DOCs (Exp1) resembles binding effects found in *podobać się*.

Exp2 tests 16 conditions, based on four binary factors: a) position of binder (subject vs. object), b) type of binder (Ex\,DAT vs. Th\,NOM), c) type of bindee (anaphor vs. pronoun), d) bindee’s embedding (presence vs. absence). (4) illustrates one of the conditions. 72 Polish university students (69 women and 3 men, \(M_{\text{age}}=23.15, \text{SD}=2.82\)) rated Exp2’s data. The results of two-way and three-way ANOVAs show a significant effect of the position of binder (\(F(1,16)=18.591, p=.003\)), the type of binder (\(F(1,16)=8.665 p=.019\)), and the type of bindee (\(F(1,16)=11.937, p=.009\)). A significant interaction between the type of binder and the type of bindee (\(F(1,16)=30.711, p=.001\)) is reported - possessive anaphors are rated more acceptable when bound by Th\,NOM, whereas possessive pronouns are rated higher when bound by Ex\,DAT. Moreover, Bonferroni corrected post hoc test shows that pronouns bound by Ex\,DAT are rated significantly higher than pronouns bound by Th\,NOM, and anaphors bound by Ex\,DAT.

We offer a discussion of the results.

**Data**

(1) a. Piotr\,NOM pokazał chłopca\,ACC sobie\,DAT (samemu) w lustrze.           (Witkoś 2007: 458)

Piotr showed boy\,ACC self\,DAT (alone\,DAT) in mirror

b. Marta\,NOM opowiedziała Markowi\,DAT o swojej\,ACC młodości.              (B&S 2007: 78)

Marta told Mark about self’s youth

c. Piotr\,NOM pokazał dziewczyny\,ACC sobie\,DAT (nawzajem) w lustrze. (Witkoś 2007: 458)
Piotr showed girls (reciprocally) in mirror.

(2) Exp 1 - example of a tested condition: *embedded possessive pronoun bindee in IO_DAT>DO_ACC object order of *polecić ’to recommend’

Przy ustalaniu planów weselnych, przyszła teściowa poleciła Tomkowi restaurację jego brata. (to restauracja brata Tomka).

(3) a. Janowi podoba się mój dom. (MM&S 2008: 89)

    Jan likes my house,

b. Mój dom podoba się Janowi.

My house likes Jan, (’Jan likes my house’)

(4) Exp2 – example of a tested condition: *embedded possessive pronoun bindee in IO_DAT>DO_ACC object order and a binder in subject position

Podczas wspólnej podróży autostopem po Europie, Patrykowi spodobała się koleżanka jego siostry.

References

