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On some peripheral types of accusative direct object in Croatian: A cognitive analysis

Applying methods of cognitive grammar, the author discusses three peripheral types of accusative direct object in Croatian. The peripheral status of the first two types follows from the morphosyntactic peculiarity as manifested in the impossibility of passivizing the active clauses they are part of. The third type appears in one type of impersonal sentences.

Key words: accusative direct object, subject, prototypical category members, peripheral category members, passive, topicalization factors, impersonality

1. Introduction

In Croatian grammars the category of accusative¹ direct object is characterized and analyzed as a category of NPs introduced into the sentence by verb government, the verbs introducing them being called transitive verbs. According to Katičić: "Some verbs introduce into the sentence a noun or a pronoun in an oblique case, or a prepositional phrase. This complement is called object. It is not introduced into the sentence by the predicate as a predicate, but by the single verb as a lexical unit and, as such, it differs from adverbials." The same claims about this category can be found in Barić et al. as well: "The object of the verb with accusative government is called direct object. Verbs that introduce such objects into the sentence are called transitive

¹ It is clear from the title itself that our discussion will be limited to the accusative direct object only. Partitive and Slavic genitives, which can also function as direct objects in Croatian, will not be discussed here. Therefore, in the following discussion I will use the term direct object referring only to accusative direct objects.

verbs.” (1995: 431)². Two conclusions follow naturally from such claims: First, membership in the category of direct object is decided exclusively on formal grounds with reference to morphosyntactic criteria only. Second, yet no less important, this category is taken to be a compact category in which, provided the above mentioned morphosyntactic criteria are met, all members share equal status. In an attempt to define the category of accusative direct object, the representative grammars of Croatian only then use semantic criteria when they are making reference to the meaning of verbal action. Barić et al. thus, for instance, cite three basic classes:

- a) verb whose designated action affects the object and changes it
- b) verbs that code an action that stands in some relation to the object, but does not change the object
- c) verbs that code an action which denotes spatial or temporal relations

Each of these three groups is divided into several subgroups, however, this will remain outside the scope of this paper. Our aim is not to explain the meanings of individual verbs introducing a direct object into a sentence, nor is it a classification of different object types (obligatory objects, objects with a pronominal function replaceable with NPs, objects functioning as pro-sentence items - objects NPs substitutable by complement clauses etc.³). What we are concerned with here is investigating the ways in which the meaning of some transitive verbs in conjunction with their subjects controls the membership of some NPs in the category of direct object. Our discussion will show that morphosyntactic criteria are not the only relevant criterion for categorization. In some instances the semantics of the transitive verb and its subject can play a decisive role in the conceptualization of the direct object, and that with significant syntactic implications. Thus, it will be seen that the category of direct object is not a homogeneous category with membership determined solely on the basis of the accusative government of the verb. As is the case with all other grammatical categories, this category too is structured on the basis of the prototype effect, its members qualifying as more or less typical. It will also be seen that this category exhibits some degree of radiality⁴ where the prototype motivates the inclusion of the peripheral members into the category only on the basis of their accusative-case marking.

2. Discussion

Cognitive Grammar defines the direct object prototype in terms of four topicality factors: semantic (thematic) role, empathy, definiteness and figure/ground organiza-

² “Objekt glagola s rekcijom u a k u z a t i v u zove se **izravni** ili **direktni objekt**. Glagoli koji otvaraju mjesto takvom objektu zovu se **prelazni** ili **tranzitivni glagoli**.” (Barić i dr., 1995: 431)

³ This and other types of direct object are discussed in detail in Ivić (1983).

⁴ On radial categories see more in Lakoff (1987) and Taylor (1991).

tion. Regarding **semantic role**, the prototype is a patient. The definition of patient is one of more familiar definitions, as it varies only slightly across different linguistic theories. Still, I will cite the definition offered within the framework of Cognitive Grammar because some of its parts have proved crucial for the issues raised in this paper. According to Cognitive Grammar, the patient is "...an inanimate object that absorbs the energy transmitted via externally initiated physical contact and thereby undergoes an internal change of state" (Langacker 1991: 285).

Turning now to the next factor - **empathy** - the prototype is an inanimate physical object which is the highest-ranking element in its domain on the empathy hierarchy:

[AN **human** > animal AN] > [INAN **physical object** > abstract entity INAN]

In this hierarchy the feature ANIMATE characterizes the prototype subject as an action chain head and the source of the energy that is transferred and directed at inanimate entities, i.e. prototype objects. These, in turn, are metaphorically conceptualized as action chain tails and energy targets, which results in their lower positioning on the empathy scale. These first topicality factors are connected in the sense that the semantic microrole of patient, as a subrole of the semantic macrorole undergoer, is almost without exception understood as an inanimate physical object undergoing a change of state.

The third factor is **definiteness**. It defines the direct object as a specific indefinite entity, unlike the prototypical subject (agent) which, due to its semantic features (animate, human, intention and responsibility in doing some action), is necessarily marked definite. This topicality factor, at least as far as Croatian is concerned, seems to be weakly grounded. While it is fully applicable to the prototypical subject, the same cannot be said of the direct object prototype. Namely, this factor is relevant and distinctive in English where definite and indefinite direct objects can stand in opposition according to whether definite or indefinite articles are placed in front of them. According to Langacker, they have an "...important discourse function by allowing the introduction of a new participant (*Floyd was so angry that he picked up a glass and smashed it.*)" (Langacker 1991: 322f), but it is also claimed that "...an object too is often definite (*Floyd broke the glass*), and its definiteness (as a kind of subjective individuation) heightens a clause's transitivity." (Langacker 1991: 322). Definiteness could be applied to Croatian a) if the prototype object is a patient and an inanimate physical object, which results in its lesser degree of definiteness from that exhibited by the prototypical subject, and b) only if definiteness is understood as a feature prominent in the syntactic participants marked as animate. But this factor, taken into consideration independently, does not bear on the main issue here, namely, morphosyntactic consequences of introducing some peripheral direct objects into the sentence.

The last factor, **figure/ground organization**, is perhaps the most relevant factor in defining the essence of the direct object. Its priority among the four topicality factors follows from one of the basic premises of cognitive grammar, namely from the

conceptual approach to semantics where the meaning is identified with conceptualization. Since each grammatical relation is semantically motivated and each, even the least, change in grammatical relations results in meaning changes, grammatical relations are also considered and analyzed conceptually. According to the hierarchy:

primary figure/trajector > secondary figure/landmark > ground/other

the direct object is a secondary figure, i.e. the second focal participant.

Summarizing what has been said about the direct object prototype, with an emphasis on the semantic features (which will be important for the following discussion), we can say that it is an inactive participant in an action chain with the semantic role of the patient. It is the clause participant located in a target domain and the receiver of the energy transmitted from the most focal participant of a source domain (agent/trajector/subject). This is shown in Figure 1 where two most prominent elements are marked with heavy lines according to the above mentioned focal⁵ hierarchy.

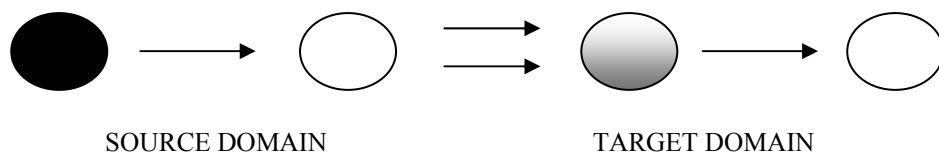


Figure 1

Deviations from the described prototype are numerous, but we will be interested, as it has already been stressed, only in those that have an impact on morphosyntactic structure. We will focus on three types of peripheral direct objects. The peripheral status of the first two types follows from the morphosyntactic peculiarity as manifested in the impossibility of passivizing the active clauses they are part of. The impossibility of passivization is the basic indicator of morphosyntactic anomalies conditioned by such objects because every prototypical verb-direct object relation necessarily licenses passivization.

The first type can be classified as a reverse energy flow. In such examples, as opposed to the prototype, the energy is not transmitted from subject to object, but in reverse, from object to subject (Figure 2), as in examples (1-5):

⁵ For focus degrees exhibited by syntactic participants see Shibatani (1985) and Comrie (1989), which also place the subject and direct object in front of the indirect object and the oblique object as the last, i.e. the lowest-ranked participant.

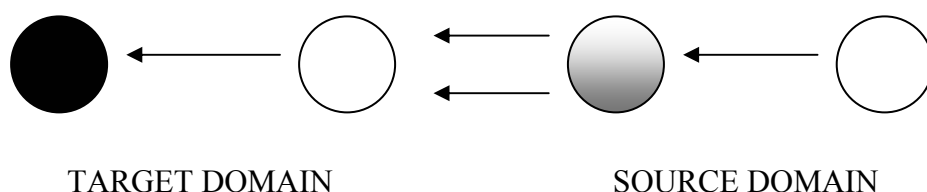


Figure 2

- (1) a. On -i su pre -trpje -li
 they. 3SG.M.NOM be3PL.PRES PREF suffer PAST.M.PL
 bombardiranj -e...
 bombing N.SG.ACC⁶
 ‘They suffered bombing’
- b. *Bombardiranj -e je
 bombing -N.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES
 pre -trplj -eno od njih.
 PREF suffer PASS-PART by them.3.SG.M.GEN
 ‘*Bombarding was suffered by them’
- (2) a. Prometej -Ø je trpi -o
 Prometheus M.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES suffer PAST.M.SG
 muk -e.
 torture F.PL.ACC
 ‘Prometheus suffered torturing’
- b. *Muk -e su trplj -ene
 torture F.PL.NOM be.PL.PRES suffer PASS-PART
 od Prometej -a.
 by Prometheus M.SG.GEN
 ‘*Torturing was suffered by Prometheus’
- (3) a. 1879. državne financij -e doživlju -ju
 1879 state finances F.PL.NOM undergo PRES.3PL

⁶ The following abbreviations are used in the glosses: M = masculine, N = neuter, NOM = Nominative, GEN = genitive, ACC = accusative, LOC = locative, INSTR = instrumental, SG = singular, PL = plural, PRES = present, PAST = perfect, PASS-PART = passive participle, REFL = reflexive.

sлом-Ø.

breakdown MsgACC

‘In 1879 the state finances underwent a breakdown’

- b. *1879. slom -Ø je doživ -ljen
 1879 breakdown M.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES undergo PASS.PART
 od državnih financij -a.
 by state finances F.PL.GEN

‘*A breakdown was undergone by state finances in 1879’

- (4)a. Ivan -Ø je dobi -o telefonski
 Ivan M.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES receive PAST.M.SG phone
 poziv -Ø.
 call M.SG.ACC

‘Ivan received a phone call’

- b. *Telefonski poziv -Ø dobi -ven je
 phone call M.SG.NOM receive PASS.PART be.3SG.PRES
 od Ivan-a.
 by Ivan MsgGEN

‘*A phone call was received by Ivan’

- (5)a. Profesor Prelog -Ø primi -o je
 Professor Prelog M.SG.NOM receive PAST.M.SG be 3.SG.PRES
 aograd -u.
 reward F.SG.ACC

‘Professor Prelog received a reward’

- b. *Nagrada -a je primlj -ena od
 reward F.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES receive PASS.PART by
 profesora Prelog -a.
 Professor Prelog M.SG.GEN

‘*A reward was received by Professor Prelog’

The ill-formedness of the sentences in (1-5 b.) as passive semantic paraphrases of those in (1-5. a)⁷, follows from the lexical meaning of the verbs *pretrpjeti* (to suffer),

⁷ The ill-formedness of sentences (1-5 b.) is observed only in relation to sentences in (1-5 a.). Thus, the sentences *Telefonski poziv dobiven je od Ivana.* (A phone call was received by Ivan.) and *Nagrada je primljena od profesora Preloga.* (The reward was received by Professor Prelog.) are perfectly well-formed, but only as passive correlates of the active sentences *Netko je dobio telefonski poziv od Ivana.* (Someone received a phone call from Ivan.) and *Netko je primio nagradu od profesora Preloga.* (Someone received a reward from Professor Prelog.), i.e. as passive correlates of the active sentences where the syntactic

trpjeti (to suffer), *doživjeti* (to undergo), *dobiti* (to get, to receive), and *primiti* (to receive), verbs that cannot assign to the subject the semantic role of an active participant (agent or effector), but only semantic roles of patient, recipient or experiencer. The impossibility of passivization follows exactly from such an arrangement of semantic roles, which already makes them passive. It is not, of course, a case of prototypical passive, because of the absence of the usual grammatical means of expressing passive predicates (*be* + *pass. part.* and *personal verb form* + *particle se* in reflexive passives). These clauses, however, belong to a type of lexical passives,⁸ where the passive predicate is not formed by common, unchangeable or canonical morphological means, but by special and type-dependent lexical components. Evidence of their passivity can be found in the possibility of forming their active conceptual correlates:

- (1)c. Njih su bombardira-li.
They.M.PL.ACC be.3.PL.PRES bombard.PAST.M.PL
'They bombarded them'
- (2)c. Prometej -a su muči -li.
Prometheus M.SG.ACC be.3.PL.PRES torture PAST.M.PL
'They tortured Prometheus.'
- (3)c. 1879. slomi -li su državne financij -e.
1879 break.down M.PL be.3.PL.PRES state finances F-PL.ACC
'In 1879 they broke down the state finances'
- (4)c. Ivan -a su pozva -li.
Ivan M.SG.ACC be.3.PL.PRES call PAST.M.PL
'Somebody called Ivan'
- (5)c. Profesora Prelog -a su nagradi -li.
Professor Prelog M.SG.ACC be.3.PL.PRES reward PAST.M.PL
'They rewarded Professor Prelog'

We have seen that the prototypical direct object, along with the subject and predicate, forms a relation source - path - goal, where subject and object are different and distinct entities. The second type of peripheral direct objects is based on deviation from that relation. Instead of the relation source - path - goal, the direct object and subject stand in the relation container/content, i.e. the object belongs to the subject or denotes its part (Figure 3).

elements *Ivan* and *Professor Prelog* would be assigned active semantic roles of agent and not some inactive roles such as that of a patient, recipient or experiencer, as in our example.

⁸ On lexical passives, its types, structure and semantics see more in Mahačkova (1978), Keenan (1985) and Belaj (2001).

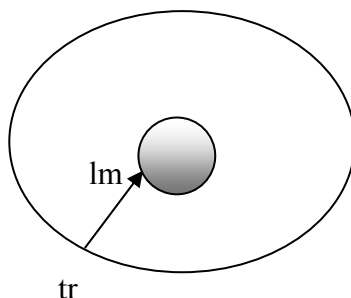


Figure 3.

As in the first case, the peripheral status of this object type is also evidenced in the impossibility of passivization, as in (6-13):

- (6) a. Atmosfer -a je dosegnu -la
 atmosphere F.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES reach F.SG.PAST
 kulminacij -u.
 culmination F.SG.ACC
 ‘The atmosphere has reached the culmination’
- b. *Kulminacij -a je dosegnu -ta od
 culmination F.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES reach PASS.PART by
 atmosfer -e.
 atmosphere F.SG.GEN
 *‘The peak has been reached by atmosphere’
- (7) a. Donacij -e su dostig -le
 donations F.PL.NOM be.3.PL.PRES reach F.PL.PAST
 iznos -Ø 600 tisuć -a dolar -a.
 amount M.SG.ACC 600 thousand F.PL.GEN dollar M.PL.GEN
 ‘The donations have reached an amount of 600 thousand dollars’
- b. *Iznos -Ø od 600 tisuć -a dolar -a
 amount M.SG.NOM of 600 thousand F.PL.GEN dollars M.PL.GEN
 dostignu -t je od donacij -a.
 reach PASS.PART be.3.SG.PRES by donations F.PL.GEN
 *‘An amount of 600 thousand dollars has been reached by donations.’
- (8) a. Ov -aj je CD -Ø
 this M.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES CD M.SG.NOM

- postiga -o odličn-u tiraž -u.
achieve M.SG.PAST great F.SG.ACC print.run F.SG.ACC
'This CD has achieved a great print run'
- b. *Odličn -a tiraž -a postignu -ta
great F.SG.NOM print.run F.SG.NOM achieve PASS.PART be
je od ov -oga CD -a.
3.SG.PRES by this M.SG.GEN CD M.SG.GEN
'*A great print run has been achieved by this CD'
- (9) a. On -o što naziv -amo "teorij -om"
that N.SG.NOM what call 1.PL.PRES theory F.SG.INSTR
zauzim -a tako čudan-Ø položaj -Ø.
take 3.SG.PRES such odd M.SG.ACC position M.SG.ACC
'What we call a "theory" takes up such an odd position'
- b. *Tako čudan-Ø položaj -Ø zauze -t
such odd M.SG.NOM position M.SG.NOM take PASS.PART
je on -im što naziv -amo
be.3.SG.PRES that N.SG.INSTR what call 1.PL.PRES
teorij -om.
theory F.SG.INSTR
'Such an odd position is taken by what we call a "theory"'
- (10) a. Ov -a mal -a bočic -a
this F.SG.NOM little F.SG.NOM bottle F.SG.NOM
sadrž -i otrov -Ø.
contain 3.SG.PRES poison M.SG.ACC
'This little bottle contains poison'
- b. **Otrov -Ø je sadrža -n od
poison M.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES contain PASS.PART by
ov -e mal -e bočic -e.
this F.SG.GEN little F.SG.GEN bottle F.SG.GEN
'** Poison is contained by this little bottle'
- (11) a. Ja im -am dvij -e
I.1.SG.NOM have 1.SG.PRES two F.PL.ACC
kuć -e.
house F.PL.ACC⁹

⁹ Accusative direct object complement NP *dvije kuće* (two houses) is number-marked for plural, although it is semantically dual. But the feature of duality is not morphosyntactically distinctive in the feminine gender in Croatian, as it is in the masculine and neutrum, where

‘I have two houses’

- b. ***Dvij -e kuć -e ima -ne
two F.PL.NOM houses F.PL.NOM have PASS.PART
su od men -e.
be.3.PL.PRES by me 1.SG.GEN

‘***Two houses are had by me’

- (12) a. Muzej -Ø posjeduju -e devet
museum M.SG.NOM possess 3.SG.PRES nine
zbirk -i star -ih novčić -a.
collection F.PL.ACC old M.PL.GEN coin M.PL.GEN

‘The museum possesses nine collections of old coins’

- b. ***Devet zbirka -i star -ih
nine collection F.PL.NOM old M.PL.GEN
novčić -a posjedova -no je
coin M.PL.GEN possess PASS.PART be.3.SG.PRES
od muzej -a.
by museum M.SG.GEN

‘***Nine collections of old coins are possessed by the museum’

- (13) a. Ov -aj kamion -Ø tež -i
this M.SG.NOM truck M.SG.NOM weigh 3.SG.PRES
dvij -e ton-e.
two F.PL.ACC ton F.PL.ACC

‘This truck weighs two tons’

- b. ****Dvij-e ton-e teže -ne
two F.PL.NOM ton F.PL.NOM weigh PASS.PART
su od ov -og kamion -a.
be.3.PL.PRES by this M.SG.GEN truck M.SG.GEN

‘****Two tons are weighed by this truck’

Since all passivized clauses are ill-formed, it is basically unnecessary to discuss degrees of their ill-formedness. Nevertheless, some parameters of radiality can be ascertained in the cases illustrated. The passive clauses can be observed as indicators of the distance from the direct object prototype in (a) clauses, which is illustrated by the marks in front of (b) clauses. Thus the objects governed by the verbs *dosegnuti* (to reach), *dostići* (to reach), *postići* (to attain) and *zauzimati* (to take) would be closest to the prototype according to two factors. On the one hand, these verbs do form pass. part. On the other hand, related to the first factor is the fact that there are

nouns and adjectives headed by the numbers *dva* (two), *tri* (three) and *četiri* (four) are morphologically marked as singular genitive.

many instances when these verbs govern a direct object in active clauses, so they function as predicates in correlative passives. For example:

- (6)c. On -a je dosegnu -la
she 3.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES reach F.SG.PAST
prekidač -Ø za svjetl -o.
switch M.SG.ACC for light N.SG.ACC
'She reached the light switch'
- d. Prekidač -Ø za svjetl -o bi -o
switch M.SG.NOM for light N.SG.ACC be M.SG.PAST
je dosegnu -t od nje.
be.3.SG.PRES reach PASS.PART by her.3.SG.F.GEN
'A light switch was reached by her'
- (7)c. Ivan -Ø je dostiga -o njegov
Ivan M.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES reach M.SG.PAST his
cilj-Ø.
goal M.SG.ACC
'Ivan reached his goal'
- d. Njegov cilj -Ø dostignu -t je
his goal M.SG.NOM reach PASS.PART be.3.SG.PRES
od Ivan -a.
by Ivan M.SG.GEN
'His goal was reached by Ivan'
- (8)c. Ova Vlad -a postig -la je
this government F.SG.NOM achieve F.SG.PAST be.3.SG.PRES
značajne rezultat -e.
important result M.PL.ACC
'This government has achieved important results'
- d. Značajni rezultat -i postignu -ti
important result M.PL.NOM achieve PASS.PART
su od ove Vlad -e.
be.3.PL.PRES by this government F.SG.GEN
'Important results have been achieved by this government.'
- (9)c. Godine 1377. to područj -e zauzim -a
year 1377 that province N.SG.ACC conquer 3.SG.PRES
Tvrk -o.
Tvrko M.SG.NOM
'In 1377 Tvrko conquered that province'

- d. Godine 1377. to područj -e zauze -to
 year 1377 that province N.SG.NOM conquer PASS.PART be
 je od Tvrtk -a.
 3.SG.PRES by Tvrtko M.SGGEN
 ‘In 1377 that province was conquered by Tvrtko’

The verb *sadržavati* (*to contain*) together with its objects is somewhat more distant from the prototype. As with the previous four verbs, pass. part. can also be derived here, but with one difference: it cannot, as the verbal head, govern neither the prepositional genitive nor the instrumental without a preposition, the two prototypical constructions for expressing an actor in Croatian passives. In other words, it cannot govern an agent or an effector, but it does govern a prepositional phrase (*u (in) + x loc*) with the syntactic role of locative adverbial. This preposition, besides the semantics of the verb itself, also stresses the conceptual relation between the subject and direct object, the container/content relation.

- (10) c. Otrov -Ø je sadrža -n
 poison M.SG.NOM be.3.SG.PRES contain PASS.PART
 u ov -oj mal -oj bočic -i.
 in this F.SG.LOC little F.SG.LOC bottle F.SG.LOC
 ‘The poison is contained in this little bottle’

According to our criteria, next on the distance hierarchy are verbs *imati* (*to have*) and *posjedovati* (*to possess*) because these verbs cannot derive passive participles. In line with the premise that all grammatical changes are semantically conditioned, the reason for this might be the high degree of deviation from the prototype source - path - goal relation as manifested in these verbs and their complements.

The most distant from the prototype are objects of the verb *težiti* (*to weigh*). Besides the fact that here too there is no possibility of deriving the passive participle, objects of this verb, from the synchronic point of view, do not have a syntactic role of direct object at all, but function as quantity adverbials. Given the rule that every overt NP must be case-marked, and in this case it is accusative, the idea that there must be some sort of connection between these NPs and the category of direct object cannot be discarded. These NPs must exhibit some connection to the category of direct object. What we seem to be dealing with here is some sort of fossilized accusative that does not exhibit any accusative meaning. This verb with its complements designates a feature of the subject, resulting in the highest degree of nondistinctiveness between the subject and the other, accusatively marked verb complement.

The third type of peripheral direct objects is not established on the grounds of failure of passivization. It is found in impersonal clause similar to the so called reflexive passives (14-15):

- (14) Lingvistik -u se često smatr -a
 linguistics F.SG.ACC REFL¹⁰ often consider 3.SG.PRES
 formaln -om znaność -u.
 formal F.SG.INSTR science F.SG.INSTR
 ‘Linguistics is often considered as a formal science’
- (15) Naš -u kuć -u grad -i se
 Our F.SG.ACC house F.SG.ACC build 3.SG.PRES REFL
 već godinama.
 for years
 ‘Our house is being built for years’

There is just one syntactic difference between a passive and an impersonalized clause: in a passive clause the predicate is congruent with subject/nominative, while in impersonalized clauses it is the accusative that functions as the direct object. Over the last couple of decades, Croatian linguists and philologists were, in my opinion without a single linguistically grounded reason, excessively rigorous when it came to this clause type (cf. Jonke 1952; Vince 1956). Use of the accusative instead of the nominative case was discarded as resulting from a bad and corrupting influence of other languages, particularly of German. Recent Croatian grammars (Katičić 1991; Barić et al 1995) are not so radical, however. Besides the reflexive passive, they also make allowance for impersonalized clauses. So Katičić (1991: 146), besides a description of the transformation of impersonalization, says: “The transformation of impersonalization is not applicable to transitive verbs with an expressed object in polished literary language, which is why it is characteristic of a less careful manner of expression.”¹¹ Barić et al. explain impersonalized clauses with their characteristic unambiguity, which is not the case with passive clauses, which are not devoid of ambiguity. It gives an example *Čovjek se osuđuje na smrt strijeljanjem* (*The man is sentenced to death by firing squad*), where two interpretations are possible – a passive and a reflexive one. The impersonalized clause, on the other hand, with accusative-, instead of nominative case-marking *Čovjeka se osuđuje na smrt strijeljanjem* (*The man is sentenced to death by firing squad*) removes the ambiguity by eliminating the reflexive interpretation. Cognitive Grammar can accommodate neither the first nor the second explanation. The first explanation is not acceptable because stylistic arguments are preferred to the syntactic ones. The second explanation is somewhat more acceptable, but it is not satisfactory either because such types of

¹⁰ Element *se* is, for the sake of simplicity, marked REFL, but it is of great importance to understand that in impersonalized clauses it functions as a particle, and not as a reflexive pronoun.

¹¹ “Preoblika obezličenja ne primjenjuje se na prelazne glagole s izrečenim objektom u ponnije dotjeranom hrvatskom književnom jeziku i zato je to oznaka nešto manje brižna izražavanja.” (Katičić 1991: 146).

ambiguity are, in principle, eliminated by the context,¹² which makes formal (grammatical) means in some measure redundant. As it has already been pointed out, Cognitive Grammar explains changes in semantic relations by changes in grammatical relations and so is the case here. The peripheral status of the direct object in impersonalized clauses has to do with the fourth topicalization factor, namely, figure/ground organization. As it has been said earlier, according to this factor, the position of primary figure in prototypical instances is taken up by the subject, the direct object assuming the position of secondary figure. Similarly, in prototypical instances the primary figure/subject is assigned a semantic microrole that is subordinated to the semantic macrorole of actor, while the direct object is assigned semantic microroles that are subordinated to the semantic macrorole of undergoer. Accordingly, the passive does not belong to prototypical instances because an undergoer semantic microrole is assigned to the primary figure/subject. Therefore, passive is considered as a strategy of focusing on the undergoer and defocusing from the actor. Impersonalization is also a strategy of undergoer focusing, but because the subject is not expressed, the position of primary figure is taken by the next element on the focus hierarchy, namely, by direct object. Use of impersonalized clauses is thus, besides being a means of undergoer focusing, a strategy of object focusing and subject defocusing. Semantic consequences of such a reverse syntactic focusing show in the fact that a patient becomes more prominent than it is in the passive, because it remains immanent in its typical syntactic element (direct object) taking at the same time the position of the primary figure which, in prototypical instances, is taken up by the subject.

3. Conclusion

The analysis of the Croatian accusative direct object clearly defines it as a category structured on the basis of prototype effects. Category radiality is manifested in the semantically conditioned grammatical anomalies (the impossibility of passivization), as exhibited by particular examples. Syntax, on the other hand, acts as a bridge linking such peripheral members to the prototype through the common accusative government of the verb functioning as the predicate.

¹² It would be extremely difficult to find an example where it would not be clear from the context whether the reflexive or passive interpretation is in question.

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O NEKIM RUBNIM TIPOVIMA HRVATSKOGA IZRAVNOGA OBJEKTA U AKUZATIVU: KOGNITIVNA ANALIZA

Autor, primjenjujući metode kognitivne gramatike, raspravlja o trima rubnim tipovima izravnoga objekta u akuzativu u hrvatskom jeziku, od kojih dva svoj status zahvaljuju morfo-sintaktičkim posljedicama vidljivima iz nemogućnosti pasivizacije aktivnih rečenica kojih su dio, a treći se pojavljuje u jednom tipu obezličenih rečenica.

Ključne riječi: izravni objekt u akuzativu, subjekt, prototipni članovi kategorije, rubni članovi kategorije, pasiv, elementi topikalizacije, obezličenje