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The role of the dative in the Macedonian dative-predicative structures

1. Introduction

This paper deals with the Macedonian sentences containing a copula, non-verbal subject complement (sometimes called 'predicative') and a nominal constituent in dative, as in the following examples:

(1) *На Ана ѝ е страв.* 'Ana is afraid.'
(2) *Интересно ми е* тука. 'I find it interesting here.'

These constructions, called 'dative-predicative structures' (DPS), exist in all Slavic languages with varied scope of use and may express various types of situations, ranging from physical to psychological and cognitive states. This paper examines the type of lexemes that can function as subject complements in DPS in Macedonian and the types of situations expressed with DPS. Special attention is

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paid to the role of the dative in creation of the semantics of the construction. To fully understand the meaning and functioning of the DPS they are compared to the corresponding subjecless clauses without a dative constituent (*Интересно е* тука. 'It is interesting here.'), for which the term 'predicative structure' (PS) is used here.

This research is based on examples collected from literature and journalistic texts, as well as internet sites and interactive forums. In total around 290 subject complement types were attested, represented with different frequency. The existence of corresponding PS was also examined. Since this is a rather productive construction in Macedonian, this number of lexemes used as predicatives cannot be taken as definite.

The main goals of the research are: (1) to determine what type of situations are expressed in Macedonian with a DPS, and (2) to examine the role of the dative participant in each of them. Thus, the focus is on the semantic aspects of the Macedonian construction in relation to the corresponding structures in Serbian and Bulgarian, with brief comparison to Russian at points. We also aim to clarify the status of the Macedonian DPS construction and its development tendencies in relation to the neighbouring languages.

In Russian linguistics there is a long history of studies on the Russian DPS (see overview in Zimmerling 2018 and Say 2013), but in South Slavic languages it has not been studied much, attracting the attention of the linguists only more recently[1]. In Macedonian, it is presented in a study on subjectless sentences, so called impersonal constructions (Guržanov 1988) and in one on copula constructions (Cvetkovski 1988). The thematic session on *Predicatives in dative clauses in Slavic languages*, presented at the *16th International Slavic Congress* in Belgrade 2018, was an attempt to intensify the interest in in DPS in South Slavic language studies. This research has been motivated thereby.

The paper is organized as follows: section 2 discusses the structural properties of DPS, and section 3 is dedicated to functional properties, where the types are first presented and then elaborated in subsections, finishing with a summary subsection (3.4). At the end a round off is given in a concluding section.

2. Structural properties

DPSs are subjectless clauses. They contain two obligatory constituents: the predicate consisting of a copula verb and a non-verbal complement, for which the term 'predicative' will be used, and the dative argument, with an animate, predominantly human referent. Other circumstantial data can be expressed in the

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[1] For a recent contribution to the topic see the papers in "Русский язык за рубежом", 2018, № 5.

form of adverbial, prepositional or clausal adjuncts, as well as clausal complements, but they are generally not obligatory[2]. The Dative argument is a particular feature of the DPS, instantiating the participant that experiences the environment (circumstances) in some way. The corresponding sentences without the dative just describe the circumstances and do not profile an experiencer. Comparison of the situations expressed by these two structures helps understand the role of the dative argument in creation of the characteristic semantic and pragmatic properties of DPSs.

In Macedonian the copula is obligatory in both DPS and in PS and always has a form of 3rd person singular (neuter gender with verbs in *l*-form). The basic copula verb *сум* 'be' is predominantly used. The dynamic copulas, such as *станува*, *стане* 'turn', *доаѓа*, *дојде* 'come', *паѓа*, *падне* lit. 'fall' (example 3) can sometimes be used, but they have a more restricted distribution.

(3) Оеднаш ми *стана* топло. 'Suddenly I started feeling warm.' (Guržanov 1988: 52)

The predicative complement is the constituent that carries the main meaning. There is no uniform agreement regarding its syntactic status. In Russian tradition there is a tendency to consider it as a separate class of words – состояние (sostoyanie) (Zimmerling 2018). In Serbian they are defined as *situacioni prilozi* 'circumstantial adverbs' which express certain type of states in particular situations (Marić/Kerkez 2018: 44). In Bulgarian they are considered predicative adverbs or predicative adjectives (Petrova 2018). In Macedonian predicatives are referred to as 'nominal part of the predicate', but they are considered adverbs (Guržanov 1988, Minova-Ǵurkova 1994). The reasons for such conflicting accounts stem from the fact that they are recruited from different word classes (adjectives, participles, nouns, adverbs) and that the meaning they receive in the complex structure does not correspond fully to the meaning of the base in its usual uses.

In this presentation the term 'predicative' is used for the syntactic function which can be fulfilled by forms stemming from different word classes. In Macedonian DPS is a productive construction and it is not possible to list all items that can be used. The collected base consists of 298 lexemes attested in DPS use. About 70% of those are predicatives related to adjectives, mostly ending in -*о*: *студено* 'cold', *загушливо* 'stuffy', *вкусно* 'tasty', *гадно* 'disgusting', *добро* 'good', *жално* 'sad', *забавно* 'amusing', *јасно* 'clear', but there are a few ending in -*ски*: *детски* 'childish', *идиотски* 'idiotic', *царски* 'kingly'. About 6% originate from participles, but they also have adjectival use. There are passive ones: *очекувано* 'expectedly', *здодаено* 'bored, tired', and active ones: *вознемирувачки* 'upsetting', *збунувачки* 'puzzling'.

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[2] But see Uhlik (2018) for a different view.

Adverbial forms are represented with about 3%: *далеку* 'far', *многу* 'much', and prepositional phrases with about 7%: *од интерес* 'of interest', *без врска* 'no good'.

Nouns take up about 14%. There are old lexemes, of Slavic origin: *страв* 'fear', *жал* 'sadness', *срам* 'shame'; and of Turkish origin: *ќеф* 'pleasure', *мерак* 'desire', as well as some new forms, mostly of foreign origin: *мистерија* 'mystery', *ужас* 'horror', *топ* 'top'. In Serbian and Bulgarian, a closed class of old Slavic nouns are used with an accusative Experiencer, but the Turkish and more recent ones with a dative one. Nevertheless, the accusative constructions have the same function as the dative ones.

Predicatives can express various types of properties that are attributed to the situation, so there have been attempts to establish semantic classes: some have suggested very detailed classification, while others have opted for generalizations. According to Marić/Kerkez (2018: 46), in Serbian both trends are known: Stevanović (1974) suggested 15 classes, while Maroević (2010) only 3 classes: states, modalities and assessments. In a number of works on Russian DPS, Zimmerling distinguishes 15 classes and in Ivanova, Zimmerling (2019) they add 4 more for Bulgarian. There does not seem to be a justification for such granularity. A more general classification may be more useful and applicable. We suggest that Zimmerling's 15 classes can be grouped into 4 broad classes, which can further be divided into sub-classes:

1. Physical and physiological perceptions (7%): *топло* 'warm', *спарно* 'stuffy', *заморно* 'tiresome', *океј* 'OK';
2. Emotional experiences (31%): *мачно* 'awful', *пријатно* 'pleasant', *страв* 'fear';
3. Cognitive reactions (46%): *јасно* 'clear' *чудно* 'strange', *важно* 'important';
4. Parametric properties (16%): *близу* 'near', *луто* 'chilly', *скапо* 'expensive'.

Percentages show the representation of each class in the base of Macedonian predicatives colected from 2016 through 2018. Predicatives expressing emotional experiences and cognitive reactions prevail. The percentage of predicatives for physical and physiological perceptions is rather small in Macedonian.

Most of the predicatives which are related to adjectives can be used in PSs for general description of a situations, but some may have different meaning in DPS. This is especially true of those expressing states. Compare the meaning of the PS sentences in (a) with the DPS ones in (b).

(4) a. Овде *е лошо*.   'It is bad here.'
    b. Овде *ми е лошо*.   'I feel sick here.'
(5) a. Овде *е пусто*.   'It is desolate here.'
    b. Овде *ми е пусто*.   'I feel lonesome here.'

Old Slavic nouns are not used for general description, but new and some borrowed ones are used in PSs as well:

(6) a. *Жал е за него.   '*It's sorry for him.'
    b. Жал ми е за него.   'I feel sorry for him.'
(7) a. Раат е одве.   'It's pleasant here.'
    b. Раат ми е одве.   'I feel pleasant here.'

Prepositional phrases expressing states are not used in PS (8), but intelectual reactions are possible (9).

(8) a. *Овде е по волја.   To mean: 'It's pleasing here'
    b. Овде ми е по волја.   'It's pleasing for me here.'
(9) a. Овде е без врска.   'It's unpleasant/stupid here.'
    b. Овде ми е без врска. 'I feel unpleasant/stupid here.'

Few predicatives that are not felicitous for general description and are thus not used in PSs usually get some modification of the meaning when used in DPS in comparison to their attributive semantics. Thus, *страно* and the synonym *туѓо* 'alien, foreign', get the meaning 'strange, unusual', *драго*, *мило* 'dear' get the meaning 'glad'. Some adjectives may completely change the meaning. For example, *криво* 'crucked' means 'sorry, regret' in DPS (10).

(10) *Криво му е* што дојде.   '*He regrets* coming here.'

A sentient being is presupposed in all uses of the adjectives as predicatives in DPS or PS. However, adjectives that describe people's character and moods are not good candidates for DPS in Macedonian (as well as in Serbian and in Slovenian), though they are encountered in Russian (Say 2013; Gradinarova 2010) and in Bulgarian (Gradinarova 2010). In fact, according to Gradinarova (2010), such patterns are becoming very productive in these languages, commonly used in spoken language and on social media, even though the language norm does not always accept them. Compare the following examples from Gradinarova (2010). While in Russian and Bulgarian DPSs these adjectives express the dative referent's state (11), the corresponding sentences in Macedonian are either unacceptable or express the referent's opinion (12).

(Rusian)

(11) a. Ему радостно/грустно. (p. 43)   'He is happy/sad.'
     b. А мне пьяно. (p. 39)   'And I am drunk.'
     c. Но как-то мне пессимистично ... (p. 51) 'Oh how I feel pessimistic …'

(Bulgarian)

     d. Мързливо ми е … (p. 41)   'I am in a lazy mood ...'
     e. Изморено ми е в момента. (p. 41)   'I'm tired at the moment.'
     f. ... романтично ти е, … (p. 52)   '… you are in a romantic mood, …'

(Macedonian)

(12) a. Весело/Тажно му е.   'He finds it joyful/sad.'
     b. *Пијано ми е.   To mean: 'I'm drunk.'
     c. А како ми е песмистично ...   'And how I find it pessimistic…'
                                               (Not: I'm in a pessimistic mood.)
     d. *Мрзливо ми е, ...   To mean: 'I don't feel like doing anything.'
     e. *Изморено ми е во моментов.   To mean:
                                               'I feel very tired at the moment.'
     f. Романтично ти е.   You find it romantic.'
                                               (Not: You are in a romantic mood)

3. Functional properties

In Russian linguistic tradition DPS is defined as an impersonal sentence expressing current inner state of the Experiencer (Zimmerling 2018)[3]. Such characterization influenced the South Slavic studies dealing with DPS. Guržanov (1988) defines DPS in Macedonian as follows: "Sentences with obligatory dative object denote physical and psychological states and experiences of living beings". Minova-Ǵurkova (1994: 165) explains that the dative in subjectless copula constructions specifies the person as the experiencer of a particular state. Recent studies point out the complex nature of the South Slavic DPSs and compare their functional scope with the Russian ones (*cf.* the 2018 articles by Marić, Kerkez on Serbian, Uhlik on Slovenian, Petrova on Bulgarian, Mitkovska on Macedonian). They have some general tendencies in common, which differentiate them from the Russian corresponding structures.

In Mitkovska (2018: 23) it was stated that in general DPS in Macedonian inform about the way the dative participant experiences the reality and his/her subjective stance in relation to that reality. *Reality* implies a real-life situation, which is always understood when a DPS is uttered, but some details may also be

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[3] "I show that the constructions N_{DAT} — V_{LINK} — P_{RED} (dative-predicative structures, DPS) and N_{NOM} — V_{LINK} — P_{RED} are used to express the meaning of inner state – i.e. stage-level predicates linked to an animate subject" (Zimmerling 2018: 45).

overtly expressed in the sentence as complements or modifiers of the predicate or in a separate sentence (see examples 13b and c, 14a and b, 15b and c). The need for such additional expressions depends on the meanings expressed by the DPS.

DPS in Mac is used to express three levels of involvement of the experiencer in the situation. The three types are presented briefly here and then each type is discussed separately and compared to the corresponding PS.

1. Direct involvement means expressing current physiological, emotional or cognitive state of the dative referent (the experiencer):

(13) a. Топло ми е.   'I'm warm.'
     b. *Криво му е* кога ќе згреши.   '*He feels sorry* when he makes a mistake.'
     c. *Јасно им е* сега.   '*It's clear to them* now.'

2. Indirect involvement is understood as the dative referent's assessment of the situation in relation to his/her needs and inclinations:

(14) a. *Високо ми е* да се качувам до петти кат. '*It's high for me* to climb up to the
                                                    fifth floor.'
     b. *Важно му е* да го положи испитот. '*It is important for him* to pass the exam.'

3. External observation represents the dative referent's judgement or evaluation of the situation:

(15) a. *Сомнително ни е.*   'We find it suspicious'
     b. *Неучтиво им е* да не одговориш.   '*They think it's impolite* not to answer.'
     c. *Не му е фер* некој да добие повеќе. '*He doesn't think it's fair* some to get
                                                    more.'

3.1 *Direct involvement*

When the dative referent is exposed to some situation, it may provoke a physiological emotional or cognitive state in the referent. Sensations provoked by some physical properties of the environment or physiological bodily states are usually expressed with predicatives from the class of Physical and physiological perceptions. However, Parametric properties are sometimes reanalyzed as feelings:

(16) *Тесно ми е* во овие панталони. '*I feel uncomfortable* because these trousers are
                                                    too tight for me.'

The event has to be actualized and the sentence expresses the current state of the experiencer. DPS informs about the dative participant's subjective experience of the environment, which is motivated by the objective circumstances, and it may be in agreement with the situation. However, it is not always so, as example (17) shows, since these constructions inform about the dative referent's perception of the situation.

(17) Можно е да стареам па *ми е студено* и кога не е студено.
        'It is possible that I'm getting old, and *I feel cold* even if it is not cold.'

The same conditions are valid for emotions and cognitions. For expressing emotional states, predicatives of the class Emotional experiences are mostly used, but many Physical and physiological perceptions are metaphorically reinterpreted as emotions, as illustrated in (18).

(18) Тешко ми е.
        'I don't feel well.'[physiological]
        'I am miserable.' [emotional]

Cognitions are expressed with predicatives for Cognitive reactions. Pure cognitive states are not numerous (see example 13c).

As discussed above, in Russian and in Bulgarian the expression of direct involvement, i.e. the current state of the dative participant, is expanded through the spread of DPS in the domain of adjectives describing people's character and moods (see examples 11). However, this is not the case in Macedonian (see examples in 12), and some other South Slavic languages, hence we do not find many new predicatives for expressing actual states.

Corresponding PSs without the dative argument describe the situation in relation to some generally accepted norms, e.g. having the property *студено* 'cold' / *здодевно* 'boring' at least to the same or higher degree than the general standard for coldness/boredom that is valid for any potential experiencer. In example (19) the sentence in (a) does not contain a dative constituent and it expresses properties of the situation which the speaker considers generally accepted. However, they do not have to be equally judged by everyone. In (b) DPS is used and since the experiencer is coded in a dative NP the observation does not characterize the situation itself, but the subjective view of this participant.

(19) a. *Здодевно е* овде.   *'It's boring* here.'
        b. Можеби, но *на Гоце не му е здодевно.*   'Maybe, but *Goce is not bored*.'

In both constructions the experiencer sets the standard but in DPS it is motivated by the participant's inner state and in PS by some general human standards. DPS presents a subjective reaction to the situation. Though it is expected human beings to experience the environment according to the general norms, there are sometimes internal reasons for a different reaction. Putting the experience in dative position, the speaker downplays the referent's responsibility for such discrepancy, as the dative presents the participant as an affected entity that has no control over the situation (Wierzbicka 1986: 419; Rudzka-Ostyn 1996: 355). Indefinite pronouns and adverbs may emphasize this (example 20).

(20) Некако/Нешто *ми е студено* овде. '*I* somehow *feel cold* here.'

3.2 *Indirect involvement*

When a presumed situation is qualified from the dative referent's perspective in relation to his/her needs, affinities, inclinations, abilities etc., the referent does not experience a state immediately, but only assumes a possible state. They refer to non-actualized situations, either to the future or to generic events. For that reason, the term 'indirect involvement' is used. Such statements are not paraphrased with 'X feels' but with 'for X … is'.

Indirect involvement may be clear from the situation, but often additional modifiers or complement clauses that specify the circumstances are used (14 and 21). Predicatives expressing Parametric properties are most typically used. Physical and physiological perceptions, Emotional experiences and Cognitive reactions are possible and require more specification (as in 21), so that it is clear that the statement is not about a current situation. Such structures are often used as a kind of explanation or excuse.

(21) Не купија кафе. *Гужва им беше* во супермаркетот, па не влегоа.
      'They did't buy coffee. *They found it too crowded* in the supermarket, so they did not go in.'

Corresponding sentences without the dative referent express the speaker's assessment of the situation. Compare (14a) above with (22) below. Again, the subjective orientation is eliminated. The evaluation is presented as independent of the participant involved, even if first person is in question.

(22) *Високо е* да се качувам/качуваш до петти кат.
      'According to general standards *it is high* that I/you climb up to the fifth floor.'

3.3 *External observation*

Some DPSs express a subjective judgement on the part of the dative referent, not a particular physiological or emotional/cognitive state. They can be paraphrased as: *X thinks a situation is Y* or *according to X, a situation is Y.* As in the previous semantic subtype, the participant assesses the situation, but it is not in view of some personal interest and potential involvement. These sentences express the dative referent's subjective appraisal of the situation as positive or negative. Predicatives of the class Cognitive reactions and abstract Parameters are the best candidates (examples in 15 above), though concrete Parameters are also encountered.

The corresponding PS also expresses appraisal of the situation (23), which is ascribed to the speaker. Here the situation is assessed according to some generally accepted standards, valid for the property named in the predicative (Krivokapić 2005).

(23) a. Сомнително е. 'It is suspicious.'
    b. *Неучтиво е* да не одговориш. '*It's impolite* not to answer.'
    c. *Не е фер* некој да добие повеќе. '*It's not fair* some to get more.'

In line with the dative's character to present participants as not controlling the situation, the dative experiencer in DPS is viewed as exposed to some appraisal, not in charge of it. The pragmatic effect of this is a shift of responsibility to some unknown force and a less direct judgement. It is presented as a subjective opinion and there is no claim that it should be generally accepted. Thus, the dative in this type of DPS serves as a downtoning strategy.

3.4 *Summary*

To sum up, the two predicative constructions compared here, PS and DPS, both express assessment of the situation, but from a different perspective: PS from the speakers standpoint, based on generally accepted standards, and DPS from the dative referent's standpoint, based on some unknown inner motivation. Consequently, the insertion of the dative participant in the situation causes a viewpoint shift, from outside the situation to within.

Along the DPS functions discussed, we can also observe further change of viewpoint. In Table 1 it is shown how the dative referent's perspective changes from a view of an involved participant to an external judgement and evaluation, from particular to general. Indirect involvement is an intermediate stage. In that sense the three types of DPS meaning represent different levels of subjectification, as defined by E. C. Traugott:

Over time, meanings tend to come to refer less to objective situations and more to subjective ones (including speaker point of view), less to the described situation and more to the discourse situation. (Traugott 1986: 540)

Type of involvement	Direct involvement	Indirect involvement	External observation
Type of meaning	current state as experienced by the dative referent	dative referent's assessment of a possible situation	dative referent's personal stance towards a situation
Type of situation	realized situation	potential situation	general situation
Subjectification	less subjective		more subjective

We can assume that the different uses we have now appeared over time, though we do not have historical data. One indication is the fact that External observation is a more productive function than Direct involvement and more new predicatives are recruited in it. On the other hand, subjectification is seen as a process that leads to expressions with pragmatic functions related to 'face', such as hedging and downtoning (Traugott 2012). The general meaning of the Dative being "unintended affective endpoint" (Rudzka-Ostyn 1996: 355), in all DPS types its effect is to soften the claim and present the appraisal as coming from an unknown source. This makes them suitable for pragmatic application, especially in face threatening speech acts.

4. Conclusions

In this paper the structural and functional properties of the subjectless copula clauses with a dative constituent were discussed. It was determined that various types of lexemes can be used as non-verbal part of the predicate, i.e. as predicatives. DPS is more productive in Macedonian for expressing judgement than for expressing inner states, as is the case in Serbian and Slovenian (Marić/ Kerkez 2018; Uhlik 2018), and unlike in Russian and Bulgarian (Gradinarova 2010). In this function the aptness of DPS for indirectness and pragmatic softening is especially pronounced. The role of the Dative was clarified by contrasting them to the corresponding structures without a dative constituent, i.e. PS, which tend to present the situation more objectively and sound more direct and presuming.

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Summary

The role of the dative in the Macedonian dative-predicative structures

In this article, we look at the subjectless sentences with a copula, non-verbal part of the predicate and a dative constituent. We call them 'dative-predicative structures' (DPS). They express a state or attitude towards a certain situation from the dative referent's perspective. The main goal is to determine the role of the dative in the semantic and pragmatic features of the construction. There are four types of lexemes used in the predicative position in DPS. They are related to the three types of situations that are expressed: direct involvement, indirect involvement and external observation. The comparison of the DPS with the corresponding constructions without a dative argument (predicative structures – PS) shows that the dative introduces a subjective tone which softens the claim. This is especially evident in the third type of meaning, where judgement and assessment is expressed. In that respect Macedonian shows similar tendencies as Serbian and Slovenian: DPS is expanding more for expressing assessment of the situation, and less for characterizing the current situation.

Keywords: dative, copula, predicative, experiencer, subjectification.