

### **Causatives without Causers and Burzio's Generalization.**

**The Problem.** The rarely discussed accidental construction in Russian [1] (termed 'adversity impersonal' in Babby 1993) presents a counterexample for Burzio's Generalization (BG) (Burzio 1986) because it involves an internal argument marked with the accusative case in the absence of the agent. The absence of an implicit agent in this construction is evidenced by the fact that (unlike the passive [2]) the accidental disallows control into purpose clauses [3a] and allows only by-phrase adjuncts that modify a causing event, not an agent [3b]. Further, unlike the passive, the accidental construction is only possible with those verbs whose meaning is compatible with inanimate causation [4a,b]. While these facts may lead us to question the validity of BG, abandoning it altogether would miss the fact that in English, BG is observed - the construction such as [1] is impossible [5]. So, it is reasonable to ask what causes the variation with respect to BG and how can we predict whether a language can allow a BG violation?

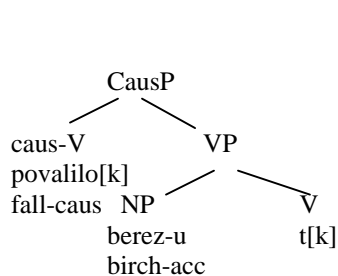
**The Proposal.** In this paper I argue that the possibility of BG violations is related to the kinds of causative heads that exist in a language. In particular, the BG violation in Russian [cf 1] can be explained by adopting an assumption that the accusative case is licensed by a Caus-head (Harley 1995, Pylkkanen 2000, 2002), along with the proposal developed in Pylkkanen 2002 that Caus can be spelled out separately from Voice - the head that introduces the external argument (Kratzer 1996). Pylkkanen 2002 argues that causatives across languages involve a Caus head that introduces an event argument but may come either separately or together (bundled) with Voice. Assuming Pylkkanen's proposal we get that in a language where Caus is not bundled with Voice, it should be possible to have a causative construction that lacks an agent but still has accusative case. Let us now consider the evidence indicating that the accidental construction in Russian is, in fact, a causative without a causer. First, that the accidental construction is a causative - has a Caus head -- is indicated by the lexical semantic fact that external causation is obligatory: a modifier like "on its own" is impossible [6a]. Second, that Caus is distinct from Voice in Russian is seen from the fact that it is possible to attach an adverbial that modifies the causing event as long as the modifier is not agentive [6b]. Finally, the Russian accidental construction finds a parallel in the Japanese adversity lexical causative argued by Pylkkanen 2002 to also involve a Caus head but no external argument. Like the Russian accidental construction, the adversity causative requires an external cause [7] but disallows an agent [8]. Crucially, the Japanese adversity causative is like the Russian accidental construction in that it also involves the accusative case - a violation of BG. Notably, the Japanese examples provide evidence in support of the claim that the accusative case is introduced by Caus. A causativized unaccusative on the adversity reading such as [9b] allows accusative case, but this is not possible in an unaccusative that lacks the causative morpheme [9a]. Thus, Russian and Japanese have a separate Caus head and consequently allow accusative case even in the absence of Voice [10].

However, if a language is voice-bundling (lacks a separate Caus head), it will not be possible to have the accusative case in the absence of Voice [11]. Pylkkanen 2002 argues that English is a voice-bundling language. She claims that a voice-bundling language will not allow causativized unergative verbs that lack an agent, while a non-voice-bundling language will allow them. Russian has a desiderative construction that involves a causativized unergative without an agent. The non-agentivity is evidenced by the impossibility of control into purpose clauses; yet, a causing event is required [12a]. (Pylkkanen 2002: ch3 presents similar evidence from Finnish, also a non-voice-bundling language). In contrast, an agentive unergative is compatible with control into purpose clauses and does not require external causation [12b]. The absence of a non-agentive unergative in English [12c] indicates that English lacks a separate Caus head in contrast to Russian. Consequently, if accusative case is licensed in English, the agent must also be present - BG is observed.

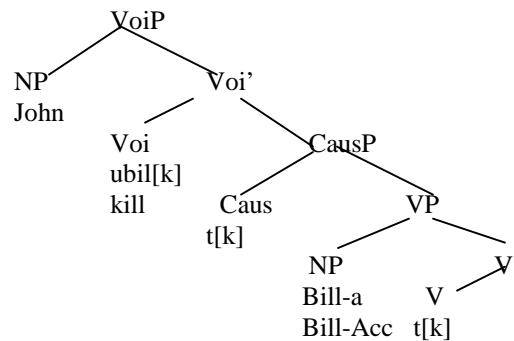
**Conclusion.** The proposal thus connects a theory of causativization with case-licensing and derives parametric variation with respect to BG. The possibility of having accusative case in the absence of the agent is connected to the possibility of having a Caus head that is separable from Voice. A testable prediction is made: languages that have non-voice-bundled Caus heads will be able to violate BG while those that are voice-bundling will not. In addition to Russian, the prediction is born out in Japanese. Finally, the proposal draws parallels between the Japanese adversity causative and the Russian accidental construction thereby placing Russian into the typology of causatives developed by Pylkkanen 2002.

- [1]a. Bumag-u sozhgl-o                      b Dim-u        udaril-o                      c Berez-u    svalil-o  
 paper-acc burned-neut                      Dima-acc hit-neut                      Birch-acc make-fall-neut  
 The paper got burned                      Dima got hit                      The birch was caused to fall
- [2] Dom byl sozhzhen chtob poluchit' strahovku [The passive]  
 House was burned to receive insurance  
 The house was burned down to collect the insurance
- [3] Dom sozhgl-o a. (\*chtob poluchit' strahovku) /b. (\*Dimoj) /(molnziej)  
 House-acc burn-neut (\*to receive insurance) / (\*Dima-instr) /(lightning-instr)  
 The house got burned down (\*to collect the insurance) / (\*by Dima) /(by lightning)
- [4]a Knig-a byl-a prochitan-a                      b. \* Knig-u prochital-o  
 Book-nom was-fem read-fem                      Book-acc read-neut  
 The book was read                      The book got read
- [5] \* Him killed. => something killed him
- [6] Dim-u ubil-o a. (\*sam / sam-o po sebe) /b. (mgnovenno) /(/\*special'no)  
 Dima-acc killed-neut (\*alone-m/alone-neut by self) / (instantaneously) /(/\*purposefully)  
 Dima got killed (\*on his own / on its own) / (instantaneously) / (on purpose)
- [7] Taro-ga mukuko-o (\*katteni) korob-ase-ta [Japanese lexical causatives data from Pylkkanen 2002]  
 Taro-nom son-acc (\*by-self) fall-caus-past  
 Taro was adversely affected by his son falling down (\*by himself)
- [8] Taro-ga (\*Hanako-ni-yotte)/sensoo-ni-yotte musuko-o sin-ase-ta  
 Taro-nom (\*Hanako-by) /war-by son-acc die-caus-past  
 Taro's son was caused to die on him (\*by Hanako)/ by war
- [9]a \* Taro-o sin-ta                      b Taro-ga musoko-o sin-ase-ta [adversity causative reading]  
 Taro-acc die-past                      Taro-nomson-acc die-caus-past  
 Taro-acc died                      Taro's son died on Taro

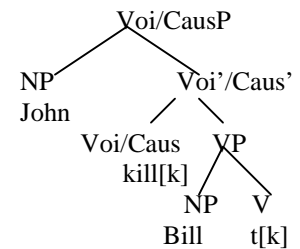
[10a] Russian  
 caus w/o voice



[10b] Russian: caus and voice



[11] English: caus and voice bundled



- [12]a Mne xorosho igraet-sja (\*chtoby vyigrat') / (\*samo po sebe)  
 Me well plays-sja (\*to win) / (\*alone by self)  
 Playing goes well for me / Playing feels well to me (\*in order to win) / (\*on its own)
- b Ja xorosho igraju (chtoby vyigrat') / (sam po sebe)  
 I well play (to win) / (on my own)  
 I play well (in order to win) / (on my own)
- c \* Something/ it plays me well => English lacks agent-less causativized unergatives

**References** (selected): Pylkkanen, L. (2002). Introducing Arguments. Ph. D Thesis, MIT.

Babby, L. (1993). "A Theta-theoretic Analysis of Adversity Impersonals in Russian". FASL 2. The MIT Meeting. Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications