

Selected Phenomena of Polish

Benjamin Roth

6 maja 2008

Case and Gender

Aspect

Irrealis

Pronouns

Word Order

Passive Constructions

Negation

Other Interesting Things

- ▶ seven cases, rich morphology
- ▶ Basically three genders: male, female, neuter
- ▶ Other lines of distinction determine form and agreement as well.
- ▶ accusative for male singular nominals - animate vs. inanimate:
 - ▶ Znam **tego** nauczyciela. (“I know that teacher.”)
 - ▶ Mam **dobrego** psa. (“I have a good dog.”)
 - ▶ Znam **ten** hotel. (“I know that hotel.”)
 - ▶ Mam **dobry** zawód. (“I have a good job.”)

- ▶ plural nominals - male-personal vs. non-male-personal:
 - ▶ Znam **tych** nauczycieli. (“I know those teachers.”)
 - ▶ Mam dobre **psy**. (“I have good dogs.”)
- ▶ this distinction is also important for verb agreement:
 - ▶ Studenci protestowali. (“The students protested.”)
 - ▶ **Psy** szczekały. (“The dogs barked.”)

complications do exist...

- ▶ Chcesz, żebym przeczytał twoj**ego** emaila? Zapłać.
- ▶ “You want me to read your email? Pay for it.”
- ▶ Przygotuj identyczn**ego** hamburgera jak ten pokazany przez kucharza i zdobądź punkty.
- ▶ “Prepare a burger identical to that shown by the cook and gain credits.”

Aspect

- ▶ Two aspects: imperfective and perfective
- ▶ For each verb two forms exist, with possibly different stems
- ▶ Imperfective verbs describe ongoing actions, perfective verbs focus on completed actions.
- ▶ Perfective forms are only used in past and future tense.

Aspect

- ▶ Imperfective aspect:
 - ▶ durative: An ongoing and nonrecurring action is described.
 - ▶ iterative: An action consisting of recurring actions is described.
 - ▶ inchoative: A continuing transition from one state into another is described.
- ▶ Perfective aspect:
 - ▶ resultative: The result or completion of an action is reported. The duration or course of action is not important.
 - ▶ momentary: The event or action does not have a duration, start and end coincide.
 - ▶ inchoative: The start of an action is reported only.

Irrealis

- ▶ Irrealis: “Conditional”, “Conjunctive”
- ▶ To express hypothetical, uncertain or desirable contents.
- ▶ Often used in constructions, e.g. hypothetical conditionals.

Irrealis: Morphology

The irrealis is made of two building elements:

- ▶ The past stem of the verb
 - ▶ marked for number and (grammatical and natural) gender
 - ▶ **pisat**-bym (*sg., male*), **pisaty**-byście (*pl., non-male-personal*)

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 - ▶ **pisat**-bym (*sg., male*), **pisaty**-byście (*pl., non-male-personal*)
- ▶ The clitic indicating irrealis
 - ▶ marked for number and person
 - ▶ pisat-**bym** (*sg., 1st*), pisaty-**byście** (*pl., 2nd*)

Irrealis: Clitic Positioning

- ▶ Can but need not be attached to the verb (subject to pragmatic factors). Avoid putting it at the end of a sentence.
 - ▶ **Zwiedziłbym** chętnie te urocze zaułki
 - ▶ Chętnie **bym zwiedził** te urocze zaułki.
 - ▶ “I’d love to visit those charming alleys.”
- ▶ Is always (at least graphemically) detached from impersonal verb forms:
 - ▶ **Warto by było** zwiedzić te urocze zaułki.
 - ▶ “It would be worthwhile to visit those charming alleys”
 - ▶ Sklep **otwarto by** jutro.
 - ▶ “Tomorrow, the shop would be opened.”

Irrealis: Clitic Positioning

- ▶ Attached to certain particles:
 - ▶ Czy**byście mogli** mi poradzić jak najtańiej doleciec?
 - ▶ “Could you tell me how to fly there the cheapest way possible?”
- ▶ Attached to certain conjunctions:
 - ▶ Byłabyś dużo szczęśliwsza, gdy**byś przestała** palić.
 - ▶ “You would be much happier if you stopped smoking.”

Personal Pronouns

- ▶ Personal pronouns occur in long and short forms.
- ▶ Long forms usually occur after prepositions.
- ▶ Short forms are dependent on an accented word (not necessarily a verb). They do not occur at the beginning of a sentence, the end of a sentence is dispreferred.
 - ▶ Dobrze ci tak!
well you.DAT that way
That serves you right!
 - ▶ Brat **mi**(DAT) **je**(ACC) kupił. (My brother bought it for me.)
 - ▶ Przyjdę **do ciebie**(GEN). (I will come to you.)
 - ▶ Szukam **cię**(GEN). (I'm searching for you.)
- ▶ Pro-drop: Widzę go. Przyjdzie. (**I** see him. **He** comes.)

Possessive Pronouns

- ▶ mój, twój (“my, your”): adjectival
- ▶ jego, jej (“his, its, her”): noun-like
- ▶ swój (“my/your/his/its/her own”): adjectival

Word Order

- ▶ Many orderings are allowed but may have unwanted pragmatic implications.
- ▶ There seem to be some don't's:
 - ▶ Avoid putting verbal units at the end of a sentence.
 - ▶ ...
 - ▶ Jurek **będzie** jutro **pracował** w ogrodzie.
 - ▶ **Będzie** Jurek jutro **pracował** w ogrodzie?
 - ▶ Jurek jutro **będzie pracował** w ogrodzie.
 - ▶ ? W ogrodzie jutro Jurek **będzie pracował**.
 - ▶ ? Jurek **będzie** jutro w ogrodzie **pracował**.
 - ▶ ? **pracował będzie** Jurek jutro w ogrodzie.

Passive Constructions: Present

- ▶ present reflexive:

Dużo pisze się o tej książce.

Much write.3RD.SG PREFL about this book.

Much is being written about this book.

- ▶ present 3rd person:

Dużo piszą o tej książce.

Much write.3RD.PL about this book.

Much is being written about this book.

- ▶ participle construction:

Jestem chwalony.

I'm praised.IMPRES.PART-PASS.NOM.SG

I'm being praised.

Passive Constructions: Past

- ▶ past reflexive:

Dużo pisało się o tej książce.
Much wrote.PAST.3RD.SG.N PREFL about this book.

Much was written about this book.

- ▶ neutral participle construction:

Dużo pisano o tej książce.
Much written.PART-PASS about this book.

Much was written about this book.

Passive Constructions: Past

- ▶ participle construction (imperfective):

Byłem chwalony.

I was praised. IMPRF.PART-PASS.NOM.SG.

I was being praised.

- ▶ participle construction (perfective):

Książka została wydrukowana.

Book has been printed. PREFL.PART-PASS.NOM.SG

The book has been printed.

Passive Constructions

- ▶ Future passive is constructed analogously.
- ▶ The subject of the active construction can be realized with the instrumental or with *przez*+accusative.

Negation

- ▶ In addition to negating pronouns the sentence has to be negated with *nie*:
- ▶ Nikogo tutaj nie było.
Nobody here not was
Nobody was here.
- ▶ Nikt mi nic o tym nie mówił.
Nobody me nothing about this not told.
Nobody has told me anything about that.
- ▶ Nie chcę mieć żadnych kłopotów.
Not I want have no troubles
I don't want to have any trouble.

Other Interesting Things

▶ Participles

- ▶ Idąc do domu, nie zauważyłem cię.
- ▶ Nie mając czasu, nie mogłem przyjść do ciebie.

▶ Numerals...

- ▶ Cardinal numbers **ending in 2,3,4 are used like adjectives.**
- ▶ Cardinal numbers **ending in 0,1 and 5-9 are used like nouns**, requiring the genitive of the counted noun.
- ▶ For the numbers **2,3 and 4, used for persons**, there are additional **equivalent noun-like forms**. (*dwaj-dwóch, trzej-trzech, czterej-czterech*)
- ▶ For groups of persons of different gender or pluralis tantum, there are **collective forms**. They have to be used. (*dwoje, troje, czworo ...*)

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Where...

...to start? :)