Two theoretical approaches to cases in comparison

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Abstract

The paper discusses the approach to cases within the frameworks of Functional Grammar and of Cognitive Grammar. Issues discussed are the possible structure of case meaning, the possible difference between governed and non-governed uses of cases, and the use of different cases for the second argument of bivalent verbs, with examples draw from Latin and Greek. Differences between the two approaches are argued to depend crucially on the use of discrete (in FG) as opposed to continuous (in CG) concepts for the description of linguistic phenomena.

1. Theoretical background

In this paper I discuss how case usage is approached within two theoretical frameworks, i.e. Functional Grammar (FG see Dik 1997) and Cognitive Grammar (CG see Langacker 1987). In order to highlight the differences between the two approaches, I will refer to the distinction between continuity and discreteness as discussed in Langacker 2006. I will argue that FG is rigid in imposing excessive discreteness on linguistic phenomena, while CG is more apt to handle continuity and hence polysemy.

As an example, I discuss how the two approaches handle the use of the same case for arguments of verbs and for adverbials (satellites in the FG terminology), the use of cases other than the accusative for second arguments of verbs, as well as possible case alternation with the same verb. My discussion is based on Greek and, to a lesser extent, on Latin. I will show that a model of case meaning based on radial categories can account for high polysemy. Besides, I will make use of the concept of construction, as used in Construction Grammar, to show how different argument structures can co-occur with the same verb or with verbs which have related meanings, based on their degree of productivity.

1.1. Case in FG

In FG, grammatical forms, such as cases, are not conceived of as carrying an autonomous meaning. Cases are part of the wider group of relators, defined as follows in Pinkster 1990, 40: „By ‚relators‘ I understand formal means which serve to indicate the relation between constituents on the sentence level or the noun phrase level“. Pinkster views as an issue the fact that such relators are used both in the core predication and in the periphery, and explains in two different ways the function of cases in either position. In his opinion, „[t]he use of different cases in the periphery has an identifying function; the use of different cases in the nuclear predication has a discriminating function“ (1990: 48). In other words, cases do not *per se* convey meaning; when used within the nuclear predication, they simply serve the function of distinguishing between obligatory arguments of the verb, following the strategy „be sure always to use a case other than that used already“ (1990: 44, see further Pinkster 1985). Following this strategy, the first argument is assigned the nominative case, the second argument the accusative case and the third argument the dative case. When used in the periphery, cases indicate semantic roles in association with lexical features of NPs, and not on account of a semantic content of their own: indeed, while it is said that „a proper semantic value of these relators ... is relevant with regard to

their use in the periphery" (1990: 40), ‚traditional' approaches to case meaning are criticized to the effect that it is shown that no possible semantic content is identifiable for Latin cases, given the wide range of meanings associated with each case in reference grammars, which FG cannot accommodate into a model of structured polysemy.

In spite of different terminology, the distinction between uses of cases in the core predication vs. periphery is remindful of the distinction between grammatical and semantic (uses of) cases. Such rigid approaches, which view ‚grammatical' and ‚semantic' (uses of) cases as sharply separated from each other, raise problems, as argued especially by Hettrich in various publications (e.g. 1990, 1994, 2008). Regarding verbs which can take arguments in different cases, such as *consulere alicui / consulere aliquem* in Latin, Hettrich 1990: 87 remarks that the idea that cases carry no independent semantic content when governed by the verb has the effect that „[m]an betrachtet die Verben als polysem und nimmt an, jede Verbalbedeutung selektierte einen spezifischen obliquen Kasus", whereas an explanation that takes the semantic content of cases as its starting point has the advantage to give a unified treatment of all verbs that allow for case alternation, as well as of verbs that take cases different from the accusative. As I will argue in sections 2.2 and 2.3, such verbs can be shown to occur in different constructions, which carry a certain meaning, connected with the meaning of the specific cases involved in each construction.

The existence of bivalent verbs which take cases other than the accusative, such as *favere* (dat.) or *uti* (abl.) in Latin, is also discussed within FG. Pinkster 1988 suggests that, while no synchronic explanation is available (in his opinion) for such exceptions to the tendency for second arguments to be assigned the accusative, the ‚irregularity' constituted by the existence of such verbs may be explained diachronically, if one supposes that the non-accusative arguments were earlier adverbials (satellites in FG), and were later ‚absorbed' into the verbal valency. A similar explanation is offered in Mulder 1987 for non-accusative second arguments of bivalent verbs in Ancient Greek. Mulder's basic concern is to gauge whether non-accusative second arguments have the same semantic role (in the FG terminology, goal) as accusative ones do. The discussion is very much theory oriented, and an important issue raised by second arguments with semantic roles other than goal is violation of the Semantic Function Hierachy set up within FG (1987: 222). Note that while there is no clear discussion of the structure of semantic roles[1], they are apparently considered discrete categories sharply distinct from each other, rather than prototypical categories with fuzzy boundaries.

Though the idea that some arguments were earlier adverbials, and that verbal valency can be seen in a dynamic perspective, is certainly plausible, and while the use of diachrony to explain synchrony is always fruitful, this explanation raises problems within Pinkster's own approach. I limit myself to the use of the ablative with *frui* and *carere* in Latin. Criticizing the widespread opinion that the ablative with such verbs is motivated by an independent instrumental or separative meaning of the case, Pinkster 1988: 240 discusses example (1):

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[1] Semantic roles (or semantic functions in the FG terminology) are given definitions that do not allow for degrees of prototypicality, as is shown by the discussion of problematic cases, which always aims to establish what is the semantic role of a certain constituent in a sharply defined manner, see for example Dik (1997: 117-124).

(1)   Cic. Att. 2,1,4 *nec nos te fruimuret tu nobis cares* „I have no chance of enjoying
       your society and you lack mine"

and remarks that:

> Animate nouns are hardly ever used as instrument satellites (only for soldiers under military
> command). Similarly, animate nouns are not used to express the «Source» and calling *nobis* in
> [1] an «ablativus separativus» does not tell us very much.

While it is true that instrument and source adverbials tend to be inanimate in Latin,
following this remark it becomes difficult to understand how such constituents, having
human referents, could have been adverbials at an earlier time, and what type of adverbials
they could have been.

In a recent article, Pinkster 2009 returned to the issue in a discussion of the use of the
dative with compound verbs in Latin. After showing that the dative is not as widespread
with compound verbs as reference grammars usually imply, he offers an in-depth analysis of
various verbs, and concludes that:

> One of the functions of preverbialisation is the transformation of one-place verbs to two-place
> verbs and of two-place verbs to three-place verbs. The new argument has to be assigned a case.
> Nominative and genitive are excluded for obvious reasons. The accusative is especially productive
> for verbs that require an affected or an effected second argument. The ablative is especially
> productive for separative arguments and for arguments that indicate the entity another entity is
> provided with (or antonyms). The semantic function of most dative arguments with compounds is
> different.

However, the precise semantic motivation for the use of the dative is left on the
background: verbs that take the dative are divided into four groups but it is said that „it is
difficult to find a common semantic denominator for these four classes", an no further
attempt is done to find a unified explanation for their argument structure.

1.2. Case in CG

In CG grammatical forms are considered meaningful in all their usages. CG does not make
a qualitative distinction between lexical and grammatical meaning, but simply assumes
different degrees of semantic abstractness. Regarding cases of governed NPs, often
considered meaningless on account of being obligatory (as in FG), Langacker 1991: 235
writes that „being obligatory is not the same as being meaningless"; a possible answer to
the question whether the use of cases in the core predication is qualitatively different from
their use in the periphery is that:

> [i]t is quite evident that the oblique cases make a definite semantic contribution in many (if
> not all) of their uses . . . If the subject- and object-marking cases depart somewhat from this
> model, it is only by virtue of the abstract nature of their meaning' (Langacker 1991: 379–80).

The highly polysemous character of cases is conveniently described by means of the
model of radial categories, that is, categories whose members share some features with the
semantic prototype, but do not necessarily share features with each other (see Lakoff 1987
and Luraghi 2008 for further reference). Assuming that case meanings are structured as
radial categories has the advantage that the use of cases in various positions receives a
unified treatment; besides, this model of polysemy has the further advantage that, as
pointed out in Nikiforidou 1991: 195, „the same semantic network set up for synchronic

polysemy, can...be shown to be (at least partly) relevant to semantic change as well". Thus, similar to the theory of ‚satellite absorption' put forward in Pinkster 1988 and Mulder 1987, diachrony can be used to explain synchrony, but this does not cause a break in the basic motivation for the usage of cases in any syntactic function.

1.3. Constructions

In Cognitive Grammar, types of argument structure (more or less the equivalent of predicate frames in FG) are considered part of the wider set of grammatical constructions, or simply constructions. Constructions are holistic units which carry a certain meaning, not inferable from the separate meanings of their parts. Groups of verbs with different semantic properties occur with different constructions: for example, in the Indo-European languages which have morphological case, most verbs which indicate spontaneous events, such as *melt* (intr.), often exhibiting middle voice, occur in the Nominative construction, while verbs that indicate an action occur in the Nominative-accusative construction, as most transitive verbs (see sections 2.2 and 2.3 for Greek examples).

Potentially, states of affairs are infinite; the fact that only a small set of constructions accounts for all verbs in a language is based on generalizations. For example, many verbs which do not indicate actions, but rather states, and whose subject is not an agent, but rather an experiencer, have the same argument structure of action verbs (i.e. they are transitive) in the Indo-European languages, such as ‚love' and ‚know'. The same holds for a number of verbs that indicate sensations, such as ‚see'. Note that the direct object of such verbs is not a patient, but rather a stimulus. The same construction is also commonly used with other verbs whose second argument is not a real patient, or may be considered a patient to a limited extent only, because it does not undergo a change of state.

In other cases, such differences among states of affairs may be mirrored in argument structure: for example, verbs which have a partially affected direct object may take cases that indicate the degree or type of affectedness. This is the way to account for bivalent verbs which take cases other than the accusative, as we will see in the next sections.

2. Greek cases

In the first place, I would like to tackle the question whether cases in the core predication do indeed display the same meaning which they convey when they occur in the periphery. As noted above, this partly equals asking whether there is a sharp distinction between grammatical and semantic uses of cases.

2.1. The accusative

The accusative is often considered a typical grammatical case on account of its usage as case of the direct object in the Indo-European languages. As well known, in most languages the accusative also functions as an allative: this is considered its ‚semantic' use in e.g. Kuryłowicz 1964. Recently, Hettrich 2008 has suggested that all uses of the Sanskrit accusative are semantically connected to each other, and that the accusative displays the same semantic content when used as a grammatical case and when used as a semantic case (see also Hettrich 1994 on semantic aspects of double accusative constructions in Greek). In this section I would like to do the same for the Greek accusative.

In Ancient Greek, uses of the accusative outside the verbal valency are numerous, and the possible connection between them has often eschewed explanation. Traditionally, it is thought that the accusative is an ancient allative, and that this is its original meaning. An example is given in (2):

(2)   Hom. Od. 15,297 *hē dè Pheàs epéballen* „she (sc. the ship) drew to Pheas"

In (2) a situation is described in which a trajector (the ship) moves along a trajectory in the direction of a landmark (Pheas). The accusative profiles the direction of the trajectory, not the trajectory itself: however, the fact that the intended endpoint of the trajectory is indicated, implies that the trajectory is unidirectional. In other occurrences, the accusative can profile the trajectory, while the direction is left out of view. This happens in occurrences such as (3):

(3)   Hom. Il. 6,390 *hò d' apéssuto dṓmatos Héktōr tèn autèn hodòn* „and Hector hasted from the house back over the same way"

Note that in (3) only our knowledge of the shape of the entity involved (the road) indicates that the trajectory is unidirectional. However, this is not necessarily the case, as shown (4):

(4)   Hom. Od. 6,259 *óphr'àn mén k'agroùs íomen* „so long as we are passing through the fields"

In (4) the trajectory may be unidirectional, but it may also be multidirectional: the use of the accusative to indicate multidirectional path is especially developed within prepositional phrases[2]. In some other occurrences, a stationary situation is described in terms of motion, even though no motion is implied, as in (5):

(5)   Hom. Il. 23,529 *eípet'agalêos Maneláou doupòs erōèn* „he was a spear-cast behind glorious Menelaus"

The semantic extension in (5) can be explained through the notion of 'fictive motion' (see Talmy 2000). Fictive motion is a type of subjectification[3]: the perspective of the speaker is mapped onto a state of affairs, which is then presented from a subjective rather than an objective point of view. Subjectification is often used with motion verbs and direction expressions in the description of itineraries, as in *The road that runs across the hills*: obviously, the road does not move, but the speaker describes the situation from his/her possible point of view, if moving along the road. In (5), the distance is described as if it were a trajectory along which a spear moved, cast by the speaker. In much the same way as in the case of multidirectional path, the stationary usage of the accusative of extension is especially frequent with prepositions in Homeric Greek[4].

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[2] An example of multidirectional path indicated by a prepositional phrase with the accusative is *dià dôma* as opposed to *dià dṓmatos* where the genitive profiles a straight trajectory, see Luraghi 2003: 33-4, 169-173 for discussion.

[3] See in particular Langacker 1991: 315-342.

[4] See Luraghi 2003 ch. 3.

The semantic extensions described above and included in the domain of space can be mapped onto the domain of time: in such cases, the accusative mostly indicates duration[5].

A trademark of Greek case syntax is the so-called ‚accusative of respect‘, which indicates the extent to which a certain concept applies to an entity. The semantic role of such construction is called ‚area‘ (see Radden 1989, Luraghi 2003, 47-48). Examples occur in Homeric formulas, such as *pódas ōkùs Akhilleús* ‚Achilles swift foot‘, *boền agathòs Menélaos* ‚Menelaos good at the war cry‘, outside formulas, as in (6):

> (6)   Hom. Il. 3,210 *Menélaos hupeírekhen euréas ốmous* „Menelaus overtopped (him) with his broad shoulders"

and are frequent in all Greek authors after Homer. Example (6) contains the bridging context that leads from space to quality: Menelaos is said to be taller than another person by a certain concrete space occupied by a body part (from the top of his shoulders to his entire height); in the formulas, it may be still a body part which sets the limits, but the space so defined is not concrete: the domain of space is mapped onto the abstract domain of quality, and what would be a stretch of space in concrete terms becomes the conceptual area to which a certain quality applies.

Directional motion can also be mapped onto more abstract domains. In occurrences in which the accusative indicates direction, such as in (2), reference is made to a state of affairs in which an entity moves from a certain point in space toward another point. As a result, the entity involved undergoes a displacement, i.e. a change in its position in space. On an abstract plane, change of position corresponds to change of state: this semantic extension leads the accusative to indicate prototypical patients of action verbs, that is, direct objects. Thus, the meaning of the Homeric accusative is structured as a radial category as in (7):

> (7)   *THE MEANING OF THE ACCUSATIVE IN HOMERIC GREEK*
>
> DIRECTION → EXTENSION IN SPACE → EXTENSION IN TIME
>
>   ↓   ↓
> PATIENT   AREA

2.2. Case alternation within the nuclear predication

In this section I will consider two types of bivalent verbs: (i) verbs with which the accusative can alternate with another case; (ii) verbs which take second arguments in cases other than the accusative. As we will see, even though such verbs seem to constitute an heterogeneous set, the occurrence of cases other than the accusative can be explained in much the same way with all of them.

Let us consider in the first place verbs with which the accusative can alternate with the genitive. This type of alternation is usually accounted for as based on the partitive meaning of the genitive; handbooks describe such an alternation with verbs of eating and drinking. In spite of the fact that the actual extent to which the genitive is used with such verbs is not as large as handbooks may lead to think (see Riaño Rufilanchas 2005), it is clear that its

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[5] The construal of time in terms of space is a common phenomenon in the world's languages, as shown with extensive exemplification in Haspelmath 1997.

motivation lies in different degrees of affectedness, that is, between total (accusative) and partial (genitive) affectedness. Other verbs, such as for example verbs of perception, also allow for the same alternation; in example (8) the two cases are coordinated, thus showing that the semantic function of differently marked direct objects is the same (in this case, stimulus):

(8)   Hom. Od. 12,265-6 *mukēthmoû t'ḗkousa boôn aulizomenáōn oinôn te blēkhḗn* „I heard the lowing of the cattle that were being stalled and the bleating of the sheep"

Verbs with an experiencer subject and a direct object which has the semantic role stimulus, such as verbs of perception, sensation, mental states or activities, emotions, frequently take a genitive, not only in Greek, but in the other Indo-European languages as well. Such verbs have a low degree of transitivity, since the subject does not act intentionally, does not exert control over the state of affairs, and the object does not undergo a change of state.

Low transitivity in general is typical of all verbs that take non-accusative second arguments: even verbs which indicate actions, and have an agent subject, such as those which mean ‚reign', ‚rule', as *basileúein, anássein*, or *árkhein*, have an object which is not a prototypical patient, because it does not undergo a change of state. Such verbs may take the genitive, the accusative, or the dative. The latter case is frequently associated with non-prototypical direct objects of verbs which refer to actions typically performed toward human beings, such as verbs that mean ‚help'; some verbs take second arguments in the dative with human referents, and another case with inanimate ones, such as verbs that mean ‚take away'. Reasons of space do not allow me to go through all examples which would deserve to be examined. As a summary, I will only mention the verb *orégein*, reach (out)', which can take all three cases, as shown in (9)-(12):

(9)   Hom. Il. 23,805 *hoppóterós ke phthêisin orexámenos khróa kalón* „which of the two will first reach the other's fair flesh"

(10) Hom. Il. 6,466 *hôs eipṑn ou paidòs oréxato phaídimos Héktōr* „so saying, glorious Hector could not reach his boy"

(11) Hom. Il. 5.33 *hoppotéroisi patḕr Zeùs kûdos oréxēi* „to whichsoever of the two it be that father Zeus will give glory"

(12) Hom. Od. 12,257 *kheîras emoì orégontas en ainêi dēiotêti* „stretching out their hands toward me in their awful death-struggle"

Only the accusative, as shown in (9), indicates that the object is actually reached. The genitive occurs in (10) as well as in other occurrences when the intention of the agent is not carried out, and the object cannot be reached. The dative occurs in an apparently different construction, because it co-occurs with a direct object (and active voice), but if one considers the precise types of direct objects involved one can see that the difference is only apparent. In occurrences such as (11), the direct object is most often the word *kûdos*, in some occurrences one finds *eúkhos*: the state of affairs is expressed through the verb plus the direct object understood as a semantic unit, and the dative refers the human or divine participant toward which some abstract entity (honor, a prayer) is addressed, rather than be the concrete goal of an actual trajectory, as it is with the accusative. In (12) the object is the word *kheîras*; the participant referred to by the dative cannot actually be reached although this may be intended by the agent, similar to occurrences with the genitive.

To sum up, contrary to the accusative, the genitive and the dative indicate that a certain argument of the verb either is not a patient (as in the case of experiencer verbs) or, in cases in which it is a patient, it does not undergo a change of state. To a limited extent, the

genitive can also occur with direct objects patients that do undergo a change of state, as is the case with verbs of consumption, but in such cases it indicates that only a part of an entity is involved in the change of state. Thus, case marking is connected with transitivity: highly transitive verbs take second arguments in the accusative, while verbs with low transitivity may take the genitive or the dative, as well as the accusative.

The idea that non-accusative second arguments are associated with lower degrees of transitivity of course is not new. Pinkster (1988) mentions various explanations of non-accusative second arguments in Latin, which connect them with low transitivity, but rejects them on account of the fact that he views transitivity as necessarily connected with passivization, rather than as a semantic notion that refers to the type of state of affairs indicated by a verb. Again, transitivity is conceived of not as a scalar property of sentences as a whole, but rather as a discrete feature of certain verbs, which is either present or absent. Pinkster further points out that not all verbs which belong to the same semantic area, and not all verbs with a low degree of transitivity, exhibit the same type of case marking. As an example, he mentions semantically similar *favere*, with the dative, and *iuvare*, with the accusative[6]. Indeed, if one looks for discrete correspondences between meaning and form, case marking of second arguments is hardly comprehensible in Latin, Greek, and other languages: as we have seen in example (8), two different cases may even be coordinated in Greek; besides, numerous verbs take either the accusative or another case with no apparent difference, as the verb *keleúein*, which may take the dative, as in Il. 2,50-1, or the accusative, as in Od. 4,274-5 (see Chantraine 1981: 69).

In the next section we will see how one can account for this state of affairs.

2.3. Constructions and productivity

In the preceding section I have mentioned verbs occurring in different types of construction, both in Greek and in Latin. In Greek, for example, one finds a Nominative-accusative construction, typical of transitive verbs, and possibly the only one available for highly transitive verbs, a Nominative-genitive construction, typical of verbs which have an experiencer subject, and a Nominative-dative construction, typical of verbs whose second argument is a human being which does not undergo a change of state. This list does not exhaust all possible types of Greek argument structure, but it can suffice for the present discussion.

As already remarked in the previous section, not all verbs with experiencer subjects come in the Nominative-genitive construction in much the same way as not all verbs whose second argument is human and does not undergo a change of state come in the Nominative-dative construction. How can this be? This apparent incongruity can be explained in terms of prototypical categories and productivity of constructions.

In the first place, various types of states of affairs do not per se constitute discrete categories characterized by a set of necessary and sufficient features. Potentially, any state of affairs is different from any other: however, linguistic coding is necessarily based on generalizations, given the fact that it would be impossible for a language to have an infinite set of argument structures available for verbs, in order to account for the infinite diversity

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[6] As Pinkster himseslf points out, the dative is sometimes extended to *iuvare* in late authors; see below section 2.3 for discussion.

of events. Thus, languages tend for example to group together verbs which refer to states of affairs intentionally brought about by a prototypical agent, i.e. a human controlling entity: such states of affairs are commonly called actions, and action verbs constitute the bulk of transitive verbs in the Indo-European languages. The occurrence of an agent is not enough to ensure the same degree of transitivity for all verbs: in fact, some transitive verbs also imply a change of state on the side of the patient, while other do not. Action verbs whose patients do not change state may still imply some sort of change, such as change of location, as in verbs that mean ‚bring‘, or ‚give‘, or they can have no such implication, as in verbs of saying or verbs that indicate voluntary perception processes, such as verbs which mean ‚watch‘. In Greek, for example, we find a scale of transitivity among verbs such as:

(15)   *TRANSITIVITY SCALE – ACTION VERBS*

        kteínō, bláptō -- phérō, títhēmi -- phroúreō, ággellō

        +transitive   -transitive

Thus, in spite of being transitive and have agent subjects, such verbs indicate states of affairs in which a patient is affected to quite different extents. Note that the Nominative-accusative construction for bivalent verbs is extremely productive, if one measures productivity of constructions in terms of type frequency as suggested in Barðdal 2009. According to Barðdal productivity of constructions „is a function of both type frequency and coherence. ... By *type frequency* I mean the total number of types which can instantiate a construction ... For a syntactic construction ... all predicates which can instatiate the ... construction together make up its type frequency. ... By *schema* [i.e. construction] *coherence* I mean the internal consistency found between all the members of each schema“ (2009: 27).

Following the above definition, the Nominative-accusative construction in Greek is the most productive one in terms of type frequency, even though, given its extension to a large number of semantically different groups of verbs, its coherence is not especially high. On the other hand, the Nominative-dative or the Nominative-genitive constructions are less productive in terms of type frequency, but they do acquire a certain degree of productivity given the higher semantic coherence of the specific groups of verbs with which they occur.

Among possible participant in states of affairs, human beings are obviously more salient than inanimate entities, and the extent to which they are affected may be relevant and hence need to be made explicit by special coding. This happens with verbs that take the dative, that is, occur in the Nominative-dative construction in Greek, and typically mean ‚help‘, ‚rule‘, ‚trust‘,and so on (see Chantraine 1981: 66-73 on verbs that take the dative in Homeric Greek): such verbs have second arguments that refer to human beings which do not undergo a change of state. However, since the Nominative-accusative construction, as argued above, is extremely productive, and often occurs with verbs whose patients do not undergo any change of state, especially if they are inanimate, such construction may also extend to verbs which are semantically close to those that occur with the Nominative-dative construction, or the same verb may exhibit variation without apparent change of meaning, as in the case of *keleúein* mentioned in section 2.2.

Productivity and hence extensibility also explains apparent incongruities observed in Latin by Pinkster, as the fact the *favere* takes the dative and semantically close *iuvare* takes the accusative; the fact that *iuvare* is also occasionally found in the Nominative-dative construction in late authors (see fn. 7) shows that this construction was also productive to a certain extent and with a semantically coherent class of verbs: in this case, in spite of lower type frequency, the Nominative-dative contruction gained in productivity thanks to its

higher degree of semantic coherence with respect to the Nominative-accusative construction.

The Nominative-genitive construction occurs with various semantically different verbs; a relevant set is constituted by verbs which have an experiencer subject and a stimulus object. An experiencer does not act voluntarily and does not control the state of affairs in which s/he is involved: the only feature that experiencers share with prototypical agents is the fact that they are human. The occurrence of the genitive for the stimulus points toward lack of control by indicating partial affectedness. However, the feature of humanness of the experiencer suffices for the Nominative-accusative construction to also be extended to many verbs with experiencer subject.

3. Conclusion

In this paper I have discussed the way in which FG and CG handle certain aspects of the use of cases in Latin and Greek. I have shown that FG works with discrete categories, separated from each other by sharp boundaries, while CG makes use of prototypical categories with fuzzy boundaries. As a result, FG cannot handle case polysemy, and cannot give a unified account of the use of cases in different syntactic positions. Consequently, proponents of FG find it pointless to speak of the meaning of cases, and prefer to treat cases as meaningless, when they are governed, or indicating semantic roles, not on account of their meaning, but rather depending on lexical features of specific NPs, when they are not. CG views case meaning as an instance of structured polysemy, based on the model of radial categories, and conceives of cases as always meaningful, both when they are governed and when they are not. By making use of a continuous model, CG can handle polysemy, and does not need to separate grammatical from semantic usages of cases.

Bivalent verbs which take cases other than the accusative are a complicated issue within FG, because, while they constitute semantically definable groups, not all verbs which have similar meanings take the same construction. Again, since FG tends to view inclusion in a category (a group of verbs in this case) as a matter of necessary and sufficient features, this state of affairs can hardly be explained. I have shown that a satisfactory explanation can be reached by making use of the notion of construction and different degrees of productivity of constructions.

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