Adversity impersonal construction in diachrony   **Kyongjoon Kwon (Harvard Univ.)**

[Background] The study of Adversity Impersonal construction (henceforth, AI) has been concerned with either finding an origin in functional-historical camp or coming up with a theoretical apparatus to account for the syntactically unusual properties, such as an instrumental causer, Accusative case marked NP without Nominative subject from formalists. In this paper, I will take insights from both parts, especially strengthening the arguments with crosslinguistic and diachronic data.

[Diachronic pathways] At the outset a personal sentence, i.e., a subject and an agreeing verb, was used to refer to something unexpected mostly from nature force and out of human's control. The semantic peculiarity was then emphasized by transforming an agreeing verb into a non-agreeing. Assuming Lexical-decomposition hypothesis (Hale and Keyser 1987; Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995), it is not surprising that syntax can be modified in accordance with its semantics. In contemporary colloquial Russian, for instance, the example (1) is used to express that he was forced to leave the work against his own will. The same goes with the AIs. An important consequence of the elimination (or suspension) of phi-feature checking left the previous nominative subject unvalued, i.e., severed from T position. Thus, this second stage could not be stable, eventually yielding to the next stage, in which a dangling nominative came to be lost, (3). I propose that the almost non-restricted permutation between instrumental and accusative case marked nouns in contemporary Russian, noted by Lavine and Freidin (2002), be rather attributed to stylistic fronting, thus neither discourse-driven movement nor from defective T, which is conditioned by subject gap, under the assumption that an EPP in Old Russian was met by the raising of V to T (cf. Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 1998). In partial sum, I propose that this chain of events, (1) through (3), be seen as analogous to anticausativization, most noticeable effect of which is the suppression of an agentive subject. There is, however, an important difference between anticausative and AI in the nature of verbs after the appropriate operation (still transitive for AI, intransitive for anticausativization). The similarities between anticausative and AI are striking; incompatible with (i) a *by*-phrase (agent PP) modification, (ii) agent-oriented adverb (*on purpose*), (iii) control into purpose clause but compatible with (i) a phrase like *by itself* (*sam po sebe*) and (ii) a causer in PP (cf. Markman 2004; Alexiadou et als 2006; Kallulli 2007; Schäfer 2008). For an example, see self-evident examples (4).

Interestingly, even before the emergence of instrumental case marked NP, *ot* plus genitive came to refer to a causer, (5). This is a crucial development, which motivated the emergence of another variant for expressing a causer, i.e., instrumental case marked causer. Given the lack (or suppression) of an external argument, an initial phase of AI had good reason to be perceived as a variant of passive. I propose that the introduction of an NP as a causer demonstrates syntactic approximation of AI to passives. It comes as no surprise that both instrumental and *ot*-genitive are the cases for expressing the agents of passives in Old Russian. Because passive is not limited to a lexically defined group of verbs, AI also came to encompass many transitive verbs other than verbs connected with natural force, (6). A thematic restriction of AI, i.e., the fact that a causer cannot be animate, can be accounted for by the existence of an oblique causer construction, in which an animate causer appears in genitive, (7). I claim that AI is one kind of passive constructions, the morphological uniqueness (i.e., default agreement, Accusative subject) of which should be ascribed to diachronic developments, (8). Around the 17th century, the development of AI was complete with lexical diffusion and semantic clarification between instrumental and *ot*-genitive clarified. With parallel phenomena in German (*Fate Accusative* in Haider 2001) and Icelandic ((9), Sigurðsson 2006), I propose that AI is a pragmatically conditioned construction to express a *non-agentive* nature of an event, as brought about by natural force. The need was efficiently met by obliterating an agent via quasi-anti-causativization. This is reinforced by default agreement.

[Derivation of two surface orders of AI] The oblique case marked NP first merges at Spec, vP (*contra* Lavine & Freidin 2002, Markman 2004 but *pro* Schäfer 2008), when V merges with v creating a little v projection (causative formation), and then moves up merging with Spec, TP for an EPP reason. There is no movement in VP, i.e., V and an NP:acc remain in situ. This derivation yields a [Instr-V-Acc] order. Another variant, [Acc-V-Instr], more directly reflects diachronic paths proposed. Firstly, V raises to T to for an EPP reason different from XP-movement in Spec,TP. Then, an NP:acc is raised to Spec,TP position for a purely stylistic reason, thus not EPP-driven, not Topicalization (similarly, Markman 2007).

(1) Ego   ušli   s   raboty   (contemporary colloquial Russian)
     him-acc went away:pl from;prep   work:gen.sg 'He was forced out of work (= got fired)'

(2) v Toržku tuča   na odnomъ času rovъ   učinilo   i
     In T:loc thunderstorm:nom in a single hour ditch:acc sg created:neut.sg and
     xoromovъ   několьko   sneslo   izъ osnovanьja
     [houses:gen.pl some:acc]:acc   carried off:neut.sg   from foundation:gen
     'In Toržok a thunderstorm created a ditch in a single hour and several houses got pulled off their
     foundations'   (ca.1300)

(3) mnogo mostu   rvalo   (15C)
     many   bridge:gen sg   tear off:past neut sg
     'Many bridges got torn off'

(4) a. Vanju   udarilo   molniej / *Dimoj   AI
         Vanja:acc hit:neut sg   lightening:instr / *Dima:instr
         'Vanja got hit by the lightening / *by Dima

     b. Vaza   slomala-s' (*Dimoj)   Anticausative
         vase: nom broke-refl   *by Dima

(5) Ot   groma i ot   mlъnija   mnogo ljudei i   konei pobilo   (15C)
     From   thunder and from lightening   many   people and horses killed:neut sg
     'Many people and horses got killed from thunder and lightening'

(6) Počelo   ego   znobitь   (17C)
     began:neut sg him:acc feel feverish:inf
     'He began to feel feverish'

(7) Ivana   očki   slomali+s'   (Rivero and Savchenko 2005: (2), 276)
     Ivan:gen sg   glasses:nom pl   broken:pl+refl
     'John's glasses broke'   (Possessor reading)
     'John caused his won glasses to break'   (Causer + possessor reading)

(8) The development of adversity impersonal constructions
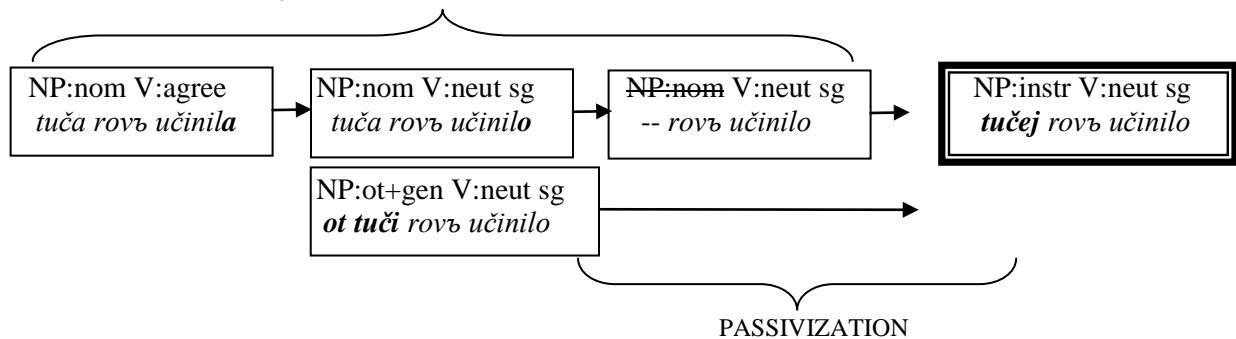
(9) Bátinn   fyllti   á   augabragði.   (Icelandic, Sigurđsson 2006, (18))
     boat.the.:acc   filled   in   flash (filled = 'got-filled')
     'The boat swamped immediately.'

[**References**] Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou (1998) "Parametrizing AGR: word order, V-movement and EPP-checking"; ----- & ----- & Schäfer (2006) "The properties of anticausatives crosslinguistically"; Haider (2001) "How to stay *accusative* in insular Germanic"; Hale & Keyser (1987) "A view from the middle"; Kallulli (2007) "Rethinking the passive/ anticausative distinction"; Lavine & Freidin (2002) "The subject of defective T(ense) in Slavic"; Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1995) Unaccusativity: At the syntax-lexical semantics interface; Markman (2004) "Causatives without causers and Burzio's Generalization"; ----- (2007) "Cyclic linearization, remnant movement, and a typology of OV(S) constructions" Schäfer (2008) "The oblique causer construction across languages" ms. Sigurđsson (2006) "The Nom/Acc alternation in Germanic"