

VERBS OF DOUBLE GOVERNMENT IN SERBO-CROATIAN

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A number of verbs in Serbo-Croatian are said to co-occur with both the Accusative case and the Dative case as their Direct Object. For example, (1a) and (1b) (which both mean 'He advised him to go on the trip') are both grammatical sentences in Serbo-Croatian:

(1a) *Savetovao mu* (Dat.) *je da ide na put*

(1b) *Savetovao ga* (Acc.) *je da ide na put*

Other verbs which "govern" both Dative [Dat.] and Accusative [Acc.] include: *pomoći/pomagati* 'help', *slagati/lagati* 'lie', *ponuditi/nuditi* 'offer', *služiti* 'serve', *suditi* 'judge', *smetati* 'bother, interfere with.'

This distribution poses an interesting problem both for the learner of Serbo-Croatian and for the linguist analyzing the language. Hence a considerable literature exists, both about some of the verbs separately, and about all of them, in the larger studies dealing with the Dat. and/or the Acc. cases (Belić 1951, Stevanović 1951, 1974, Vušović 1934, Popović 1964, Stanojčić 1967, Gortan-Premk 1971, etc.).

In these studies the difference in cases that co-occur with these verbs is either attributed to the presumed different meanings of the verbs themselves, or to differences in style. Thus *pomagati* with the Dat. is said to mean 'help, lend assistance', while *pomagati* with the Acc. is said to mean 'help, give financial support.' For Stevanović, *lagati* 'tell lies' takes the Dat. and *lagati* 'cheat' takes the Acc.. Commenting on the semantic difference in this verb, as associated with these two cases, Asim Peco asserts that *lagati* with the Dat. is synonymous with *podvaljivati* 'cheat', while *lagati* with the Acc. is synonymous with *varati* 'deceive'. The two last-named authors thus take up somewhat contrary positions.

However correct intuitive judgments of this kind may be in some instances, they provide no rationale for a distribution of this kind. They do not tell us in any way what motivates the speaker to choose one case rather than another. Besides, *podvaljivati* and *varati* differ along the same parameter: the former "governs" the Dat., and the latter the Acc.; thus the same question (why do they co-occur with these two cases) can be asked of these two verbs also.

In traditional grammar, as is well known, examples of this kind are regarded as instances of "government". The verb, the principal member of the syntactic construction, determines the relevant category, the case. The problem with the notion of "government" is that it denies any semantic contribution to the message by the case used. In instances in which a verb "governs" the Acc., or only one case, "government" appears to be a rule that works. In cases, however, in which we find "double government" (or even "triple government") all that Serbo-Croatian grammars can say is that verbs such as those cited sometimes take one case, and sometimes take another.

In this paper we would like to offer, as an alternative, a semantic solution to the problem. We intend to demonstrate that the motivation for the choice between the Dat. and the Acc., in association with one of the verbs mentioned above, is not arbitrary but a consequence of its grammatical meaning. The two cases are in semantic opposition to each other, a part of the larger grammatical system which provides information concerning the extent to which the participant referred to by the noun (in association with these cases) is in control of the event denoted by the verb. The meaning of the Dat. indicates a greater degree of control by the participant, the Acc. a lesser degree of control. This grammatical system

in Serbo-Croatian has two additional members, meanings signaled by the Nominative [Nom.] and Instrumental [Ins.] morphology. The Nom. indicates that its referent exercises the highest degree of control over the event, while the Ins. indicates the second highest degree of control, higher than both the Dat. and the Acc.. For the purpose of this presentation, we assign numerical values to these meanings, from 1 to 4, where 1 refers to the highest degree of control (signaled by the Nom. case), and 4 refers to the lowest degree of control (signaled by the Acc.). The Dat. is indicated by 3, the Ins. by 2. This is shown on Diagram I.

DIAGRAM I: THE CONTROL SYSTEM

Nominative	[1]
Instrumental	[2]
Dative	[3]
Accusative	[4]

When the speaker of Serbo-Croatian has to communicate a message involving more than one participant, he has at his disposal meanings with which he can convey information about what each participant is doing in the event. This information is conveyed differently in different languages: in English, it is accomplished with word order; in Serbo-Croatian, with case morphology. The four meanings (1 through 4) rank various participants in an event, and on the basis of them and of the relevant context, the hearer infers the roles of the participants in the event. These roles may be those of Agent, Causer, Instrument, Benefactor, Patient, etc., i.e., categorizations with which we are familiar; they may however be many other roles that can be played by participants in real life events.

While the meanings of the Nom. and Ins. are used to convey participants who actively control the event (as causer, agent, instrument, means, etc.), the contribution of the meanings signaled by the Dat. and by the Acc. morphology is less direct. The Dat. indicates that its referent controls the action of the verb only to some extent; there is usually something about the referent that motivates the action of the verb; often, the meanings of the Dat. indicates only the source of the motivation, and leaves it to the context and the lexicon to specify more about its nature. The referent of the Acc. is not, usually, in control of the event at all.

The ranking of the various participants, accomplished by the four meanings of the system, can be seen in the following example:

- (2) Filip, najmladji sin, pomljiivo odmahnuo mater od kamina, davši [1] joj [3] znak [4] svojom grmovitom ukuštralom kosom [2] da ne ljuti staroga. (M. Božić, *Kurlani*, 10).

(Filip, the youngest son, attentively waved his mother away from the fireplace, giving [1] her [3] a signal [4] with his bushy, disheveled hair [2], so as not to anger the old man.)

The ranking is set out on Diagram II:

DIAGRAM II: THE CONTROL SYSTEM EXEMPLIFIED

'Philip'	[1]
'hair'	[2]
'mother'	[3]
'signal'	[4]

In this scene members of a household are keeping a vigil inside, while a storm of unusual proportions rages outside. They are all in an agitated state of mind. The wife is annoying the husband with her constant lamenting. The youngest son acts to prevent a family quarrel. Here, Philip (Nom.) [1] is ranked highest, the most directly responsible for the event of 'giving', and the signal (Acc.) [4] is ranked lowest. The mother ('her' in this extract, (Dat.) [3]) is ranked higher than the signal because she motivates the action and is inferred as the motivator. The hair (Ins.) [2] is ranked higher than either the mother or the signal and is inferred as the means, the actual instrument which enables Filip to accomplish the activity of 'giving.'

In example (2) we find all four meanings of the Control System. In what follows, however, we shall concentrate on the two participant messages in which (in addition to the highest ranking participant) we find just one of the two lower ones, Dat. or Acc., in association with the verbs mentioned earlier. It must be emphasized however that these two meanings are purely relative to each other. They only provide a hint to the hearer on the basis of which he can infer more precisely the roles of their referents. Each of the remaining examples in this article, (3) through (7), has two parts: (a), where the verb is associated with the Dat., and (b), where the same verb is associated with the Acc.. (Except where stated, translations are by the present author).

- (3a) -Nego, *pomozi* mi [3], ahbabe, da se okrenem na drugu stranu, jer sam se ukočio pričajući. I pruži mu svoju bleđu ruku ispod pokrivača. (I. Andrić, *Pripovetke*, 81).

("Please *help* me [3] turn onto the other side. I got all stiff just talking." And he extended his pale arm from under the cover.)

- (3b) Prosjake i bolesnike darivala je, a sa mnogo obzira i pažnje, neprimetno i nena-metljivo, *pomagala* je bogate porodice [4], siročad [4] iz boljih kuća, svu onu 'stidnu sirotinju' [4] koja ne ume da zamoli i snobiva se da primi milostinju. (I. Andrić, *Na Drinu ćuprija*, 205).

(She gave to beggars and to the sick and with much tact and care, unnoticed, she *helped* rich families [4] which had fallen into destitution, orphans [4] and widows [4] from better homes, all those 'ashamed poor' [4] who did not know how to beg and were embarrassed at accepting alms.—I. Andrić, *The Bridge on the Drina*, 238.)

- (4a) Fra Petar leži na dušku, preznaja se i teško diše a fra Marko sjedi pored njega. Između njih čekmedže sa novcem. Izbrojaše 2400 groša svega. Sad vječaju i prepiru se. Fra Petar mu [3] *savjetuje* da ponese barem 1500 groša a fra Marko neće više od 500. (I. Andrić, *Pripovetke*, 94).

(Fra Petar was lying on his bed, sweating and breathing heavily, Fra Marko was sitting at his side. In front of them was the chest with the money. They counted 2400 groschen together. Then they started to argue: Fra Petar was *advising* him [3] to take at least 1500 groschen with him, and Fra Marko did not want more than 500.)

- (4b) Konačno fra Marko popusti i pristade da se novac prepolovi. Uze 1200 groša i ode u svoju sobu, opasa se ćemerom, pa se vrati da se oprosti sa fra Petrom. Ječeći i zakašljavajući se, *savjetovao* ga [4] je Petar da odvoji odmah osam groša za sejmene. (I. Andrić, *Propovetke*, 95).

(Finally Fra Marko agreed to split the money. He took 1200 groschen and went to his room to change before coming back to bid farewell to Fra Petar. Moaning and coughing, Fra Petar *advised* him [4] to take eight groschen right away and give two to each soldier.)

- (5a) Svi koji su *služili* stranim konzulatima [3] bili su omraženi od domaćih Turaka, ali ovaj Mehmed naročito. (I. Andrić, *Travnička hronika*, 157.)

(All those who *served* the foreign consulates [3] were detested by the local Muslims, but this Mehmed particularly so. —I. Andrić, *Bosnian Story*, 162.)

- (5b) -A tko ti je ostao na domu?

-Nitko, gospodine. Moj stariji brat bio je pod turskom zastavom pa su došli Srbi i otjeli nam sto i sedam ovaca. A ja sam *služio* srpskoga kralja [4] i tri puta se povukao na Albaniju. Pa su Bugari došli i mater mi odvukli. (M. Krleža, *Novele*, 159).

"Who do you have at home?"

"Nobody, sir. My older brother was in the Turkish army and the Serbs came and took our hundred and seven sheep. I *served* the Serbian king [4] three times and retreated with him to Albania. Then the Bulgarians came and took my mother away."

- (6a) -Ne, ne. Drugi ili te ne znaju ili ti [3] *lažu* ili, misle isto ali šute. Sve tvoje teorije, sva tvoja mnogobrojna duhovna zanimanja kao i tvoje ljubavi i tvoja prijateljstva, sve to proizlazi iz tvoje ambicije. (I. Andrić, *Na Drini ćuprija*, 286).

(Oh no! Others either do not know you or *lie* to you [3] or think as I do but keep silent. All your theories, all your many spiritual occupations, your loves and your friendships, all these derive from your ambition." —I. Andrić, *The Bridge on the Drina*, 340.)

- (6b) Ovaj Kapicibaša bio je čovek omražen i na rdjavu glasu, melez, bez pravih prijatelja, koji je izdavao i *lagao* svakoga [4], isto kao što diše i govori i koga nikada nisu cenili ni oni koji su se njime (Ins.) služili. (I. Andrić, *Travnička hronika*, 52).

(This Kapidji-basha had been a much-hated man, of ill reputation, a mulatto, with no real friends, who betrayed and *lied* to all [4] as he breathed and spoke, and for whom no one had any use, even among those who employed him. —I. Andrić, *Bosnian Story*, 56.)

- (7a) Posle dobre gozbe i jakih jela, kad su se vratili u konak, kapičibašu je od 'ostre bosanske vode' uhvatila ljuta groznica. Vezir je *ponudio* svome gostu [3] da se posluži njegovim dobro uredjenim amamom. Dok se kapičibaša pario na vrelim kamenim pločama . . . (I. Andrić, *Travnička hronika*, 50).

(When they got back to the Residency, after a grand entertainment, with an abundance of highly-spiced food, the Kapidji-basha had been seized with a raging fever from the 'chilly Bosnian water.' The Vizier *had offered* his guest [3] the use of his finely appointed Turkish baths. While Kapidji-basha was steaming on the hot stone . . . —I. Andrić, *Bosnian Story*, 54.)

- (7b) Simka izlomljeno uzdahnu, ćutke pripremi večeru i tiho ga [4] *ponudi*. Djordje odmahnu glavom. (D. Ćosić, *Koreni*, 24).

(Simka sighed brokenly, prepared dinner in silence and quietly *offered* him [4] (it). Djordje refused it with a movement of his head.)

In (3a) a bedridden monk is addressing his visitor, who is sitting by his bedside and listening to his life story. The monk wants to turn over, but needs help to do so. While he can not do this on his own, he exerts control over the event by asking for help and extending his arm. "Me" in (3a) is associated with the Dat.. By contrast, the referents in the Acc. in (3b)—the "rich families," the "orphans" and the "widows"—all have no control over their circumstances. The context tells us that they do not know how to ask for help, and that they are not doing anything to encourage people to help them: they are just passive recipients. (What should be recalled here is that we are concerned only with the event denoted by the verb, and not with any other activity that may be going on in this scene.)

Example (4b) closely follows (4a) in the original. The deputy Vizier sends his guards to summon the abbot of the monastery. The abbot is away. The monks suspect that the deputy wants to use the Vizier's absence to collect the taxes for himself—taxes which are due only to the Vizier. Fra Petar, the highest-ranking monk, is advising Fra Marko (the monk chosen to accompany the guard) to take a large portion of their money to pay the taxes. Fra Marko does not want to do this, however. In (4a) the verb of advising is associated with its object (Fra Marko) in the Dat.. There is a great deal of interaction between the two monks before they agree on the amount. In this advising event, Fra Marko is quite active, because by disagreeing he is helping to determine what the advice should be. In (4b), however, there are no arguments. The two monks have already agreed on the amount to be taken; now Fra Petar is advising Fra Marko (here in the Acc.) how to handle the guards and how to behave on the journey. Thus in (4a) Fra Marko is doing more to control the advising event than he is doing in (4b). In the latter he is no longer resisting; the noun is appropriately associated with the Acc., signaling a lesser degree of control in the advising event. At this point the old monk is only outlining the details, the amount to be taken is no longer at issue.

With respect to (5a), foreign consulates in Bosnia during Turkish rule had great difficulty in recruiting the services of local people. By nature the Turks were suspicious of foreigners, and no man of reputation wanted to serve foreigners; so, foreign consulates had to make special efforts to find people to serve them. The soldier in Krleža's story, (5b), is obliged to serve, and is not at all motivated to serve the Serbian king. In this case, since all eligible young men enter his service automatically, without choice, the king does not have to contribute to the action.

In (6a) *lagati* co-occurs with the Dat., and in (6b) it co-occurs with the Acc.; in other words, the referent of the noun is ranked higher in (6a) and lower in (6b). In the first example two men are having a quarrel. One of them, Stiković, is a vain young man who studies abroad. His accuser is his childhood friend Glasićanin, who, unable to afford to go to school, has had to remain in the small town and work for his living. He is jealous of Stiković who writes, publishes, and is a very good speaker. During the summer months young men of the town gather on the bridge to listen avidly to students' tales of life in the great cities. In these discussions Stiković always plays the leading role, and everyone looks up to him. Glasićanin is particularly annoyed that a young schoolmistress, with whom he is in love, admires Stiković; in anger, he accuses him of consciously encouraging others to flatter him by accepting statements made by them ("they lie to you") that he knows to be untrue. Thus, according to Glasićanin, Stiković is to some degree in control of the event of lying. The people that Kapićibaša is lying to in (6b) are much less in control of the event: Kapićibaša does not need any motivation to lie, since it is second nature to him: he lies when he has no reason to do so.

In (7a) an emissary of the new Sultan comes to Travnik to bring the death sentence for

discovers the real intent of Kapičibaša's visit and instructs his men to poison him. In the example, Kapičibaša is showing the first symptoms of poisoning, and the Vizier is offering him the use of his Turkish baths. Kapičibaša is associated with the Dat. because he motivates the offer by his high position; in addition, he is clearly in a physical condition when such a bath could benefit him. On the surface, the two men are playing the roles of host and guest very well. In (7b), on the other hand, the event of offering is not as motivated. The husband has returned from a business trip drunk and in a very nasty mood. His wife does not dare ask him anything, and prepares dinner as a matter of routine. He does not ask for it, nor does he encourage her in any way to serve it; when she serves him all the same, he refuses; he does not participate in the event. In both examples, the broader context confirms the analysis: in (7a) the offer is accepted; in (7b) it is refused.

When we look at the examples cited here we see that the hearer/reader interprets each verb in the light of the information provided by the co-occurrent case. From the association of one verb with different cases he arrives at different interpretations. We can thus understand how these came to be considered as different verbs by some scholars.

Consider, for instance, (3a) and (3b). From the meaning 'more in control of the event' signaled by the Dat., and from the contextual clues (Fra Peter's physical presence, his asking for help, the fact that he even extends his arm) the reader can infer that the verb 'help' in association with the Dat. means 'lend assistance'. In contrast, in (3b) the meaning 'less in control of the event' (with the Acc.) occurs in association with participants who do not know how to ask for help and are even embarrassed to receive it; on this basis, the reader infers that a kind of help different from physical assistance is involved, and financial assistance is one kind that comes to mind.

In the lying event—(6a) and (6b)—the inference is rather different. From the meaning 'less in control of the event' (in (6b)) and from contextual clues about Kapičibaša's character, the reader infers that his victims are unaware that they are being lied to, that they are being cheated. In contrast, from the meaning of the Dat. in (6a), signaling that the participant is somewhat more in control of the lying event, and from what the reader by now knows about Stiković and his position among the local youth, the reader infers that Glašanin is accusing him of encouraging others to lie to him. We see that these intuitions—physical versus financial assistance; being lied to versus being cheated—are inferences from the grammatical meaning of the case, the lexical meaning of the verb, and the context.

Speakers do not arbitrarily select Dat. or Acc. forms to co-occur with the verbs discussed here. Rather, the choice between these two cases reflects the speaker's subjective assessment of the contribution of the participant referred to by the case chosen. The association of a verb with the Dat. or the Acc. follows a clear semantic parameter which is constant every time: higher versus lower control over the event denoted by the verb. The Dat. usually occurs in environments in which the second participant normally motivates the event (by his interaction in it: by asking for something, by being useful to someone, by his 'high' social position, etc.) and is thus more in control of the event than is the participant referred to by the Acc., who normally has no control at all. On the conscious level the speaker may not be aware of it. Analysts too can not detect this difference right away, in particular if they examine sentences divorced from their context.

By virtue of their lexical meaning, verbs are compatible with the meanings of certain cases; this explains why verbs in Serbo-Croatian tend to co-occur with only one case. Thus *podvaljivati* 'deceive, trick' is compatible with the Dat., and *varati* 'cheat' is compatible with the Acc. However, rather than a verb "governing" a case, the meaning of a verb works

the Vizier. However, he hides his real mission and pretends to have come to confirm the Vizier in his present position and to hand him a personal gift from the Sultan. The Vizier together with the meanings of the case toward the common goal of communicating the desired message.

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POVZETEK

GLAGOLI Z DVOJNO VEZAVO V SRBOHRVAŠČINI

Glagoli v srbohrvaščini naj bi se vezali z določenimi skloni. Članek obravnava skupino glagolov, katerih predmeti se rabijo i z dajalnikom i s tožilnikom (npr. savetao mu je in savetao ga je), in daje za to razvrstitev pomensko rešitev. Kaže, da izbira med tema sklonoma vedno motivira prispevek njunega pomena k sporočilu. Ta izbira odraža govornikovo subjektivno oceno udeležencevega prispevka, na katerega kaže eden od sklonov. Dajalniški referent vedno izvaja več nadzora nad dogodkom, ki ga označuje glagol, kot pa tožilniški referent. Izbira sklona ni vnaprej določena z vezavo, ampak je pogojena s pomenom.

