

BIBLIOTECA DELLA
SOCIETÀ ITALIANA DI GLOTTOLOGIA - 42

**TRA SEMANTICA E SINTASSI:
IL RUOLO DELLA LINGUISTICA STORICA**

**ZWISCHEN SEMANTIK UND SYNTAX:
DIE ROLLE DER HISTORISCHEN
SPRACHWISSENSCHAFT**

Atti del Convegno Congiunto | Gemeinsame Arbeitstagung
Società Italiana di Glottologia | Indogermanische Gesellschaft

*Testi raccolti a cura di
Paola Cotticelli Kurras e Sabine Ziegler*

Verona, 11-14 ottobre 2017



Il volume è stato pubblicato con il contributo Dipartimento di Culture e Civiltà
dell'Università degli Studi di Verona

PROPRIETÀ RISERVATA

©

COPYRIGHT MMXVIII

EDITRICE 'IL CALAMO' SNC

www.ilcalamo.it

info@ilcalamo.it

ISBN: 9788898640409

INDICE

<i>Premessa</i>	7
MARINA BENEDETTI, <i>C'è Oggetto e Oggetto: esplorazioni sintattico-semantiche su ἔχειν</i>	15
PIER MARCO BERTINETTO, LUCA CIUCCI, <i>Reconstructing Proto-Zamucoan. Evidence (mostly) from Verb Inflection</i>	27
MICHELA CENNAMO, <i>Intransitive Alternations and the Semantics of Predicates in Latin</i>	49
EYSTEIN DAHL, <i>Experiencer Predicates with Multiple Object Alternation in Early Vedic</i>	81
GUGLIELMO INGLESE, <i>The Middle Voice and the Encoding of Reciprocity in Hittite</i>	99
AGNES JÄGER, <i>The Syntax-Semantics Interface from a Diachronic Perspective</i>	111
DANIEL KÖLLIGAN, <i>From Parenthesis to Particle: the Grammaticalisation of Speech Act Verbs in Greek and Latin</i>	129
VILLE LEPPÄNEN / BENEDIKT PESCHL, <i>Adpositional Phrases in Indo-European: Aspects of Grammaticalization</i>	143
ROSEMARIE LÜHR, <i>Stancetaking in der zitierten Rede in altindogermanischen Sprachen</i>	157
ELISABETTA MAGNI / ROMANO LAZZERONI, <i>Presenti a raddoppiamento e plurazionalità</i>	177
ANDREAS OPFERMANN, <i>Uridg. 3. *<i>kue</i> – eine grundsprachliche Fokuspartikel</i>	191
TIZIANA QUADRIO, <i>Desiderativ-jussive Formeln in den griechischen Liebeszaubern und das Problem von μή + Impv.Aor. im Griechischen</i>	203
VELIZAR SADOVSKI, <i>Words Outlandish and Presumptuous: Performative Speech Acts in Indo-Iranian Sacred Jurisprudence between Ritual Formulation, Pragmatic Application and Political Resemanticization</i>	231
ONDŘEJ ŠEFČÍK, <i>Development of Verbal Reduplication in Vedic</i> .	259

MICHELA CENAMO

INTRANSITIVE ALTERNATIONS AND THE SEMANTICS OF
PREDICATES IN LATIN

ABSTRACT

This article discusses two types of intransitive alternations in Latin and the semantic parameters determining their encoding and distribution: animacy, control, the verb's inherent meaning, 'the root', and lexical aspect. The analysis brings novel data to the current debate on the role played by the elements of meaning lexicalized in the verb root, their interaction and integration with the event structure template of verbs and the inherent properties of the verbs's core arguments in determining argument realization, also throwing new light on the status of some so-called 'impersonal' verbs/patterns in the language, an issue addressed also in a wider typological perspective.

1. INTRODUCTION*

This article investigates two types of intransitive alternations in Latin, anticausativization and the personal ~ impersonal encoding of some (in)transitive predicates, focusing on the interplay of the aspectual template of verbs, the verb's inherent meaning (the 'root'), the inherent characteristics of the S/O/A argument¹ (e.g., animacy) and the continuum of control (Lehmann 1988), depending on the alternation, in determining the distribution of the different strategies available to mark these constructions within the voice domain, and interacting with it. The discussion is organized as follows: Section 2 illustrates the notion of anticausativization and its typological and theoretical underpinnings, discussed in Section 3 for the strategies instantiating it, their synchronic distribution and diachronic development, the medio-passive *-R* form, the reflexive pattern (*se+* active), the active intransitive. Section 4 addresses the issue of the impersonal ~ personal active encoding (rarely, also the *-R* form) for some 'impersonal' verbs, the core argument(s) surfacing in an oblique case and varying in its/their syntactic status (e.g., *tui me miseret* 'I pity you', *me fallit* 'I happen to be wrong/it

* Abbreviations:

ABL = ablative; ACC = accusative; caus. = causative; F = Feminine; FUT = future; IMPF = imperfect; IND = indicative; INF = infinitive; M = masculine; MPASS = mediopassive; NEUT = neuter; NOM = nominative; PL = plural; PP = past participle; PRF = perfect; PRS = present; PRTC = participle; PST = past tense; RFL = reflexive; SBJ = subjunctive; SG = singular.

¹ The terms refer to the nuclear arguments of a clause, following a well established terminology (see Haspelmath 2011 and references therein).

escapes me’, *mihi apparet* ‘it appears to me’), arguing for the different voice status of this construction, expressing the involuntality of the verb eventuality. Section 5 explores the status of the involuntality pattern within the Latin voice system and illustrates its similarity with analogous patterns in other Indo-European and some Australian and American Indian languages. Finally, section 6 draws the conclusions.

2. THE ANTICAUSATIVE ALTERNATION: SOME CURRENT ISSUES

The term *anticausative* refers to a transitivity alternation, where the subject of the non-causative (i.e., intransitive) member of the alternation corresponds to the original inanimate object (i.e., the Undergoer) of a transitive predicate, whilst the Actor is suppressed, either both syntactically and semantically (Haspelmath 1987: 7), or at the level of argument structure (i.e., the lexical syntactic representation), but retained in the lexical semantic representation (Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995: 84). The process is presented as occurring spontaneously. Depending on the language and the diachronic stage investigated (Lazzeroni 2009), the anticausative pattern may be either morphologically unmarked (1a) or both morphologically marked and unmarked, signalled by a dedicated morpheme, e.g., the reflexive (1b-c):

- (1) a. *The vase broke* (<Mark broke the vase) (unmarked)
 b. *Das Segel zerriss* (Schäfer 2008: 11)
 the sail tear.PST.3SG
 ‘The sail tore’
 c. *Die Tür öffnet sich* (marked)
 the door open.PST.3SG RFL
 ‘The door opened’
 d. *La neige fond* (unmarked)
 the snow melt.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘The snow is melting’
 e. *Le vase (se) casse* (optionally marked)
 the vase RFL break.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘The vase breaks’

Two general semantic constraints are usually recognized in the literature as involved in anticausativization: (i) the *spontaneous manifestation of an eventuality* and its corollary, ‘unspecific change of state’ (Haspelmath 1987: 15), whereby only transitive causative verbs denoting events which may come about spontaneously, without a wilful animate causer may occur in the anticausative alternation (Haspelmath 1987: 15, Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995: 102), entailing (ii) the *absence of agent-*

oriented meaning components or other ‘highly specific meaning components’ that debar the spontaneous interpretation of the verbal process (Haspelmath 1987: 15; 1993: 94). Therefore ‘actions are excluded which imply specific instruments or methods, e.g., *bite, cut, dig, paint...*’ (Haspelmath 1993: 93). Following a different perspective, this constraint reflects the nature of the eventuality described by the verb: verbs which lexicalize a manner component rather than a final/result state seem to be excluded from the alternation (Rappaport Hovav & Levin 2010).

The second semantic parameter involves the *thematic underspecification of the causer*: only verbs with a thematically underspecified causer (e.g., Engl. *break, open*) undergo anticausativization. Verbs with a thematically specified causer (i.e., an agent) do not allow the anticausative alternation (e.g., *kill, assassinate*) (Koontz-Garboden 2009: 80-86, among others).

In several languages the core of the category is instantiated by verbs lexicalizing a final result state (achievements/accomplishments) (Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995: 9, int. al).

The anticausative pattern, however, may occur also in contexts where these parameters do not apply, as with (continuation of) activity verbs (i.e., aspectuals) (2b) and states (2c) in Italian (Cennamo 2012: 395-96):

- (2) a. *Il diluvio si è placato*
 the downpour RFL be.PRS.IND.3SG stop.PP.M.SG
 ‘The downpour has stopped’
- b. *la lamentela è continuata per mesi*
 the complaint be.PRS.IND continue.PP.M.SG for months
 ‘The lecture has continued for three hours’
- c. *una comunità omogenea si basa anche su una mediocrità di fondo*
 a community homogeneous RFL base.PRS.IND.3SG
 also on a mediocrity of background
 ‘A homogeneous community is based also on some sort of underlying mediocrity’

3. ANTICAUSATIVES IN LATIN: SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC ASPECTS

In Latin three strategies are employed for anticausativization: (i) the Mediopassive *-r* form (3.1), (ii) the Reflexive pattern, *se* + verb in the active voice (3.2), the Active intransitive (3.3) (Feltenius 1977; Gianollo 2014; Cennamo, Eythórson & Barðdal 2015).

Although in the literature the different forms are described as in free variation, and the differences in usage are viewed as reflecting different periods in the history of the language, with the active intransitive being the

Se + active is not attested with verbs of variable/reduced telicity, e.g., gradual completion verbs (5a), with which this pattern is only found from the 1st century A.D. onwards (Cennamo, Eythórson & Barðdal 2015: 687–688):

- (5) a. **memoria* *se* *minuit*
 memory.NOM RFL decrease.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘Memory diminishes’

The Reflexive does not occur in anticausative function with activities (e.g., *volutare* ‘to roll’, *quassare* ‘tremble’ (5b-c), for which only the -*R* form (3d) and the Active Intransitive are found (7c-d) (Cennamo 1998, 2001):

- (5) b. **animi* /*saxa* *se* *volutant*
 soul.NOM.PL stone.NEUT.PL RFL roll.PRS.IND.3PL
 ‘Souls whirl/Stones roll’
 c. **caput* *se* *quassat*
 head RFL tremble.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘The head shakes’

The provisional generalization emerging from the preliminary investigation of the distribution of the three patterns in Early and Classical Latin is that the Reflexive pattern occurs as an anticausativization strategy with inherently telic predicates, i.e. with verbs lexically encoding a result/target state (reversible change) (Parsons 1990), achievements/accomplishments (6):

- (6) a. *valvae* *se* *ipsae* *aperuerunt* (Cic. Div. 1, 34, 74)
 doors.NOM.PL RFL themselves.NOM.PL open.PRF.IND.3PL
 ‘The doors suddenly opened of their own accord’
 b. *brassica* *commutat* *sese semper cum calore* (Cat. Agr. 157,1)
 cabbage.NOM. change.PRS.IND.3SG RFL always with heat.ABL
 ‘Cabbage constantly changes its nature with heat’

The Reflexive also seems to be preferred (to the medio-passive -*R* form) when the subject, although inanimate, is personified, showing some degree of control as in (6a) vs. (6b), where no personification is involved, and *se* simply marks the intransitive (anticausative) variant) (Ronconi 1968, Cennamo 1998; Cennamo, Eythórson & Barðdal 2015: 686–689).

3.3. The Active Intransitive

In Early and Classical Latin the Active Intransitive is found mainly with gradual completion verbs (e.g., *lenire*, ‘to soothe’, *ampliare* ‘to enlarge’,

veterinary texts such as the *Mulomedichina Chironis*) (Pirson 1906; Feltenius 1977) (see also Adams 2013; Gianollo 2014; Cennamo, Eythórson & Barðdal 2015):

- (9) *postea* *rumpunt* *dentes* (*Chiron* 775)
 afterwards break.PRS.IND.3PL tooth.NOM.PL
 ‘Afterwards teeth break’

3.4. Interim summary

In light of the above discussion, it can be argued that the alternation among the different voice forms marking anticausativization in (Early and Classical) Latin reflects both the idiosyncratic (i.e., the root) (e.g., the type of change, reversible/target ~ non-reversible/result state (Parsons 1990) and the structural aspect (i.e., the event structure template) of a verb meaning.

More specifically, it has been shown that the *-R form* is found with all verbs allowing anticausativization, whilst the *Reflexive pattern* occurs with telic verbs only (e.g., *scindere* ‘to crack’, *movere* ‘to move’, *aperire* ‘to open’, *frangere* ‘to crack’, *rumpere* ‘to break’). In contrast, the *Active Intransitive* most typically occurs with verbs which do not lexicalize the attainment of a final state, i.e., the endpoint of the process. For instance, it is frequently attested with gradual completion verbs (e.g., *lenire* ‘to soothe’, *minuere* ‘to decrease’, *sedare* ‘to calm down’), and marginally, activities (e.g., *quassare* ‘to shake’, *volutare* ‘to roll’). This strategy also occurs with accomplishments denoting a target state like *aperire* ‘to open’ (Cennamo 1998, 2001).

The semantics of predicates interacts, in the course of time, with changes in the voice system and the encoding of argument structure (Cennamo 1998; 2009; 2011).

3.5. Anticausatives and Transitivity in Late Latin

In Late Latin the semantics of the predicate and the inherent and relational properties of the subject are no longer relevant for the morphological realization of anticausatives, with ensuing changes in the distribution of the anticausative strategies, resulting in the cooccurrence of the *-R form* with the Reflexive and the Active Intransitive patterns for the same verb(s), as well as the appearance of the Reflexive and the Active Intransitive with aspectual classes with which they are not found in Early and Classical Latin.

In particular, the Reflexive also occurs with gradual completion verbs (e.g., *minuere* ‘to decrease’) (10a), and other types of accomplishments (e.g., *coquere* ‘to cook’, de-nominal verbs like *cicatricare* ‘to heal’ (< noun *cicatrix* ‘scar’) (10c), at times alternating with the *-R form* in one and the same text (10c-d) (Pirson 1906, Feltenius 1977):

- (10) a. *minuente* *se* *morbo* (Plin. Nat. 23, 50)
 decreasing.PRS.PRTC.ABL RFL disease.ABL
 ‘When the disease is on the decline’
- b. *memoria* *minuitur* (Cic. Sen. 7, 21) (CL)
 memory.NOM decrease.MPASS.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘Memory is impaired/diminishes’
- c. *vulnera cum se cicatricaverint* (Orib. Syn. 7, 10 Aa)
 wound.NEUT.PL when RFL heal.FUT.PRF.3PL
 ‘When the wounds will have healed’
- d. *vulnera cicatricantur* (Orib. Syn. 7, 3)
 wound.NEUT.PL heal.MPASS.PRS.IND.3PL
 ‘The wounds heal’

The *se*+active pattern instead comes to be found with activities (e.g., *vexare* ‘to oppress’, *servare* ‘to keep’, *excusare* ‘to justify/excuse’) (Cennamo 1998, 2001b: 238), at times with ambiguity between an anticausative and a passive interpretation, i.e. between a spontaneous vs. an induced process reading (11) (Cennamo 1998, 2001a, 2006):

- (11) *mala ... toto anno servare se possunt*
 apple.NEUT.PL whole.ABL year.ABL keep.INF RFL can.PRS.IND.3PL
 ‘Apples ... can keep/be kept for the whole year’

By the same period of the Active Intransitive in anticausative function increases in frequency (12a), in alternation with the reflexive (12b) (Feltenius 1977: 82, Cennamo 2006: 317):

- (12) a. *ut confirmet* (sc. *vulnus*) (Chiron 670)
 in-order-to heal.SBJ.PRS.3SG (wound)
 ‘So as it (sc. the wound) heals’
- b. *donec cicatrix oculo se confirmet* (Chiron 76)
 till scar.NOM eye.DAT RFL heal.SBJ.PRS.3SG
 ‘Until the scar in its eye heals’

Thus, the Active Intransitive, the Reflexive and the *-R* form become fully interchangeable for marking anticausativization, with all verb classes (13) (Pirson 1906, Feltenius 1977):

- (13) a. *rumpunt dentes* Active Intransitive
 break.PRS.IND.3PL tooth.NOM.PL
- b. *rumpuntur dentes* (Chiron 776) Mediopassive
 break.MPASS.PRS.IND.3PL tooth. NOM.PL
- c. *dentes se rumpunt* Reflexive
 tooth.NOM.PL RFL break.PRS.IND.3PL

‘Its teeth break (sc. iumentum)’

The distribution of the three forms as anticausativization markers point to the spread of the Reflexive strategy from inherently telic verbs, i.e., achievements and accomplishments (e.g., *scindere* ‘to crack’, *frangere* ‘to break’, *mutare* ‘to change’), to non-inherently telic and atelic ones (e.g., *citare*, *provocare* ‘to cause’, *minuere* ‘to decrease’, *servare* ‘to keep’, i.e., accomplishments of variable/reduced telicity and activities (Cennamo 2001a). With these aspectual classes either only the medio-passive *-R* form (in passive function) occurred (cf. (14a) vs (14b)), or the active intransitive/the *-R* form, in anticausative function (14c). If the pattern clearly marked an induced process (passive interpretation) only the *-R* form occurred (14a), (14d) (Cennamo 1998, 2006):

- (14) a. *stercora provocantur*
 excrement.PL cause.PRS.IND.MPASS.3PL
 ‘Excrement is induced’
- b. **stercora se provocant*
 excrement.PL RFL cause.PRS.IND.3SG
 *‘Excrement causes itself’
- c. *memoria minuitur/minuit*
 memory.NOM decrease.MPASS.PRS.IND.3SG/PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘Memory is impaired’ (lit. ‘Memory decreases’)
- d. *mala servantur*
 apple.NEUT.PL keep.MPASS.PRS.IND.3PL
 ‘Apples are kept’

In late texts the reflexive pronoun and the *-R* form in anticausative function cooccur, at times with ambiguity between an anticausative and a passive reading (15), depending on the verb and on the syntactic context:

- (15) *si autem minutetur se medicamen*
 if then pulverize.MPASS.PRS.SBJ.3SG RFL drug
 ‘If then the drug pulverizes/gets pulverized’
 (Orib. *Eup.* 4, 63; Svennung 1935: 463, n. 2) (VI A.D.)

The co-occurrence of the two morphological devices, the *-R* form and the reflexive pronoun, exemplified in (15), reveals the total functional equivalence of the two constructions, and is a clear sign of the restructuring of the voice system taking place in Late Latin. The mediopassive *-R* form gradually disappears from the spoken language and is replaced by the Reflexive, that spreads to all verb classes in Late Latin, with both animate and inanimate subjects (see Cennamo 1998; 2001a; Cennamo, Eythórson & Barðdal 2015: and further references therein).

In Late Latin the use of the *-R* form in anticausative function might reflect also so-called Deponentization (Flobert 1975), the widespread use of the passive morphology in active function with all verbs (Cennamo 1998, 2009 and references therein), replacing the active morphology, with both intransitive and transitive verbs, as a part of the reorganization of voice distinctions and the consequent functional opacity of the voice morphology conveying them, well attested in 4th century texts (16a), and even more so at later stages, as illustrated in (16b), from the 9th century A.D.) (Cennamo 1998, 2005, 2006, Herman 2002).

- (16) a. *et sabbato non ieunantur* (*Peregr. Aeth.* 27, 1)
 and Saturday.ABL not fast.PRS.IND.MPASS.3PL
 ‘And they do not fast on Saturdays’
- b. *cum illo, qui eam ... dugatur uxorem*
 with he.ABL who.NOM she.ACC take.MPASS.PRS.SBJ.3SG spouse.ACC
 ‘With that person who will marry her’ (lit. ‘will take her as his spouse’)
 (*Cod. Verc.* cap. 192; Löfstedt 1977: 275)

During this period also the analytic passive pattern, BE+PP, is found in active function (17) (Cennamo 2001b):

- (17) *foris aperta est = foris aperuit* (anticausative)
 door.NOM open.PP.F.SG be.PRS.IND.3SG door.NOM open.PRF.IND.3SG
 ‘The door opened’

Thus, changes in the distribution of the strategies for anticausatives may be viewed as a reflex of deep and wide-ranging changes taking place in the encoding of voice and argument structure (Cennamo 1998, 2001a, 2006, 2009).

3.6. *Interim summary*

As shown in the above discussion, in Late Latin the Reflexive pattern and the Active Intransitive come to occur in anticausative function with different aspectual classes: the Reflexive expands to verbs of variable/reduced telicity, as well as activities, whilst the Active Intransitive spreads to accomplishments and achievements. In late texts all verbs may freely alternate the three voice forms, regardless of their structural and inherent features, a development that is part and parcel of wider and pervasive changes in the encoding of argument structure in the passage to Romance.

Both the event structure template of verbs and the meaning components lexicalized in the verb, i.e., the root, in particular the type of change encoded as well as the degree of control of the O-subject, appear to affect the choice

of construction, interacting, in the course of time, with changes in the encoding of transitivity.

The changes in the marking of anticausatives in Late Latin and their progression appear to be aspectually driven, albeit further investigation and a more fine-grained description of the path of development need to be carried out, in order to detect their chronology, and whether for instance the Anticausative Reflexive occurs earlier with gradual completion verbs than with atelic verbs (e.g., activities).

4. THE PERSONAL ~ IMPERSONAL ENCODING OF SOME (IN)TRANSITIVE VERBS / THE 'INVOLITIONALITY'/LACK OF CONTROL ALTERNATION

Aspect also plays a role in the other type of alternation investigated, the 'impersonal' ~ personal encoding of some (in)transitive eventualities (rarely, also the *-R* form for some verbs), the core argument(s) surfacing in an oblique case and displaying variable syntactic status (e.g., *tui me miseret* 'I pity you', *me fallit* 'I happen to be wrong/it escapes me', *mihi apparet* 'it appears to me') (Rosén 1992; Barðdal & Eythórsson 2009; Cuzzolin & Napoli 2008; Fedriani 2014; Cennamo & Fabrizio, *forthc.*, Fabrizio 2016, among others). In point of fact, this construction occurs, most typically, with states, that appear to instantiate its core (e.g., *decere* 'to become', *pudere* 'to shame/make ashamed' (caus.) (cf. § 4.3.2). The main semantic parameter at work in this type of alternation, however, is control, the semantic spectrum reflecting the degree of primary responsibility of a participant over the verbal process, itself a multifactorial, scalar notion involving a cluster of gradient parameters, belonging to different dimensions (e.g., animacy, thematic role(s), lexical aspect) (Lehmann 1988: 57-61; Comrie 1989: 59-62; Cennamo 1993: 15-31), as clearly perceivable in the alternation between *me fallit* 'I happen to be wrong', *me fallo* 'I am wrong' (see discussion in § 4.3.2). Indeed, these 'impersonal' constructions could be better described as lack of control patterns, similar, in their semantics and formal marking, to analogous constructions in languages with semantic alignment (e.g., Australian languages) (Walsh 1989: 429, Verstraete 2011, and contributions in Donohue & Wichman 2008).

4.1. Oblique core arguments and Transitivity in Latin

4.1.1. Control and voice alternations

Control, the semantic spectrum reflecting the degree of primary responsibility of a participant over the verbal process, plays an important role in the encoding of transitivity in Latin, determining fluctuations between the medio-passive *-R* form and the active voice with animate subjects (18)-(21)

(Cennamo 1998: 83-88). The *-R* form acts as a syntactico-semantic de-transitivizer, turning a transitive causative verb into an intransitive one, marking the affectedness/lack of control of the subject over the verbal process, as illustrated in (18–21).

As already pointed out (§4), the notion of control involves various transitivity features, among which Agentivity, Volitionality, Individuation of the sentence nuclear participant(s) and the aspectual nature of the predicate (Lehmann 1988: 57-61, Comrie 1989: 61-62, Klaiman 1991).

- (18) a. *excito eum* b. *excitor*
 wake.1SG.IND. he.ACC wake-up.1SG.MPASS.PRS.IND.
 ‘I wake him up’ ‘I wake up’
- (19) a. *gravo eum* b. *gravor*
 oppress.1SG.IND.PRES he.ACC oppress.1SG.MPASS.PRS.IND
 ‘I oppress him’ ‘I am oppressed, I have difficulties’
- (20) a. *rumpo digitum*
 break.1SG.PRS.IND finger.ACC
 ‘I break my finger’
 b. *rumpor* (*invidia/risu*)
 break.1SG.MPASS.PRS.IND envy.ABL/laughter.ABL
 ‘I burst from envy/ into laughter’
- (21) a. *praecipito eum in terram* b. *praecipitor*
 throw.1SG.PRS.IND he.ACC in ground throw.1SG.MPASS.PRS.IND
 ‘I (am) throw(ing) him to the ground’ ‘I (am) fall(ing) down’

4.1.2. Control, Detransitivization, and Impersonals

The notion of Control also seems to be involved in Latin in the personal vs impersonal encoding of (in)transitive eventualities (Ronconi 1968: 16-17).

Impersonals may be viewed as points along a Detransitivization continuum comprising passives (Shibatani 1985, 1994, Givón 1990: 565-572, Siewierska 2008, int. al.), and sharing with them the pragmatic notion of Agent-defocusing, although differing in the extent to which the Agent (either S or A, according to whether the verb is monovalent/divalent) is implied and syntactically expressed (see also Cennamo 1993; 1997; 2003 and discussion in Malchukov & Ogawa 2011).

Impersonality therefore is a gradient, whereby one goes from a logically implied (but unexpressed) argument (A/S) to a situation where the process is seen as taking place by itself, with no underlying argument. The extent to which the underlying argument (when there is one) is either understood or

syntactically expressed, varies within languages (Cennamo 1993: 26; 2003; Malchukov & Ogawa 2011 for an overview of the different functional varieties of impersonal constructions across languages).

4.2. Impersonal constructions in Latin

Latin employs different expressions for the different levels and degrees of impersonality (i.e., Agent defocusing/backgrounding) according to two main parameters, *Aspect* and *Control*, which, alongside *Animacy*, play a crucial role in the encoding of transitivity and argument structure, both synchronically and diachronically (Cennamo 1998, 2009, 2011).

The morphological vs. syntactic encoding of impersonals (as well as passives) in Latin, in fact, reflects aspectual distinctions. In the imperfective aspect, i.e., in the tenses of the *infectum* (present, imperfect, future) there occurs a *synthetic* form (the unmarked 3rd singular of the medio-passive –*R* suffix or of the active inflection) (e.g., *amatur*, *itur*, *dolet*) (22); by contrast, in the *perfective* aspect, i.e., in the tenses of the *perfectum* (perfect, pluperfect, future perfect): there occurs a form of the verb *esse* ‘to be’ in the 3sg + the past participle of the lexical verb or the gerundive (with a deontic value), in the neuter singular form (e.g., *amatum est*, *itum est*, *amandum est*) (23):

- | | | | |
|---------|---|----|---|
| (22) a. | <i>amatur</i>
love.PRS.IND.MPASS.3SG
‘One loves, we/you/I love’ | b. | <i>itur</i>
go.PRS.IND.MPASS.3SG
‘One goes; we/you/I go’ |
| c. | <i>dolet</i>
hurt.PRS.IND.3SG
‘It hurts’ (lit. ‘hurts’) | d. | <i>doletur</i>
hurt.MPASS.PRS.IND.3SG
‘One gets/feels hurt’ |

In the *perfective aspect* a syntactic construction is found instead, the 3rd sing of ‘to be’ *esse* + the neuter form of past participle/gerundive:

- | | | | | |
|---------|---|------------------------------|----|--|
| (23) a. | <i>amatum</i>
love.PP.NEUT.SG
‘One has loved; we/you/I have loved (indef.)’ | <i>est</i>
be.PRS.IND.3SG | b. | <i>amandum est</i>
love.GER.NEUT.SG
‘One has to love; loving is to take place’ |
| c. | <i>itum</i>
go.PP.NEUT.SG
‘One ran; running took place’ | <i>est</i>
be.PRS.IND.3SG | | |
-
- | | | | |
|---------|---|----|---|
| (24) a. | <i>(mihī) doluit</i>
(I.DAT) hurt.PERF.IND.3SG
‘It hurt me’ | b. | <i>dolitum est</i>
hurt.PP.NEUT.SG be.PRS.IND.3SG
‘One got hurt; there was hurting’ |
|---------|---|----|---|

Despite some areas of functional overlapping, the active and passive impersonal strategies are not equivalent.

More specifically, four types of impersonal constructions can be identified in Latin on the basis of their function, some of which instantiate different diachronic stages (cf. Cennamo 2008, 2010, Cennamo & Fabrizio, *forthc.*):

- (i) patterns describing the *taking place of an event, process, state*, with *no argument implied*, as with weather verbs (e.g., *pluit* ‘it rains’, *nubilabitur* ‘It will be cloudy’ (§4.3);
- (ii) patterns describing the *taking place of an event, process, state*. The verb is in the unmarked 3rd person singular *active voice*; *A/S are highly defocused*, either suppressed at argument structure (e.g., *constat* ‘it is agreed’) or unexpressed (e.g., *videt* ‘one sees’) or occurring in the accusative and/or the dative, depending on the predicate (e.g., *me/mihi decet* ‘it becomes me’, *licet me/mihi ire* ‘my going is permissible’/‘I am permitted to go’). With some predicates (e.g., mental process, emotion verbs) the Experiencer (O/S) occurs in the accusative case and the Stimulus (A) is optionally realized as an oblique (*me* (ACC) *eius* (GEN) *miseritum est* ‘I pitied him’). A/S may also be realized as an infinitive, accusative and infinitive or as a clause standing as subject (indicative *quod*-clause or indirect question-clause) (Woodcock 1959: 167-168, *int. al.*) (§4.3.2).
- (iii) sentences with the verb in the unmarked 3rd singular ‘passive’ voice (the *-R* form) and S/A highly defocused (suppressed (as with weather verbs) or unexpressed, though always implied, optionally surfacing in Classical Latin as an oblique (either as a prepositional phrase introduced by *a/ab* +the ablative, or the dative for the gerundive); sometimes O is expressed, surfacing as an oblique (e.g., accusative or dative, depending on the valency of the verb (*vitam* (ACC) *vivitur* ‘one lives life/life is lived’, *me* (ACC) *despicatur* ‘I am despised/one despises me’, *parcetur labori* (DAT) ‘toil is spared/one spares toil’).
- (iv) impersonal/existential-impersonal patterns: the verb occurs in the unmarked 3rd singular (of the active or passive voice) and figures with a pre/postverbal non-agreeing argument (in case and/or number), conveying either given (*ipsos* (ACC) *ficos* (ACC)... *imponatur* ‘one should gather these figs’) or new information (*habet librum* (ACC) ‘there is a book’, *cum factum fuerit missam* (ACC) ‘when the Mass is over) (late development) (§4.3.4).

4.3. Impersonals with active morphology

The 3rd person singular form of the active voice was the oldest way to express impersonality, i.e., to defocus the agent of the sentence. It is attested, already in early Latin, with all verb classes, and in various expressions (e.g., adjectives in the unmarked neuter singular form + the 3rd singular of the verb *esse* ‘to be’, as in *manifestum est* ‘it is clear’ (Lindsay 1907: 52-53, Bassols de Climent 1948: 94, Woodcock 1959, Ronconi 1968: 13, *int. al.*).

ancient legal texts (e.g. the Twelve Tables (30a), and other early Latin texts, with both divalent and monovalent verbs.

Indeed, the 3rd person singular active was the oldest form to express impersonality in Latin, also attested, in some authors (e.g., Cato, Varro) with an accusative argument (30b) (Lindsay 1907: 52-53, Woodcock 1959, Basols de Climent 1948: 94, Ronconi 1968: 13, among others):

- (30) a. *si in ius vocat* (*Leg. XII Tabb.*I,1) (Rosén 1992: 388)
 if in law call.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘If in case the person so entitled (or authorized) calls (a person) to court’
- b. *selibram tritici... indat,*
 half-a-pound.ACC wheat.GEN take.PRS.SUBJ.3SG
bene lavet (Cato, Agr. 86)
 well wash.PRS.SUBJ.3SG
 ‘One should take half a pound of wheat, one should wash it well’
- c. *multa quae non volt, videt*
 many that not want.PRS.IND.3SG see.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘During one’s life one sees a lot of things/several things that one would not like to see’. (*Caec.*; 175 Ribb.) (Ronconi 1968: 14)

According to some scholars *selibram indat* in (30b) is not truly impersonal, but an agent is implied and contextually recoverable (Svennung 1935).

A non-agreeing (‘object’) argument is also attested with the gerundive (Ernout 1908-1909: 297, Ronconi 1968: 200):

- (31) a. (*ut*) *vasa vinearia et olearia faciendum*
 in-order-to containers wine and oil make.GER.NEUT.SG
 ‘In order to make containers for wine and oil’ (Varr. XIII, 1)
- b. *poenas timendumst* (Lucr. 1, 111)
 punishments fear.GER.NEUT.SG.be.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘One should fear punishments’

Further evidence for the 3rd person singular active as the earliest and more common form to express impersonality stems from the occurrence of several transitive (NOM-ACC/DAT case-frame) and intransitive verbs, also in the third person singular impersonal form, optionally followed by either an ACC or a DAT argument (patient-theme/experiencer), according to the syntactic valency of the verb, as in (32a-b), and an infinitive or accusative and infinitive clause (32c-d) (e.g., *decet* (*me*-ACC/*mihi*-DAT) ‘it becomes, it befits (me)’, *delectat* (*me*-ACC) ‘it delights (me)’, *placet* (*mihi*-DAT) ‘it pleases (me)’ (Woodcock 1959: 168, Leumann-Hofmann & Szantyr 1965: § 60, 415, among others and Table 1):

- (32) a. *oratorem irasci minime decet* (Cic. *T.D.* 4, 25)
 speaker.ACC lose-his-temper.INF not-at-all become.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘It is not at all becoming for a speaker to lose his temper’
- b. *quam delectabat eum defectiones solis*
 how delight.IMPF.IND.3SG he.ACC eclipses.ACC sun.GEN
praedicere (Cic. *Lael.* 49)
 foretell.INF
 ‘How it delighted him to foretell eclipses of the sun’

With some verbs (e.g., *decet* ‘to become’) the O argument alternates the accusative and dative encoding (Bennett 1914: 106; 212):

- (33) a. *facis ut te decet* (Ter. *Andr.* 2, 5, 10)
 make.PRS.IND.2SG as you.ACC become.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘Do what becomes you’
- b. *ita nobis decet* (Ter. *Ad.* 5, 8, 5)
 thus we.DAT become.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘It becomes us thus’

Other (in)transitive verbs that are used impersonally in the third person singular, optionally taking a **dative argument** and followed by either an infinitive or an accusative and infinitive include the verbs *constat* ‘it is agreed’, *praestat* ‘it is preferable’, *apparet* ‘it is apparent’, *liquet* ‘it is clear’, *licet* ‘it is allowed’, *libet* ‘it is agreeable’ ... (Woodcock 1959: 170-171, Neue-Wagener 1985: 659-662, int. al.):

- (34) a. *licuit esse otioso Themistocli* (Cic. *T.D.* 1, 33)
 be-allowed.PERF.3SG be.INF idle.DAT Themistocles.DAT
 ‘It was allowable for Themistocles to be at leisure’
- b. *te liquet esse meum* (Ov. *Tr.* 1, 1, 62) (A.c.I)
 you.ACC clear.PRS.IND.3SG be.INF mine.ACC
 ‘It becomes clear that you are mine’

Some experiencer verbs (e.g., *piget* ‘fretfulness is at work’, *pudet* ‘shame is at work’, *paenitet* ‘remorse is at work’, *taedet* ‘weariness comes on’, *miseret* ‘pity is at work’) occur in the default 3rd person singular (both in the *infectum* and in the *perfectum*) with O/S (the Experiencer) in the accusative and the A argument (the Stimulus) optionally expressed in the genitive:

- (35) a. *(tui) me miseret/pudet*
 you.GEN I.ACC pity/shame.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘I pity you/I am ashamed of you’ (lit. ‘It pities/ashames me of you’)

With these verbs the impersonal and personal pattern alternate (rarely also the *-r* form for some verbs), already in Early Latin (Bennett 1914: 91, Woodcock 1959: 167, Ronconi 1968: 17), although mainly/only with the Stimulus as subject, depending on the verb (cf. *haec* ‘these’ in (36a)) (Fedriani 2014: 140):

- (36) a. *non te haec pudet* (personal) (Stimulus subject)
 not you these.ACC shame.PRS.IND.3PL
 ‘You are not ashamed of these things’ (Ter. Ad. 754, 9)
- b. *nunc illa haec pudet?* (personal) (Experiencer subject)
 now she.NOM these.ACC shame.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘Is she not ashamed of this?’ (Plaut. Turp. 104 Ribb.)
- c. *tui me pudet* (Plaut. As. 933, 6) (impersonal)
 you.GEN I.ACC shame.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘I am ashamed of you’
- d. *patris me miseretur* (Plaut. Turp. 55) (impersonal)
 father.GEN I.ACC pity.PRS.IND.MPASS.3SG
 ‘I take pity on my father’
- e. *aliquando miseremini sociorum* (Cic. Verr. 1, 72) (personal *miserere*)
 some-time pity.IMP allies.GEN
 ‘Take pity some time on the allies’
- f. *ipse sui miseret* (Lucr. 3, 881)
 he.NOM himself.GEN pity.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘He pities himself’

The oblique (animate) argument in these impersonal constructions exhibits pivot-like behavior, as in control infinitives (Fedriani 2009, Dahl 2012; Fabrizio 2016; Cennamo & Fabrizio, *forthc.*)

- (37) a. *licuit esse otioso Themistocli* (Cic. T.D. 1, 33)
 be-allowed.PERF.3SG be.INF idle.DAT Themistocles.DAT (=34a)
 ‘It was allowable for Themistocles to be at leisure’
- b. *oratorem irasci minime decet* (Cic. T.D. 4, 25)
 speaker.ACC lose-his-temper.INF not-at-all become.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘It is not at all becoming for a speaker to lose his temper’ (= 32a)
- c. *quam delectabat eum defectiones solis*
 how delight.IMP.IND.3SG he.ACC eclipses.ACC sun.GEN
praedicere (Cic. Lael. 49)
 foretell.INF
 ‘How it delighted him to foretell eclipses of the sun’ (= 32b)

Several verbs are attested in this pattern, belonging to all conjugations and to different classes: states, activities and changes of state. States appear to instantiate the core of this type of ‘impersonal’ structures (Tables 1-3)

(Cennamo 2008, 2010, Cennamo & Fabrizio forthc.; see also Barðdal 2004, Barðdal & Eythórsson 2009, Barðdal et al. 2014 for Latin and other early Indo-European languages).

Verb classes	Divalent verbs: NOM-ACC	
	Personal	Impersonal
Activity	<i>iuuare</i> 'to delight' <i>latere</i> 'to conceal' <i>delectare</i> 'to amuse' <i>fugere</i> 'to flee, run away, escape' <i>praeterere</i> 'to pass by, omit, forget' <i>fallere</i> 'to deceive' <i>lapidare</i> 'to throw stones (at someone)' 	~ <i>me iuvat</i> 'it is useful, it pleases' <i>me latet</i> 'it escapes me' <i>me delectat</i> 'it delights me' <i>me fugit</i> 'it escapes me' <i>me praeterit</i> 'it escapes me' <i>me fallit</i> 'I am wrong/I happen to be wrong' <i>lapidat</i> (Ø) 'it rains stones' (lit. it falls stones)
State	<i>attinere</i> 'to hold, concern, pertain' <i>decere</i> 'to become' <i>paenitere</i> 'to repent' (caus.) <i>miserere</i> 'to feel pity' (caus.) <i>pudere</i> 'to shame/make ashamed' (caus.) <i>pigere</i> 'to trouble'	<i>me attinet</i> 'it concerns, pertains me' <i>me decet</i> 'it becomes me' <i>me paenitet</i> 'it repents me' <i>me miseret</i> 'it pities me' <i>me pudet</i> 'it shames me' <i>me piget</i> 'it irks, disgusts me'
Change of state	<i>illucescere</i> 'to throw light upon' <i>gelare</i> 'to freeze' (caus.)	<i>illucescit</i> (Ø) 'it daybreaks' <i>gelat</i> (Ø) 'it freezes' (Imperial age, Plinius)

Table 1- Alternation personal ~ impersonal patterns with divalent verbs (Nom-ACC).

Verb classes	Divalent verbs: NOM-DAT	
	Personal	Impersonal
Activity	<i>expedire</i> 'to help out, promote'	<i>expedit mihi</i> 'it is useful, it helps'
State	<i>dolere</i> 'to grieve' (caus.) <i>constare</i> 'to agree with' <i>praestare</i> 'to be better, excel' <i>placere</i> 'to please, like' <i>licere</i> 'to be permissible'	<i>mihi dolet</i> 'it pains me, I grieve' <i>mihi constat</i> 'I am determined' <i>mihi praestat</i> 'it is preferable for me' <i>mihi placet</i> 'it pleases me' <i>mihi licet</i> 'it is permissible to me'
Change of state	<i>contingere</i> 'to touch, reach'	<i>mihi contingit</i> 'it happens to me'

Table 2 - Alternation personal ~ impersonal patterns with divalent verbs (NOM-DAT).

Verb classes	Monovalent verbs: NOM	
	Personal	~ Impersonal
Activity	<i>rorare</i> ‘to fall, drop, distil dew’	<i>rorat</i> ‘it drizzles, dew falls’
State	<i>liquere</i> ‘to be liquid, clear’ <i>resto</i> ‘to remain’ <i>oportere</i> ‘to be necessary’ <i>vacare</i> ‘to be free, have time, leisure’	<i>mihi liquet</i> ‘it is clear’ <i>mihi restat</i> ‘it remains’ <i>oportet</i> ‘it is necessary’ <i>mihi vacat</i> ‘it lacks, there is time, leisure’
Change of state	<i>accidere</i> ‘to fall upon, happen’ <i>apparere</i> ‘to come to sight, appear’ <i>venire in mentem</i> ‘to come to one’s mind’ (NOM-DAT)	<i>mihi accidit</i> ‘it happens’ <i>mihi apparet</i> ‘it is clear’ <i>mihi venit in mentem</i> (DAT-ACC)

Table 3 - Personal ~ impersonal alternation with monovalent verbs

As clearly detectable from the data analyzed, summarized in Tables 1-3, these structures reflect the involitionality/degree of control of the A/S argument over the verbal process. Lack of control/Involitionality may be regarded as the unifying parameter for the occurrence of the accusative/dative with ‘impersonal verbs’ such as *mihi libet* ‘it pleases me’, *me fallit* ‘it deceives me’, *me fugit* ‘it escapes me’, *me pudet* ‘it shames me’, *me miseret* ‘it pities me’, etc. (see also Cennamo, Eythórsson, & Barðdal 2015: 700):

- (38) a. *fallere* ‘to deceive’:
active transitive use: ‘to deceive somebody’
nisi memoria me fallit (Au.Gel., NA, 20, 1, 14, 3)
 if-not memory.NOM I.ACC deceive.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘If memory does not deceive me’
- b. *reflexive: me fallo*:
nisi me forte fallo (Cic., Phil., 12, 21, 8)
 if-not I.ACC strongly be-in-error.PRS.IND.1SG
 ‘If I am not completely wrong’
- c. *medio-passive-R form: fallor* (‘I am deceived’ (passive), ‘I am mistaken’ (middle))
nisi fallor (Cic., Att., 4, 19, 1-4)
 if-not be-in-error. PRS.IND.MPASS.1SG
 ‘If I am not mistaken’

- d. *impersonal: me fallit* ‘I am wrong (I happen to be mistaken)’ (lit. ‘me deceives’)

quod *me* *non* *fefellit* (Cic., *Ver.*, 19, 2, 1, 19, 3-4)
as-far-as-this I.ACC not be-in-error.PERF.3SG

‘I was not (I did not happen to be) mistaken as far as this is concerned’

(39) *delectare* ‘to delight’:

- a. *active transitive use:*

ista *me* ... *fama* *delectat* (Cic., *Amic.*, 15, 11)
this.NOM I.ACC reputation.NOM delight.3SG.PRS.IND

‘This reputation delights me’

- b. *reflexive: me delecto*

interea ... *nos* *delectabimus* (Cic. *Att.* II, 4.2) (Cennamo 1998: 84)
meantime we.ACC delight.1PL.FUT.IND

‘Meantime we shall organize our own pleasure’

- c. *medio-passive-R form: delector* ‘I find enjoyment’

et enim *si delectamur* *cum scribimus*
and indeed if delight.1PL.MPASS.PRS.IND when write.1PL.PRS.IND
‘Indeed, if we enjoy writing’ (Cic. *fin.* I.3)

- d. *impersonal: me delectat* ‘It delights me’

me *magis de Dionysio* *delectat* (Cic. *Q.Fr.* II.13)
I.ACC more about Dyonysus.ABL delight.3SG.PRS.IND

‘I am more delighted about Dyonysus’ (lit. ‘it delights me’)

(40) *venire in mentem* ‘to come to one’s mind’

- a. *active intransitive use:*

istuc mihi venit *in mentem* (Ter. *Haut.* 888-889)
this me.DAT come.PRS.IND.3SG in mind.ACC

‘This comes to my mind’

- b. *ei venit in mentem hominum fortunae*

he.DAT come.PRS.IND.3SG in mind.ACC man.GEN.PL fate.ACC.PL
‘Men’s fate came to his mind’ (lit. to him-DAT came to mind men’s destinies-ACC) (Cn. Naev. *Pun.* 20,1) (DAT-ACC)

In the literature on the topic (e.g., Bauer 2000 and references therein), and in reference grammars (Woodcock 1959, Leumann, Hofmann & Szantyr 1965: § 165, int. al), forms such as *me paenitet*, *me fallit*, *me delectat*, *mihi dolet* etc., are usually referred to as ‘impersonal verbs’ from mental process/emotion verbs, so-called ‘affective verbs’, with the experiencer in the accusative/dative case, depending on the verb.

The examination of the verbs attested in this ‘impersonal’ form and of the patterns in which they may occur, however, suggests that this construction represents a different clause type, rather than a type of impersonal constructions.

Indeed, these structures could be better described as patterns denoting the involuntality/lack of control of the A/S argument over the verbal process. This is realized in its taking place and as affecting a core argument, expressed in the accusative, the canonical case for objects, i.e., inactive arguments, and/or the dative with some verbs.

It is control, therefore, that seems to be involved in the personal vs. impersonal encoding of some transitive eventualities in Latin. Some of them are mental process verbs, while others belong to different subclasses, e.g., activity verbs such as *fallere* ‘to deceive’, *delectare* ‘to delight’, *fugere* ‘to pass by’, states such as *attinere* ‘to pertain’, and, marginally, changes of state, like *venire in mentem* ‘to come to one’s mind’, *illucescere* ‘to throw light upon’.

Perhaps a better characterization of the predicates figuring in this construction could be cast in aspectual terms: *activity and state verbs* seem to undergo this type of intransitivization/detransitivization, whereas accomplishments/achievements appear to be only marginally attested (an issue to be further investigated).

Other verb classes alongside emotion and mental process verbs allowed this alternation in early Latin. Once the competing *-R* form took up the lack of control function of the 3rd person singular active with (in)transitive verbs, this usage faded away, and survived in Classical Latin in some so-called ‘impersonal’ verbs, taking the A/S argument in the accusative (the dative with some verbs). Such forms as *me delectat*, *me fallit*, *me paenitet*, *mihi libet/dolet*, therefore, i.e., the various subclasses of third person singular impersonal verbs usually listed in traditional grammars, may be regarded as the crystallization of a usage that must have been very common at earlier stages of the language.

This interpretation accounts for the coexistence, in Early Latin, of the personal and impersonal forms, attested sometimes in one and the same text.

4.3.3. *Impersonals with passive morphology*

Already in early Latin the 3rd person singular active alternates with the medio-passive *-R* form in impersonal function in the tenses of the *infectum*, as shown in (41) for weather verbs and (42) for monovalent and divalent verbs. In the tenses of the *perfectum* there occurs instead a syntactic construction, the neuter past participle of the lexical verb+3rd singular of *esse* ‘to be’, as illustrated in (42b):

- (41) a. *caletur* (Plaut. Capt. 80) b. *facile nubitur* (Plaut. Pers. 386)
 be.hot.PRS.IND.MPASS.3SG easily cloud.PRS.IND.MPASS
 ‘It is hot’ ‘It likely to get cloudy’
- (42) a. *quid agitur*, *Calidore? amatur* (Plaut. Pseud. 273)
 what do.PRS.IND.MPASS Calidore? love.PRS.IND.MPASS.3SG
atque egetur *acriter*
 and be-poor.PRS.IND.MPASS.3SG highly
 ‘How goes it, Calidore? One loves and is extremely insolvent’
- b. *me eius miseritum est* (Plaut., Tr., 430)
 I.ACC he.GEN pity.PP.N.SG be.PRS.IND.3SG
 ‘I pitied him’

The Agent in these structures is rarely expressed, both in Early Latin and in later periods (Pinkster 1992; Napoli 2010):

- (43) *cum a Cotta resisteretur* (Caes. Gall. 531,1)
 when by Cotta resist.SUBJ.PLUP.3SG
 ‘If there was resistance on the part of Cotta’

The Impersonal *-R* form is also found with transitive verbs taking a dative object (e.g., *nocere* ‘to harm’, *invidere* ‘to envy’, *resistere* ‘to resist’ etc., verbs which cannot occur in a corresponding personal passive, but only in the impersonal form (i.e., impersonal passive), the Agent optionally expressed as a prepositional phrase (Michaelis 1993, among others):

- (44) *a nobis non parcetur labori* (Cic. Att. 2, 14, 2)
 by we.ABL not spare.PRS.IND.MPASS.3SG toil.DAT
 ‘Toil will not be spared by us’

The *-R* form, therefore, may either signal maximal agent defocusing (i.e., lack of a participant) or different degrees of backgrounding/ defocusing of the A/S participant, that may be referential indefinite, referring to a participant in the Universe of discourse whose identity is unknown to both speaker and hearer (45a), or it may be specific, referring to any of the Speech Act Participants (either first or second, third person) (45b), either contextually recoverable or optionally expressed by means of a prepositional phrase (Pinkster 1992; Pieroni 1999).

5. THE IMPERSONAL ‘ACTIVE’ AND ‘PASSIVE’ STRATEGIES IN LATIN AND BEYOND

The use of the active impersonal in Latin is not always an agent defocusing strategy, like the passive impersonal form. Whereas the use of the latter in such examples as *curritur* ‘running takes place’, *pugnatum est* ‘fighting took place’, seems to be a means of foregrounding the event and of defocusing the Agent (only rarely overtly expressed) both in the *infectum* and in the *perfectum*, the use of the 3rd singular active with an accusative argument in A/S function, seems to function rather as a strategy for signaling involitionality/lack of control of the participant over the verbal process, which is portrayed as affecting it, occurring either in the accusative, the inactive case or in the dative, the case of experiencers/beneficiaries and generally for arguments with a lower degree of affectedness (Naess 2009: 573-574).

Interestingly, the constructions investigated show a striking similarity with analogous constructions in other Western Indo-European languages (e.g., Icelandic, Lithuanian) (Barðdal 2004, Barðdal et al. 2014, Wiemer & Bjarnadóttir 2014, Holvoet 2016, Lavine 2016, among others) and languages with semantic alignment (e.g., some Australian languages) (Walsh 1989, Donohue 2008, Malchukov 2008, Verstraete 2011), for which the correlation between impersonal verb forms and involuntary/unintentional activities is well known and thoroughly described (see Walsh 1989, Verstraete 2011 for Australian languages, Klamer 2008 for Kambera, Austronesian, Mithun 2008 for American Indian languages, Malchukov 2008, Malchukov & Ogawa 2011, for a general discussion).

- (48) a. *miġ* *dreymdi* *ömmu* (Icelandic)
 I.ACC dream.PST.3SG grandma.ACC
 ‘I dreamt about grandma’ (Barðdal 2004: 108)
- b. *Joną* *purto* (*nuo* *šalčio*) (Lithuanian)
 Jonas.ACC shaking.PRS.3SG from frost.GEN
 ‘Jonas is shaking (from the cold)’ (Wiemer & Bjarnadóttir 2014: 306)

In Latin, however, lack of Control/affectedness of S may also be conveyed by the *-r* form, that may act as a detransitivizer, turning a transitive verb into an intransitive one, marking an inactive subject (Cennamo 1998):

- (49) a. *excito* ‘I awaken’ > *excitor* ‘I wake up’
 b. *gravo* ‘I oppress’ > *gravor* ‘I have difficulties’
 c. *rumpo* ‘I break’ > *rumpor* ‘I burst with envy’
 d. *me praecipito* ‘I throw myself’ > *praecipitor* ‘I fall down’
 e. *augeo* ‘I increase’ > *augeor* ‘I grow’

6. CONCLUSIONS

The semantics of predicates, namely (lexical) aspect and control, plays an important role in the encoding and distribution of intransitive alternations in Latin, both synchronically and diachronically. In the present article the issue is discussed in relation to the anticausative alternation and the impersonal-personal encoding of eventualities, that may be better defined as the involitionality alternation. It is shown that the Latin data offer indeed an interesting contribution to the current debate on the role played by the verb's inherent meaning and its interaction and integration with the event structure template of predicates and the inherent properties of the verbs' core arguments in determining argument realization. The perspective discussed and the data investigated also throw new light on the status of some so-called 'impersonal' verbs/patterns in the language.

More specifically, it is demonstrated that the reflexive strategy in anticausative function is initially confined to inherently telic predicates (achievements and accomplishments) (e.g., *frangere* 'to break' - *dum calor se frangat* 'till the heat goes down', *fervefacere* 'to heat up' - *se patinae fervefaciunt* 'the pans heat up'), whilst the active intransitive mainly occurs with verbs of variable/reduced telicity (e.g., *lenire* 'to soothe', *irae leniunt* 'anger soothes'), with activities (e.g., *volutare* 'to roll', *saxa volutant* 'stones roll') and, marginally, accomplishments lexicalizing a reversible state (e.g., *aperire* 'open' - *foris aperit* 'the door opens'). Gradually, in the course of time, the reflexive spreads to verbs of variable telicity (e.g., *minuere* 'to decrease', *minuente se morbo* 'when the disease is on the decline') and atelic predicates (e.g., *servare* 'to keep' - *mala se servant* 'apples keep'), whilst the active intransitive expands to achievements (e.g., *rumpere* 'to break'), until in late texts the three anticausative forms become truly interchangeable (*rumpunt dentes/rumpuntur dentes/dentes se rumpunt* 'its teeth break' (sc. *equus* 'horse')).

It is also shown that lexical aspect plays a key role also in the other type of intransitive alternation investigated, the personal vs 'impersonal' encoding of some (in)transitive predicates or involitionality pattern. This construction occurs, most typically, with states, that appear to instantiate its core (e.g., *decere* 'to become', *pudere* 'to make ashamed/shame' (caus.)), although it is also attested with activities (*iuvare* 'to delight', *fallere* 'to deceive') and, marginally, accomplishments (e.g., *contingere* 'to touch, reach', *accidere* 'to fall upon, happen'). The main semantic parameter at work in this type of alternation is *control*, as clearly perceivable in the alternation between *me fallit* 'I happen to be wrong', *me fallo* 'I am wrong', a construction similar in its semantics and formal marking, to analogous 'impersonal' constructions describing the involitionality/lack of control of the S/A argument found in other Western Indo-European languages (e.g., Icelandic, Lithuanian) and generally in languages with semantic alignment.

This pattern brings further evidence for the mixed alignment system operating in Latin, a syntactically based (nominative-accusative) and a semantically based alignment, sensitive, initially, to the notion of control.

The investigation also reveals that active and passive impersonals, although overlapping in some of their functions, are not equivalent. In point of fact, whereas impersonal passives foreground the event and defocus the Agent, that is either suppressed or unexpressed or realized as an oblique (dative/prepositional phrase), the impersonal active (with an accusative/dative argument) points to the existence of a dependent-marked subsystem of active-inactive alignment in early Latin, sensitive to the notion of control (and animacy). We leave for further study the investigation of the synchronic and diachronic relation between the two strategies (the 3rd singular active and the *-R* form) as markers of inactive syntax.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ADAMS, J.N. 2013. *Social Variation and the Latin Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- BARÐDAL, J. 2004. The semantics of impersonal constructions in Icelandic, German and Faroese: beyond thematic roles. In W. Abraham (ed), *Focus on Germanic Typology* [Studia Typologica 6], 105-37. Berlin: Akademie Verlag
- BARÐDAL, J. & Th. EYTHÓRSSON. 2009. The Origin of the Oblique Subject Construction: An Indo-European Comparison. In V. Bubeník et al. (eds), *Grammatical Change in Indo-European Languages*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 179-193.
- BARÐDAL, J., V. BJARNADÓTTIR, G. JENSET, & Th. SMITHERMAN. 2014. Reconstructing constructional semantics: the dative subject construction in Old Norse-Icelandic, Ancient Greek, Old Russian and Lithuanian. *Studies in Language* 36.3: 511-547, thematic issue on "Theory and Data in Cognitive Linguistics", N. Gisborne & W. Hollmann(eds.).
- BASSOLS DE CLIMENT, M. 1948. *Sintaxis Histórica de la Lengua Latina*, vol. 2, Barcelona, Escuela de Filología.
- BAUER, B. 2000. *Archaic Syntax in Indo-European*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- BENNETT, Ch. E. 1910. *The Syntax of Early Latin*, vol. 1 Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- BENNETT, Ch. E. 1914. *The Syntax of Early Latin*, vol. 2 Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- BERTINETTO, P. & M. SQUARTINI 1995. An attempt at defining the class of 'gradual completion verbs'. In: P. Bertinetto et al. (eds) *Temporal reference, aspect and actionality*, vol. 1: *Semantic and syntactic perspectives*. Turin: Rosenberg & Sellier 11-26.
- BJARNADOTTIR, V. 2014. Oblique anticausative in Lithuanian (a comparative approach). *Baltistica* LXIX.1: 15-39.
- CENNAMO, M. 1993. *The reanalysis of reflexives: a diachronic perspective*. Naples: Liguori.
- CENNAMO, M. 1997. Passive and impersonal constructions. In M. Maiden & M. Parry (eds), *Dialects of Italy*, London: Routledge, 145-161.
- CENNAMO, M. 1998. The loss of the voice dimension between Late Latin and early Romance. In M. Schmid et al. (eds), *Historical Linguistics 1997: Selected Papers from the XIII International Conference on Historical Linguistics*, Amsterdam: Benjamins, 77-100.
- CENNAMO, M. 2001a. Classi verbali e cambiamento sintattico: la reinterpretazione passiva del costruito riflessivo. In Z. Fábíán & G. Salvi (eds), *Semantica e Lessicologia Storiche*, Rome: Bulzoni, 225-242.
- CENNAMO, M. 2001b. On the reorganization of voice distinctions and grammatical relations in Late Latin. In C. Moussy (ed), *Actes du Xè Colloque International de Linguistique Latine*, Paris: Peeters, 51-65.
- CENNAMO, M. 2003. (In)transitivity and object marking: some current issues. In: G. Fiorentino (ed.). *Romance Objects. Transitivity in Romance Languages*. 49-104, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

- CENNAMO, M. 2006. The rise and grammaticalization paths of Latin *feri* and *facere* as passive auxiliaries. In W. Abraham & L. Leisiö (eds), *Passivization and Typology: Form and Function*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 311-336.
- CENNAMO, M. 2008. Impersonal constructions and argument marking in Latin. Workshop on *Indo-European Case and Argument Structure in a Typological Perspective*, Bergen, 20-21 August 2008, hand-out.
- CENNAMO, M. 2009. Argument structure and alignment variations and changes in Late Latin. In J. Barðdal & S. Chelliah (eds) *The Role of Semantics and Pragmatics in the Development of Case*, Amsterdam: Benjamins, 307-346.
- CENNAMO, M. 2010. Control and argument marking in Latin. Workshop on *Subject and Transitivity in Indo-European and Beyond: A Diachronic Typological Perspective*, 43rd Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Europaea, hand-out.
- CENNAMO, M. 2011. Impersonal constructions and accusative subjects in Late Latin. In A. Malchukov & A. Siewierska (eds). *Impersonal Constructions. A Cross-linguistic Perspective*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 169-188.
- CENNAMO, M. 2012. Aspectual constraints on the (anti)causative alternation in Old Italian. *Transactions of the Philological Society* 110.3: 394-421. Thematic issue on *Argument, Realization and Change*.
- CENNAMO, M. EYTHORSSON, Th. & J. BARÐDAL 2015. Semantic and (morpho)syntactic constraints on anticausativization: evidence from Latin and Old Norse-Icelandic. *Linguistics* 53.4: 677-729.
- CENNAMO, M. & FABRIZIO, C. forthc., Non-nominative arguments, active impersonals and control in Latin. To appear in L. Kulikov, S. Kittilä & I. Seržant (eds.), *Diachronic Typology of Voice and Valency-Changing Categories*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- COMRIE, B. 1989. *Language Universals and Linguistic Typology* (2nd ed.), London: Blackwell.
- CUZZOLIN, P. & M. NAPOLI. 2008. An overview of the impersonals in Proto-Indo-European“, in R. Lühr & S. Ziegler (eds.) *Protolanguage and Prehistory, Akten der 12. Fachtagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft in Krakau*, Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 75-81.
- DAHL, E. 2012a. On the semantics and syntax of the Latin ‘double dative’ construction. MS. University of Bergen.
- DAHL, E. 2012b. Aspetti della morfosintassi del soggetto in Latino. Talk given at the Department of Modern Philology, University of Naples Federico II, 8 May 2012, hand-out.
- DONOHUE, M. 2008. Semantic alignment systems: what’s what, and what’s not. In M. Donohue & S. Wichmann (eds), 24-75.
- DONOHUE, M. & S. WICHMANN (2008) (eds) *The Typology of Semantic Alignment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- DRINKA, B. 1999. Alignment in Early Proto-Indo-European. In C.F. Iustus & C. Polomé (eds.), *Language Change and Typological Variation: in Honor of Winfred. P. Lehmann on the Occasion of his 83rd Birthday* Vol. II, 464-500. Washington, DC : Institute for the study of Man.

- ERNOUT, A. 1908-1909. Recherches sur l'emploi du passif latin à l'époque républicaine", *Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique de Paris* 15: 273-333.
- ERNOUT, A. & F. THOMAS. 1964. *Syntaxe Latine* (2nd ed.), Paris: Klincksieck.
- FABRIZIO, C. 2016. Non-nominative subjects in Latin, *Societas Linguistica Europaea* 49. Naples, 31 August – 3 September 2016, hand-out.
- FABRIZIO, C. forthc. *Studies on Alignment and Subjecthood in Latin*.
- FEDRIANI, Ch. 2009. The "Behaviour-Before-Coding" Principle: further evidence from Latin. *Archivio Glottologico Italiano* 94.2: 157-184.
- FEDRIANI, Ch. 2013. The *me pudet* construction in the history of Latin: why and how fast non-canonical subjects come and go. In I. Seržant & L. Kulikov (eds), *The Diachronic Typology of Non-Canonical Subjects*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 205-228.
- FEDRIANI, Ch. 2014. *Experiential Constructions in Latin*. Leiden & Boston: Brill.
- FELTENIUS, L. 1977. *Intransitivizations in Latin*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell.
- FLOBERT, P. 1975. *Les Verbes Déponents Latins des Origines à Charlemagne*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- GIANOLLO, Ch. 2014. Labile verbs in Late Latin. *Linguistics* 52.4: 945-1002.
- HAY, J. , C. KENNEDY and B. LEVIN 1999. Scalar structure underlies telicity in degree achievements. In: *Proceedings of SALT IX*, 127-144.
- HASPELMATH, M. 1987. Transitivity alternations of the anticausative type. In *Arbeitspapier nr. 5*, Institut für Sprachwissenschaft, Universität zu Köln, 1-51.
- HASPELMATH, M. 1993. More on the typology of inchoative/causative verb alternations. In: Comrie, B. and M. Polinsky (eds) *Causatives and transitivity*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 87-120.
- HASPELMATH, M. 2011. On S, A, P, T, and R as comparative concepts for alignment typology. *Linguistic Typology* 15: 535-689.
- HOLVOET, A. 2016. Argument marking in Baltic and Slavonic pain-verb constructions. In A. Holvoet & N. Nau (eds), *Argument Realization in Baltic*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 84-106.
- KLAIMAN, M.H. 1991. *Grammatical Voice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- KLAMER, M. 2008. Differential marking of intransitive subjects in Kambara (Austro-nesian). In H. de Hoop & P. de Swart (eds), *Differential Subject Marking*, Dordrecht: Springer, 281-299.
- KOONTZ-GARBODEN, A. 2009. Anticausativization. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 27: 77-138.
- LEHMANN, Ch. 1988. Predicate classes and participation. In *Studies in General Comparative Linguistics*. Köln: AKUP, 33-77.
- LAVINE, J. 2016. Variable argument realization in Lithuanian impersonals. In A. Holvoet & N. Nau (eds), *Argument Realization in Baltic*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 107-135.
- LAZZERONI, R. 2009). Causativi e transitivi indoeuropei: fra comparazione e tipologia. *Studi e Saggi Linguistici* 47: 7-23.
- LEUMANN, M., J-B. HOFMANN & A. SZANTYR. 1965. *Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik*, vol. 1, Munich: Beck.

- LEVIN, B. 2009. The structure of event structure. LSA, Berkely, July 2009. hand-out.
- LEVIN, B. & RAPPAPORT HOVAV, M. 1995. *Unaccusativity*, Cambridge: MIT Press.
- LEVIN, B. & RAPPAPORT HOVAV, M. 2005. *Argument realization*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- LINDSAY, W. 1895. *A Short Historical Latin Grammar*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- LINDSAY, W. 1907. *Syntax of Plautus*, Oxford: Parker & Co.
- LÖFSTEDT, E. (1936) *Vermischte Studien*, Lund: Gleerup.
- LURAGHI, S. 2010. Experiencer predicates in Hittite. In R. Kim, N. Oettinger, E. Rieken & M. Weiss (eds.), *Ex Anatolia Lux*, Ann Arbor: Beech Stave Press, 249-264.
- MALCHUKOV, A. 2008. Split intransitives, experiencer objects, and ‚transimpersonal‘ constructions: (re-) establishing the connection. In M. Donohue & S. Wichmann (eds), 76-100.
- MALCHUKOV, A. & A. Ogawa. 2011. Towards a Typology of impersonal constructions. In A. Malchukov & A. Siewierska (eds), 19-56.
- MALCHUKOV, A. & A. Siewierska (eds), *Impersonal Constructions. A Cross-linguistic Perspective*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- MICHAELIS, L. 1993. On deviant case-marking in Latin. In R. D. Van Valin (ed), *Advances in Role and Reference Grammar*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 311-73.
- MITHUN, M. 2008. The emergence of agentive systems in core argument marking. In M. Donohue & S. Wichmann (eds), 297-333.
- NAESS, Å. 2009. Varieties of dative. In A. Malchukov & A. Spencer (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Case*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 572-580.
- NAPOLI, M. 2010. How Impersonal is the Latin Impersonal Passive?. In P. Anreiter & M. Kienpointner (eds.), *Latin Linguistics Today: Proceedings of the 15th International Colloquium on Latin Linguistics*. Innsbruck: Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft, 163-178.
- NEUE, F. & C. WAGENER. 1985. *Formenlehre der lateinischen Sprache*, vol. III/IV, Hildesheim: Georg Olms.
- NORBERG, D. 1943. *Syntaktische Forschungen auf dem Gebiete des Spätlateins und des frühen Mitellateins*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell.
- PARSONS, T. 1990. *Events in the Semantics of English*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- PIERONI, S. 1999. Agents in Latin impersonal passives. *Mnemosyne* 57: 1-14.
- PINKSTER, H. 1985. Latin cases and valency grammar. In Ch. Touratier (ed), *Syntaxe et Latin*, Aix en Provence: Université de Provence, 164-189.
- PINKSTER, H. 1992. The Latin impersonal passive. *Mnemosyne* 56: 159-177.
- RAPPAPORT HOVAV, M. 2008 Lexicalized meaning and the internal temporal structure of events, in S. Rothstein (ed), *Crosslinguistic and Theoretical Approaches to the Semantics of Aspect*, Amsterdam: Benjamins, 13-42.
- RAPPAPORT HOVAV, M. & B. LEVIN, (1998) Building verb meanings. In: M. Butt & W. Geuder (eds), 97-134.
- RAPPAPORT HOVAV, M. & B. LEVIN (2010) Reflections on Manner/Result complementarity. In: E. Doron, M., Rappaport Hovav & I. Sichel (eds), *Syntax, Lexical Semantics and Event Structure*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 21-38.

- RONCONI, A. 1968. *Il Verbo Latino. Problemi di Sintassi Storica*. Florence: Le Monnier.
- ROSEN, H. B. 1970. *Uterum dolet* und verwandtes. *Folia Linguistica* 4: 135-147.
- ROSEN, H. B. 1992. On some types of so-called “impersonality” and verbal valency in Indo-Indoeuropean. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 301. European. In R. Beekes (ed), *Rekonstruktion und relative Chronologie*, Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft 65: 384: 390.
- SCHÄFER, F. (2008). The *Syntax of (Anti-)Causatives. External arguments in change-of-state contexts*, Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- SIEWIERSKA, A (1984) *The Passive: A Comparative Linguistic Analysis*, London: Croom Helm.
- SIEWIERSKA, A. 2008. Introduction: Impersonalization from a subject-centred vs. agent centred perspective. *Transactions of the Philological Society* 106/2, 115-137.
- SHIBATANI, M. 1985. Passives and related constructions: a prototype analysis. *Language* 61: 821-48.
- SHIBATANI, M. 1994. Voice. In R. Asher & J.M.Y. Simpson (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 4398-4942.
- SVENNUNG, J. 1935. *Untersuchungen zur Palladius und zur lateinischen Fach- und Volkssprache*, Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell.
- VERSTRAETE, J-Ch. 2011. Impersonal constructions in Umpithamu and the Lamalaic languages. In A. Malchukov & A. Siewierska (eds), *Impersonal Constructions. A Crosslinguistic Perspective*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 606-625.
- WALSH, M. 1989. The impersonal verb construction in Australian languages. In R. Steele & T. Threadgold (eds), *Language Topics: Essays in Honour of Michael Halliday*, Amsterdam: Benjamins, 425-438.
- WIEMER, B. & V. BJARNADOTTIR. 2014. On the non-canonical marking of the highest-ranking argument in Lithuanian and Icelandic. In A. Holvoet & N. Nau (eds), *Grammatical Relations and their Non-Canonical Encoding in Baltic*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 301-361.
- WOODCOCK, E. C. 1959. *A New Latin Syntax*, London: Methuen.

TEXTUAL SOURCES

Latin: PHI-5 CD-ROM (*The Packard Humanities Institute's Collection of Digital Latin Texts*).