A corpus-based analysis of the peculiar behaviour of the Polish verb podobać się

**Katarzyna Miechowicz-Mathiasen & Paweł Scheffler**

1. **Introduction**

Our paper sums up a corpus-based microstudy of the Polish verb *podobać się* and its peculiar syntactic behaviour. *Podobać się* (please/like) is a psych-verb whose syntactic behaviour resembles that of the PIACERE-class psych-verbs (as proposed by Belletti & Rizzi in their seminal 1988 article (hence B&R 1988)).

It is generally accepted in generative frameworks that syntactic configurations and semantic (thematic) information are interrelated, i.e. the syntactic representations (at least in their initial stages) reflect the thematic representations (Chomsky's Projection Principle, Baker's (1988) Uniformity of Theta Assignment Hypothesis). It has been noted, however, that in view of the above the Experiencer verbs (i.e. Subject Experiencer and Object Experiencer verbs) present us with the so-called ‘linking problem’. Some more recent analyses, such as Pesetsky's (1995) finer-grained semantics or Arad's (1996, 1998) event/aspectual structure analysis, show that the phenomenon may be accommodated and the linking problem resolved. It seems, however, that the PIACERE group of psych-verbs, to which our verb *podobać się* (please/like) seems to belong, strongly resists such reanalyses and makes the problems very much alive. *Podobać się*, just like the Italian verb *piacere* allows the following two patterns:

(1) a. Janowi (DAT) podoba się mój dom (NOM).
    'John likes my house'
 b. Mój dom (NOM) podoba się Janowi (DAT).
    'John likes my house'

(2) a. A Gianni piace questa casa.
    'John likes this house'
 b. Questa casa piace a Gianni.
    'John likes this house'

The constructions under (1) and (2) cannot be said to involve different thematic roles or event/aspectual structure. Moreover, both versions are natural un-

---

1 **UTAH** (Baker 1988:46)

   Identical thematic relationships between arguments are represented by identical structural relationships between those items at the level of deep structure.
marked word orderings, and whichever nominal surfaces in the sentence-initial position, constitutes the sentential subject.

In view of these facts, we decided that the following questions need answering: (1) what kind of verb is podobać się – SubExpV or ObExpV, (2) what is the positioning of the two arguments – Experiencer and Theme – within the verbal projection and what this projection looks like, and finally (3) how is it possible that the system allows for two different unmarked surface word orders. In our presentation we will try to answer the posed questions and propose an analysis of the aforementioned problematic issues, as well as support our proposal with corpus data.

2. Psych-verbs and the ‘linking problem’

The linking problem is connected to the positioning of the arguments of the predicate at the level of Deep Structure (hence DS) and their respective interpretation (theta-role assignment). (Baker's UTAH). However, with DS long gone (Chomsky 1993, 1995), the central research issue concerns the relationships between the arguments (their positioning and ordering) within the verbal projection. It is these relationships that are the residue of the operations previously associated with DS such as theta-role assignment and inherent Case-marking. Once we have established what the positioning of the Experiencer and Theme arguments is inside the verbal projection, we should be able to address the linking problem and tell whether the verb is SubExp or ObExp.

It would seem at first glance that as far as the issue of linking is concerned, alternating verbs such as Polish podobać się (‘please/like’), Italian piacere (‘please/like’), and Icelandic henta (‘please/like’), are at least just as problematic, or even more so, as the other two classes of psych-verbs. For these verbs Arad (1996, 1998) proposed two different event/aspectual structures basing her assumptions on Tenny’s (1994) Aspectual Interface Hypothesis and discarding

Consider the raising constructions:
(i) Janowi (DAT) zdaje się podobać mój dom (NOM).
   ‘John seems to like my house’
(ii) Mój dom (NOM) zdaje się podobać Janowi (DAT).
    ‘John seems to like my house’
(iii) A Gianni sembra piacere questa casa.
    ‘John seems to like this house’
(iv) Questa casa sembra piacere a Gianni.
    ‘John seems to like this house’

The universal principles of mapping between thematic structure and syntactic argument structure are governed by aspectual properties related to measuring out. Only the aspectual part of the thematic structure is visible to the universal linking principles.
Baker's UTAH. Pesetsky (1995), on the other hand, proposed an approach that would be in keeping with the UTAH, claiming that the argument generally assumed to be the Theme in the constructions with TEMERE/FEAR-class verbs and PREOCCUPARE/FRIGHTEN-class verbs is actually realized by two different theta-roles: a Causer for the ObExp PREOCCUPARE/FRIGHTEN-class of verbs, and a Target/Subject Matter (of Emotion) for the SubExpVs of the TEMERE/FEAR-class. Nevertheless, for the class of alternating verbs Pesetsky quite readily accepts B&R's (1988) analysis, i.e. the unaccusative analysis, which we discuss in some detail in the forthcoming section.

In our opinion, neither of these proposals would be fully appropriate for the alternating verbs of the PIACERE-class. We are going to propose a yet different analysis drawing on B&R’s (1988) unaccusative proposal to a great extent, i.e. we consider alternating verbs unaccusative in the sense that these verbs do not have an external argument. However, we do not agree with B&R in that both arguments of these verbs follow the verb.

3. The unaccusative analysis of psych-verbs

B&R (1988: 293) propose the following Deep Structure representation for both preoccupare and piacere.

![Deep Structure Diagram]

Even though the two verbs are assumed to share the underlying structure, they do not exhibit the same surface orderings, in particular preoccupare is not an alternating verb and allows only one surface order, i.e. NOM Theme subject and ACC Experiencer object.

(4) a. Questo preoccupa Gianni.  
‘This worries John’

Arad (1996: 26) draws on Tenny’s hypothesis and proposes that the different ordering of the Experiencer argument with respect to Theme that we witness in the two classes of psych-verbs, coincides with their different event/aspectual structure. She does not explicitly analyse the alternating verbs.
b. *Gianni preoccupa questo.
   ‘This worries John’

(5) a Questo piace a Gianni.
   ‘This appeals to John’

b. A Gianni piace questo.
   ‘John likes this’

B&R’s unaccusative proposal is based on the data concerning the following phenomena: si-cliticisation, arbitrary pro, passive, Case, and the Italian unaccusativity tests (auxiliary selection and ne-cliticisation). We discuss them briefly below.

(a) Si-cliticisation
Si-cliticisation is allowed by deep-subjects only, hence no unaccusatives should exhibit the possibility of cliticizing si. This is borne out by preoccupare, nevertheless it is possible to have piacere with si:

(6) *Gianni si preoccupa.
   ‘John worries (himself)/John is worried’

(7) Nicole si piace bruna.
   ‘Nicole is liked as a brunette’

(b) Arbitrary pro interpretation
B&R (1988: 299-300) claim that such an interpretation is allowed for deep subject pros only, and thus, unaccusative predicates should never allow it.

(8) pro hanno telefonato a casa mia. (unergative)
   ‘Somebody telephoned my place’

(9) *pro sono arrivati a casa mia. (unaccusative)
   ‘Somebody arrived at my place’

(c) Passive
B&R (1988: 308-311) propose that the PREOCCUPARE-class of verbs does not allow verbal passivisation and that the apparent counterexamples to this claim are instances of the adjectival and not verbal passive (B&R 1988: 309). As Pesetsky

---

4 Pesetsky (1995: 38-41) argues that such an interpretation, i.e. the arbitrary (or corporate) reading of pro, points rather to the presence of an Agent argument than unaccusativity, which would naturally have to follow.

5 Consider their examples with preoccupare:
   (i) Gianni è disgustato dalla corruzione di questo paese.
       ‘John is disgusted by the corruption of this country’
   (ii) Gianni è affascinato da questa prospettiva.
       ‘John is fascinated by this prospect’

They further support their view by pointing out that it is possible to further grade the adjectives, e.g. add the superlative affix –issimo, and hence derive:
A corpus-based analysis of the peculiar behaviour of the Polish verb *podobać się*

(1995: 51) shows, *piacere* does not allow any kind of passive, neither verbal, nor adjectival, and thus does not pattern with any of the aforementioned classes in that respect.

(d) The inherent Case of the Experiencer
The interesting assumption B&R make about the *PREOCCUPARE*-class of unaccusatives is that these verbs assign inherent ACC Case to their Experiencer, the *PIACERE*-class verbs, on the other hand, assign DAT to their Experiencer. According to them, the fact that the Case of the Experiencer is DAT only lends further support to its being inherent in both classes.

(e) Italian unaccusativity tests: auxiliary selection and *ne*-cliticisation
There are two generally accepted unaccusativity tests in the literature on Italian: *ne*-cliticisation and the auxiliary *essere* (be) selection. The *PIACERE*-class verbs do indeed behave like unaccusatives with respect to both tests, while the verbs from the *PREOCCUPARE*-class do not; consider the following examples depicting the auxiliary selection and *ne*-cliticisation of *piacere*:

(10) a. A Gianni (DAT) è sempre piaciuta la musica
   ‘John has always liked music’
   b. La musica è sempre piaciuta a Gianni (DAT).
      ‘Music has always appealed to John’

(11) ?Ne sono piaciuti a Maria [solo due __ ].
   ‘Mary was pleased by only two of them’ (Pesetsky 1995: 51)

(iii) Gianni è affascinatissimo / preoccupatissimo da…
John is the most fascinated/the most worried by
They also show that the choice of the passive auxiliary, i.e. between the most common *essere* (be), which allows both adjectival and verbal passives, and *venire* (come) compatible only with the verbal ones, shows a contrast between the *TEMERE* and *PREOCCUPARE* classes, i.e. the *PREOCCUPARE*-class never forms passive auxiliated by *venire*.

This is visible in the following example (B&R 1988: 331):
(i) *Questo lo (ACC) preoccupa.*
   ‘It worries him’

They furthermore modify Burzio’s Generalisation (Burzio 1986) for their purposes so as to allow ACC Case assignment by an unaccusative verb (B&R 1988: 332): V is a structural Case assigner iff it has an external argument.

6 This is visible in the following example (B&R 1988: 331):
(i) *Questo lo (ACC) preoccupa.*
   ‘It worries him’

They furthermore modify Burzio’s Generalisation (Burzio 1986) for their purposes so as to allow ACC Case assignment by an unaccusative verb (B&R 1988: 332): V is a structural Case assigner iff it has an external argument.

7 The Experiencer argument of *preoccupare* bears inherent ACC assigned directly by the verb, whereas the Dative Experiencer of *piacere*, bears Case which, though assigned by the verb, is marked by a preposition. On the basis of this, B&R conclude that the DAT Experiencer of *piacere* will always be free to move, because it moves together with its Case-marker, whereas the ACC Experiencer of *preoccupare* must stay put where its Case is assigned, hence the two surface orderings of *piacere* (NOM-DAT/DAT-NOM) and a fixed (NOM-ACC) order of *preoccupare*.
4. The internal structure of the verbal projection

It seems that an unaccusative analysis of the PIACERE-class verbs is to a great extent on the right track. There is no external argument involved in these constructions, however, we have seen that in the phrase marker proposed under (6) both arguments follow the verb, i.e. they are both internal arguments. It appears, however, that only one of the arguments behaves like an internal argument with respect to *ne*-cliticisation, i.e. the NOM Theme, and never the DAT Experiencer, that allows it. Moreover, the Experiencer is able to bind into the Theme argument, and never vice versa. The binding facts are, naturally, unproblematic if one takes a look at the proposed structure (see examples below), however the *ne*-cliticisation facts remain obscure. Below, we try to show some similarities between alternating verbs and double-object verbs which will shed some light on the situation.

4.1. Some parallels between DOCS and PIACERE-unaccusatives

If we were to assume the kind of analysis proposed by B&R (1988) for the PIACERE-class of verbs, where both arguments of the verb are considered its objects, we would be apparently assuming something closely resembling a double object construction, the difference being the lack of the external (agentive) argument. Thus we propose that these verbs are basically double object unaccusatives. If we, furthermore, take a look at the possibilities of passivisation in DOCs (a situation in which their external argument is demoted/suppressed/absorbed), we find that both object arguments are equally eligible for movement to the surface subject position - a situation strongly reminiscent of the one we encounter with the alternating verbs of PIACERE-type.

(12) a. We were given a book. (British English)
b. A book was given us.
(13) a. Jon ble gitt boken. ‘John was given the book’
   ‘The book was given to John’

8 B&R (1988: 342, footnote 35) are open to the idea that the Experiencer could be base-generated in the Spec, VP. It would explain just as well why the Experiencer is able to bind into the Theme and perhaps shed some light on the distinct behaviour of the two arguments with respect to the *ne*-cliticisation (*ne* cannot be extracted from the spec, but only from the complement position). They refer to a structure proposed by Den Besten (1982) for the German counterparts of the PIACERE and PREOCCUPARE classes, i.e. *gefallen* and *interessieren*.

9 For a similar proposal see Belletti and Shlonsky (1995).
A corpus-based analysis of the peculiar behaviour of the Polish verb
podobać się

(14) a. Ólafi (DAT) var gefin bókin (NOM).
   ‘Olaf was given the book’
b. bókin (NOM) var gefin Ólafi (DAT).
   ‘The book was given to Olaf’ (Icelandic, Falk 1990)

It has been argued by Ura (1996, 2000) and McGinnis (1998) that in such constructions the two objects are equidistant, hence the possibility of two different passives. Ura (2000: 249) proposes the structure under (15) for such DOCs, and under (16) we give an almost identical structure proposed by Woolford (2006: 116).

In Ura’s approach for the two objects to be eligible for further movement, i.e. promotion to the surface subject position, they must find themselves equidistant from the target at some stage in the derivation. In both of the above constructions every single argument of the verb is introduced by a separate, distinct head. What we see here is one argument per head/projection. For some time now, it has been argued in the literature that the external argument is not and cannot be introduced into the derivation in the projection of the head introducing the internal argument (Chomsky 1993, 1995; Hale & Keyser 1993; Kratzer 1993; Tateishi 1994; Harley 1995; Bowers 2002). It seems that we are faced with a similar situation here, i.e. the relationship between the two objects in DOCs resembles that of the subject and object arguments in the regular monotransitive verb constructions. Thus, if we assume distinct heads introducing every single argument in DOCs, we think that there is reason to believe that the same situation arises in all other constructions, hence also in constructions with the PIACERE-class verbs.

We have agreed that these verbs have no external argument, and in that way they may boast some clearly unaccusative properties, we assume that they also

---

10 This, Ura claims, is possible if the direct object is moved to Spec, V\textsubscript{mid} or if both objects move to form multiple specs of the highest verbal head, the light verb v: “IO can always be passivised in a language L if L has the active/passive alternation, but DO cannot be passivised unless DO is allowed to enter the same minimal domain where IO is located before Spell-Out in L”, (Ura 2000: 249)
lack the highest light verb projection\textsuperscript{11}. Drawing on both Ura’s and Woolford’s analyses, we propose the following structure to accommodate the two arguments.

\begin{equation}
\begin{array}{c}
  \text{EXPERIENER} \\
  \text{\hspace{1cm}v_{G}} \\
  \text{\hspace{1cm}v_{G}'} \\
  \text{\hspace{1cm}v_{G}} \\
  \text{\hspace{1cm}V^{12}} \\
  \text{VP} \\
  \text{THEME}
\end{array}
\end{equation}

\textbf{4.2. The domains of inherent and structural Case}

Woolford (2006: 113-118) provides further support for the presence of two distinct heads in the constructions discussed above. Her arguments are based on the contexts of structural and non-structural Case-assignment. She proposes that what we have always believed to be one kind of Case - inherent Case – is actually two different types: lexical and inherent, which according to her are in complementary distribution\textsuperscript{13}. In her analysis, just like in the mainstream minimalist approach, the external argument is introduced by a light verb. Bearing that in mind, Woolford goes on to show that DP Goals behave more like external than internal arguments and hence they must also be introduced by a light v head (distinct from the one introducing Agents). The Cases of such elements are usually predictable inherent Cases (Ergative for Agents, Dative for Goals), and not idiosyncratic Cases like in

\textsuperscript{11} The presence of the light verb projection is also associated with the presence of ACC Case (a modernized version of Burzio’s Generalization) – the lack of it should explain why we do not encounter ACC Case in constructions with alternating verbs.

\textsuperscript{12} We assume that in the course of the derivation V should raise to v_{G}, rendering both arguments equidistant and hence equally eligible for further movement. In view of that, it is not at all surprising why alternating have alternating word orderings: Experiencer-Theme and Theme-Experiencer.

\textsuperscript{13} Two types of non-structural Case (Woolford 2006:112)

\begin{itemize}
  \item Lexical Case: Idiosyncratic, lexically selected Case
  \item Inherent Case: Case inherently associated with a certain theta-role
\end{itemize}

\textbf{Complementary distribution of lexical and inherent Case}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Lexical Case may occur on themes/internal arguments, but not on external arguments or on (shifted) DP Goal arguments.
  \item Inherent Case may occur on external arguments and on (shifted) DP Goal arguments, but not on themes/internal arguments.
\end{itemize}

\textbf{Lexical and inherent Case licensing}

\begin{itemize}
  \item lexical heads (e.g., V, P) license idiosyncratic lexical Case
  \item little/light v heads license inherent Case
the case of Theme arguments. Whether a language has light v heads which have the capacity to license inherent Case is subject to parametric variation. She concludes that due to the complementary distribution of the inherent and lexical cases, it is impossible to have one head licensing both. Since Themes never receive inherent Case (in Woolford’s approach they receive lexical Case), it follows straightforwardly that the head which inherently Case-marks a Dative Experiencer, for instance, cannot be the same as the one that introduces the Theme argument.

Coming back to the PIACERE-class verbs, we have seen above that these verbs assign inherent DAT to their Experiencer argument, while their Theme argument is forced to value its Case against INFL/T and thus surfaces as NOM. If our Experiencer argument were to be base-generated in Woolford’s [Spec, vG] (see (16) & (17)), it would be assigned inherent DAT there. The V head in our construction has no structural Case to assign (it is after all an unaccusative verb), nor does it have any lexical Case to assign, and hence the VP internal Theme argument is forced to seek Case elsewhere. Thus, it will either value its Case feature against the probing T under Agree once the DAT Experiencer has moved to [Spec, TP] to check off T’s EPP feature (as in Chomsky 2001) and the resulting word order of such a derivation would be Experiencer.DAT-Theme.NOM; or it would move over the Dative Experiencer (assuming the arguments are equidistant) to check T’s EPP itself and at the same time value its Case feature once there.

5. How does podobać się fit into the picture: a corpus-based analysis

5.1. Podobać się as an unaccusative verb

The term unaccusativity goes back to Perlmutter (1978) and his Unaccusative Hypothesis, according to which intransitive verbs are split into two types: unaccusatives (subcategorising for an internal argument only), and unergatives (subcategorising for an external argument only). After B&R (1988), we are proposing a third type: a double object unaccusative subcategorising for two internal arguments and no external argument. We propose that Polish podobać się, like Italian piacere, belongs to this type and we attempt to prove it.

The evidence B&R propose for the unaccusativity of piacere may seem somewhat circumstantial at times, however, they give two unquestionable unaccusativity tests that piacere passes, namely auxiliary selection (essere for unaccusatives) and ne-cliticization. It is impossible to devise an auxiliary selection test for the Polish podobać się because Polish does not make use of auxiliaries in the
past tense\textsuperscript{14}. It has also been noted in the literature that the ne-cliticization test is unavailable in Polish (Cetnarowska 2002). We believe that it is possible to construct a similar test.

Ne-cliticization only affects internal arguments in Italian, in the case of piacere the NOM Theme - the OB\textsubscript{DIR} (see (11) above from Pesetsky (1995)). Let us have a look at the following examples of unaccusatives from Polish and Italian.

(18) a. Przyszło(3.SG.N) tylko pięć dziewczyn. Polish unaccusative
b. Dziewczyn przyszło(3.SG.N) tylko pięć t. 'There came only five girls.'
(19) a. Sono arrivati solo cinque ragazze. Italian unaccusative
b. Ne sono arrivati solo cinque. 'Of them (the girls) arrived only five'

Let us now see how piacere and podobać się behave in similar environment. Apart from the aforementioned example (11) with piacere, we have also found the following Italian example:

(20) Ci sono alcune canzoni che mi piacciono […] tornando alle canzoni belle del momento, a me ne piace una, però non so il titolo… 'There are a few songs which I like…coming back to the beautiful songs of today, of them I like one, but I don't know the title…' [freeforumzone.leonardo.it]

It appears to us that Polish podobać się behaves in a parallel fashion with respect to extraction of its OB\textsubscript{DIR} (NOM Theme):

(21) a. Janowi(DAT) podoba się tylko jedna z tych dziewczyn. 'John likes only one of these girls.'
b. Z tych dziewczyn/Z nich Janowi(DAT) podoba się tylko jedna t. 'Of these girls John likes only one.'
(22) a. Janowi(DAT) nie podoba się żadna z tych dziewczyn. 'John does not like any of these girls.'
b. Z tych dziewczyn/Z nich Janowi(DAT) nie podoba się żadna t. 'Of these girls John does not like any.'

Just like in the case of piacere, only the NOM Theme is affected by the extraction\textsuperscript{15}, which shows us that it is a true internal argument. This is only half of

\textsuperscript{14} However, see Lavine (in press) for an auxiliary hypothesis of -no/-to and its role as an unaccusative diagnostic.

\textsuperscript{15} The following sentence in which the DAT Experiencer would be affected by such extraction is not felicitous:
(i) Jan nie podoba się żadnej z tych dziewczynek. 'John does not appeal to any of these girls.'
the truth we are seeking, nonetheless, it is an important fact that we have now established: the NOM Theme is generated in the underlying object position. As for the Experiencer, we know it is not an external argument and is not base-generated in the vP in which Agents are introduced. If it were, we would expect the presence of ACC and possibility of passivization, none of which occur with podobać się; it would also be difficult to account for the verb's two orderings.\(^{16}\)

The literature on unaccusativity in Polish is rather sparse, nevertheless, we managed to gather some facts about unaccusativity diagnostics and we present some of our findings at the same time showing how podobać się fits in with them.

Biały (1998: 64) claims that, as opposed to other languages, Polish allows impersonal constructions with both unergatives and unaccusatives. Unaccusatives are barred only from impersonals with purpose clauses\(^{17}\). The same is true of podobać się.

\begin{tabular}{ll}
(23) a. & Na dyskotekach się tańczy. (unergative)  
& 'One dances at discos.'  
\hspace{1cm} b. & W szpitalach się umiera. (unaccusative)  
& 'People die in hospitals.'  
\hspace{1cm} (23) & W parku się wszystkim podoba. (double object unaccusative)  
& 'The park appeals to everyone.'  
\hspace{1cm} (24) a. & Na dyskotekach się tańczy żeby się lepiej bawić.  
& 'One dances at discos to have more fun.'  
\hspace{1cm} b. & *W szpitalach się umiera żeby zwolnić miejsce.  
& 'People die in hospitals to make their beds accessible to others.'  
\hspace{1cm} c. & *W parku się wszystkim podoba żeby zadowolić burmistrza.  
& 'The park appeals to everyone to make the mayor happy.'
\end{tabular}

Another unaccusativity test proposed by Biały (1998: 66-67) is based on the resultative construction. Postulated by Simpson (1983), the resultative construction is shown to exhibit an OB\(_{DIR}\) restriction, i.e. the resultative phrase can only be predicated of OB\(_{DIR}\). Bialy argues that this makes it an unaccusative diagnostic.

\begin{tabular}{l}
(ii) & *Z tych dziewczyn Jan nie podoba się żadnej.  
& 'Of these girls John does not appeal to any.'
\end{tabular}

\(^{16}\) To derive the Theme-Experiencer ordering we would have a hard time extracting the Theme over the Experiencer. It is the Experiencer which is at the edge of the phase, while the Theme is in its complement domain (inaccessible to movement taking PIC into account; unless moved to the edge first).

\(^{17}\) There is a problem we see with this test and it is similar to what Pesetsky (1995) has pointed out about B&R's arbitrary pro interpretation, namely, that it is quite likely that the possibility or impossibility of a purpose clause is connected to Agenthood, or, to be more precise, is licensed by the presence of an Agent (that would be się in the example with the unergative, but not in other cases). However, it does provide us with yet another fact, i.e. there definitely is no agentive/external argument vP in the constructions with podobać się.
He also proposes that "Polish resultative constructions are realized by means of verb prefixation"\(^{18}\). The following are resultative constructions with unaccusatives:

   'The river froze solid.'

   b. Łód odlujal.
   'The ice thawed.'

Unergatives do not allow resultative constructions unless supported by a "fake object". According to Biały (1998: 67) they may be represented by się or an unsubcategorized NP (in square brackets we give the non-resultative version for comparison).

(26) Ewa dodzwoniła *(się)* do matki. (result.) / [Ewa dzwoniła do matki]
   'Eve got through on the phone to her mother.' / ['Eve telephoned her mother']

(27) Ewa wyplakała *(sobie oczy)* (za Tomkiem). (result.) / [Ewa płakała (za Tomkiem)]
   'Eve cried (her eyes out) (for Tom).'

   / ['Eve cried (for Tom)']

\textit{Podobać się} patterns with single object unaccusatives.

(28) a. Maria podobała się Janowi. / Janowi podobała się Maria.
   'Mary used to appeal to John.' / 'John used to like Mary.'

   b. Maria spodobała się Janowi. / Janowi spodobała się Maria. (resultative)
   'Mary appealed to John.' / 'John liked Mary.'

There are no unsubcategorized arguments here, and się cannot count as a "fake object" because it is an integral part of the verb podobać się, hence its use is not parallel to the use of się with unergatives above.

As a final note, it is worth adding that podobać się, just like its Italian counterpart piacere, does not allow any kind of passivization (neither verbal, nor adjectival), which again points to its unaccusative nature. In the next section we concentrate on the verb's word order patterns.

5.2. Variation in word order

As we said in section 2 podobać się is an alternating verb: it allows either of its nominal arguments to appear in the sentence initial position. To examine empirically the surface arrangements in which it occurs we turned to a corpus of modern

\(^{18}\) He claims that prefixes in Polish do not function as perfective markers only, as a majority of perfective verbs also have imperfective counterparts: wyrzeć (\textit{wipe clean}, perfective)/ wycierać (\textit{wipe clean}, imperfective) (Biały (1998: 67)).
Polish. The combinations we searched for and the frequencies of each pattern are given in Table 1 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD ORDER</th>
<th>NUMBER OF INSTANCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. DAT V NOM</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. NOM V DAT</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. DAT NOM V</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. NOM DAT V</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. V DAT NOM</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. V NOM DAT</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 1.** Word order variation allowed by podobać się and the number of instances of each ordering in the IPI PAN CORPUS

Let us now present typical example sentences and some general characteristics associated with each arrangement. The clitic się is movable and for this reason in the search we needed to split each pattern in table 1 into two or more sub-patterns. In the analysis below we discuss each sub-pattern separately.

**PATTERN 1A: DAT – V się – NOM**

This sub-pattern consisted of 63 sentences in our corpus. Two features need to be mentioned. First, over half of the sentences [34] were negative. Second, there were 15 which we would like to label as emphatic. We take an emphatic sentence to be one in which the meaning of the verb is strengthened by adverbial expressions like bardzo (very much), zawsze (always) or ogromnie (enormously), e.g.:

(29) Prezydentowi(DAT) nie podobają się szczególne przepisy (NOM)...‘The president especially does not like the regulations...’

(30) Franciszkowi Rysiowi (DAT) zawsze podobała się praca (NOM) na kolei ‘Franciszk Rysz always liked working for the railway’

---

19 The corpus we searched was the preliminary version of the IPI PAN Corpus, developed by the Linguistic Engineering Group at the Institute of Computer Science, Polish Academy of Sciences. The corpus contains over 70 million morphosyntactically annotated segments; the texts comprising it come from a variety of genres: contemporary prose: 10%, older prose: 10%, science: 10%, newspapers: 50%, parliamentary proceedings: 15%, law: 5%. The details concerning this version of the corpus and the software we used to search it can be found in Przepiórkowski (2004).

20 The elements in this pattern (and in all the others) need not be adjacent. As the examples demonstrate, there can be as many as three intervening items separating the key categories.
As for the distribution of old vs. new information in this pattern, the analysis of a larger context of the sentence in (29) reveals that the DAT nominal *prezydentowi* is thematic, i.e. (29) comes from a text which discusses the president’s views on the regulations in question, and in which the noun president is mentioned repeatedly:

(31) Ale jednocześnie prezydent stwierdził, że nie należy tego zbytnio ograniczać. (...) ta dysproporcja w uzasadnieniu prezydenta jest naszym zdaniem wyjątkowo rażąca. Prezydentowi nie podobają się szczególnie przepisy...

‘But the president also stated that this should not be restricted too much. (...) this disproportion in the president’s justification is in our opinion particularly striking. The president especially does not like the regulations…’

**PATTERN 1B: DAT – się V – NOM**

In the case of pattern 1b out of the total of 40 sentences 21 were emphatic, and only 3 were marked as negative.

(32) Zawsze mi *(DAT)* się podobały kobiety *(NOM)*, ich urok

‘I always like women, their charm’

(33) Bardzo mi *(DAT)* się podoba stwierdzenie *(NOM)* mojego przedmówcy

‘I very much like the statement made by the preceding speaker’

**PATTERN 2A: NOM – V się – DAT**

The sentences in pattern 2B reached a total of 46. Almost half were negative and only 5 were emphatic.

(34) Ten pomysł *(NOM)* nie podoba się Wiesławowi *(DAT)*

‘Wiesław does not like this idea’

(35) Zajęcia *(NOM)* podobały się uczniom *(DAT)*

‘The pupils like the classes’

**PATTERN 2B: NOM – się V - DAT**

There were only 10 sentences exemplifying this sub-pattern. 6 of them contained a modal verb or a modal expression.

(36) Pierwsza połowa *(NOM)* mogła się podobać kibicom *(DAT)*

‘The fans probably enjoyed the first half’

(37) program *(NOM)*, który tak się podoba Platformie Obywatelskiej *(DAT)*

‘the program, which Platforma Obywatelska likes so much’

The NOM expressions introducing sentences in Pattern 2 can also be linked to given/old information. In example (34) above, the idea that Wieslaw dislikes is introduced in the immediately preceding sentence:
A corpus-based analysis of the peculiar behaviour of the Polish verb podobać się

(38) Chce wycofać się z interesu i poświęcić swojej życiowej pasji: filozofii. Ten po myśl...
   ‘He wants to quit the business and devote himself to his life’s passion: philosophy’

**Pattern 3A: DAT - się – NOM - V**

In this category we found 28 sentences. Both nominals were often realized by pronouns: there were various DAT pronouns in 23 sentences, and the nominative pronoun to (it) in 12 examples. Emphatic constructions were also quite common, constituting about 30 per cent of the total.

(39) Bardzo mi (DAT) się to (NOM) podoba
   ‘I like this very much’

(40) Niezbyt mi (DAT) się to (NOM) podobało
   ‘I didn’t really like this’

**Pattern 3B: DAT - NOM – się V**

With the clitic closer to the verb the pattern becomes less popular (13 sentences) and pronominal NPs are less common: we found only 3 DAT pronouns and 3 instances of the nominative form to. Emphatics, however, still account for about 30 per cent of all the sentences.

(41) Sojuszowi Lewicy Demokratycznej (DAT) ten projekt (NOM) się podoba
   ‘Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej really likes this project’

(42) Mojemu fryzjerowi (DAT) to (NOM) się nie podoba
   ‘My hairdresser does not like this’

Pattern 3 consists of two nominal expressions followed by the verb. An examination of the context of example (41) reveals that the two nominals represent given information, whereas the verb is the information focus. The two given pieces of information represent the political party whose view is being expressed and the regulations under discussion. The new information is the judgement that is presented:

(43) Po przyjrzeniu się w szczegółach przedkładanemu przez rząd projektowi ordynacji wyborczej do Parlamentu Europejskiego musimy powiedzieć, iż Sojuszowi Lewicy Demokratycznej ten projekt się podoba
   ‘After examining the details of the Government’s proposal concerning the European elections statute we must say that Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej likes this proposal’
**Pattern 3C: DAT - NOM - V się**

Being the least popular pattern in 3, this arrangement has only 1 exemplification in the corpus:

(44) Lecz Millerowi (DAT) rada (NOM) podobała się
    ‘But Miller liked this advice’

**Pattern 4A: NOM - DAT - się V**

Pattern 4 differs from the previous one in that the NOM Theme is the initial element in the sequence. This difference brings about an increase in the number of examples that were attested in the corpus. The string encoded by 4A is by far the most numerous out of the three patterns in 4: it adds up to 110 sentences. In all of them the DAT NPs are represented by a pronoun.

(45) Ta praca (NOM) mi (DAT) się podoba
    ‘I like this work’

(46) natomiast kobiety (NOM) bardzo mi (DAT) się podobają
    ‘However, women I like very much’

As was the case with Pattern 3, the two NPs encode here given information. In sentence (45) they are arranged in the order of their relative communicative value: (45) is actually a quotation immediately preceded in the original text by a description of the speaker’s occupation:

(47) Krystyna jest urzędniczką. Oprócz tego od kilku lat zajmuje się ubezpieczeniami na życie. - Ta praca mi się podoba.
    ‘Krystyna is an office worker. Apart from that for a few years she has been selling life insurance policies. ‘I like this work.’ ’

**Pattern 4B: NOM - się - DAT - V**

DAT pronouns are also common in 4B. This time we have only 8 sentences; the two DAT pronouns that occur are *komuś* and *nam*.

(48) Może to (NOM) się komuś (DAT) podobać lub nie.
    ‘One may like this or not’

(49) W demokracji zawsze jest tak, że ktoś (NOM) się komuś (DAT) podoba lub nie
    ‘In a democracy it’s always the case that you may like someone or not’

**Pattern 4C: NOM - DAT - V się**

The single example we found of pattern 4C is a sentence relative clause.

(50) Mieliśmy dużo swobody, co (NOM) niektórym (DAT) z nas nie podobało się
    ‘We had a lot of freedom, which some of us did not like’
**Pattern 5A: V się – DAT - NOM**

Patterns 5 and 6 are both introduced by the verb. The first of them is the most common arrangement out of the ones we examined. In 5A, which is exemplified by 14 sentences in the corpus, the characteristic feature is again the DAT Experiencer pronoun (present in 11 examples).

(51) Wczoraj bardzo podobała się im (DAT) wyprawa (NOM) w Pieniny

‘They very much liked the trip to the Pieniny Mountains yesterday’

(52) Podoba się im (DAT) bezpośredni kontakt (NOM) z tak wybitnymi artystami.

‘They like direct contact with such great artists’

In Pattern 5 it is the verb that introduces the sentence and that functions as Theme. For example, in the case of (52) the preceding context concerns the assessment of an arts course by its participants:


‘How did the participants evaluate the course? ‘Very highly’ ‘They like direct contact with such great artists.’ ’

**Pattern 5B: V – DAT – się - NOM**

The popularity of pattern 5 is due to the 130 sentences we found for the sequence in 5B. All of them contain a DAT pronoun realizing the Experiencer role.

(54) Podoba mi (DAT) się twoja spontaniczność (NOM)

‘I like your spontaneity’

(55) Nie podoba mi (DAT) się to (NOM)

‘I don’t like this’

**Pattern 6A: V - NOM - DAT**

Pattern 6 is the least common of all the patterns in the study. We found only one sentence instantiating 6A, with się preceding the verb, and five sentences instantiating 6B, with się following the verb.

(56) mimo że tak bardzo się podobały jego bokobrody (NOM) wyrafinowanym paryżankom (DAT)

‘Despite the fact that sophisticated Parisian women liked his sideburns so much’

---

21 The are two sub-patterns in 5. We found no exemplars of sequences with the initial particle się, i.e. się V - DAT – NOM.
**Pattern 6B: V się - NOM - DAT**

As for 6B, in four sentences out of the five we found, the DAT nominal is followed by a relative clause.

(57) Podobała się ta szczerość (NOM) zakonnikowi (DAT).
   ‘The monk liked his / her sincerity’
(58) Nie bardzo podobało się to (NOM) działaczom klubowym (DAT), którzy...
   ‘This did not win favour with club officials, who...’

In (57) the placement of the verb in the initial position appears to be motivated stylistically. The information structure of the sentence in (58) is in line with the general pattern that has emerged in our presentation: the speaker moves from given to new information. The initial verb expresses the evaluation of the action referred to in the immediately preceding sentence:

(59) To była śmiała decyzja, bo jeszcze nie znano zwyczaju wojskowej Polek koszykarzek za ocean. Nie bardzo podobało się to działaczom klubowym, którzy...
   ‘It was a brave decision because until then no Polish female basketball player had ever gone to play in the states. This did not win favour with club officials, who...’

The results of the study clearly demonstrate that in terms of sentence word order *podobać się* is an alternating verb. However, despite the differences in word order the information structure of each of the major patterns is held constant and follows the given – new information sequence. Let us next see how corpus data can support the claim that both NP arguments of *podobać się* can function as subjects in raising constructions.

**5.3. Raising**

Raising is considered to be one of the tests for subjecthood: the process is said to move an NP from the subject position of a lower clause to the subject position of an upper clause. In section 1 we used invented examples to show that *podobać się* allows either of its nominals to occupy the position immediately preceding the raising verb *zdawać się* (*seem*). As for authentic examples, we failed to find any in our corpus. However, searching for this construction on the Internet produced a number of example sentences, which we give below. In general, they demonstrate that both the DAT NP and the NOM NP can occur pre-verbally:

(60) Pan Tytus niby przeczył, ale to ujęcie (NOM) sprawy zdawało mu(DAT) się podobać.
   ‘Mr Tytus appeared to deny it, but he seemed to like this treatment of the matter’
   From: Maria Dąbrowska, NOCE I DNIĘ, volume V Wiatr w oczy (101-102) web source: www.racjonalista.pl/kk.php/s.4356
A corpus-based analysis of the peculiar behaviour of the Polish verb *podobać się*

(61) Kobietom (DAT) to (NOM) zdaje się podobać
‘Women seem to like this’

5.4. The passive, external argument and Case

As mentioned before, neither the Italian *piacere*, nor the Polish *podobać się*, allows any type of passive. In our analysis this follows from the properties of the structures involved: their structures lack the highest light verb projection associated with external arguments and ACC Case. Thus, if there is no external argument to be demoted and no ACC to be absorbed, no passive is possible.

5.5. The two arguments of *podobać się* and binding

The ability to bind an anaphor constitutes another test often used to determine the subject status of an element in Polish. We thus searched the IPI PAN corpus and the World Wide Web for examples of structures involving anaphoric dependencies. A selection of the relevant examples we found is given below. What they show is that both NPs can act as binders and fulfill the binding criterion for subjecthood; thus we have both DAT binders, as in (62), and NOM binders, as in (63) and (64).

(62) mi (DAT) się swój¹² głos (NOM) podoba
‘I like my voice’

(63) ja (NOM) się sobie (refl.DAT) też bardzo podobam
‘I like myself very much too’

(64) im bardziej (pro NOM) przypominam młodego hipopotamka, tym bardziej podobam się swojemu mężowi (DAT)
‘The more I resemble a young hippo, the more my husband likes me’

The pronoun swój (self's own) in this context alternates with mój (my/mine):

(i) Chciać mi (DAT) się mój stajł (NOM) podoba bardziej niż ...
‘Although I like my style more than...’

(ii) Oprócz tego podoba mi (DAT) się mój obecny stan (NOM)
‘Apart from this I like my present state’
6. Summary and conclusion

In section 4 we proposed what the ordering of the items is within the verbal projection, i.e. crucially we assume that the two different surface orderings result from the same underlying order, we can say that these predicates pose no problem for Baker’s (1988) UTAH and they certainly do not call for any finer-grained semantics analysis (as in Pesetsky 1995).

Moreover, we conclude that when it comes to the division of psych-verbs into SubExpVs and ObExpVs, the PIACERE-class of verbs is neither here nor there, i.e. it constitutes a class in its own right.

With respect to the DAT-NOM / NOM-DAT alternation, we propose a structure in which the two arguments are introduced into the derivation by distinct verbal heads: the Theme argument by V and the Experiencer argument by the light vG verb. The Experiencer is higher in the structure, c-commanding the Theme, which explains why it is able to bind into the Theme. The two alternating surface orderings result from the vacuous raising of V to vG, which renders the two arguments equidistant and thus equally eligible for further movement.

We leave the remaining variations of surface orderings for further research, nevertheless we presume that they would result from the presence or absence of some additional [EPP/OCC] features on the probing heads vG and C-T (as in recent Chomskyan analyses), i.e. apart from the two orderings (NOM - V - DAT and DAT - V - NOM) we expect that the remaining order variations result from scrambling.

\[
(65) \quad \text{CP} \rightarrow C' \rightarrow C^0 \rightarrow TP \rightarrow T' \rightarrow T^0 \rightarrow v^G_P \rightarrow v^G \rightarrow \text{EXP.DAT} \rightarrow \text{VP} \rightarrow v^G \rightarrow \text{THEME.NOM}
\]
References

Arad, Maya

Baker, Mark

Barðdal, Jóhanna

Belletti, Adriana -- Luigi Rizzi

Belletti, Adriana -- Ur Shlonsky

den Besten, Hans

Biały, Adam

Bowers, John

Cetnarowska, Bożena

Chomsky, Noam
2005 ‘On Phases’. Ms., MIT.

Falk, Cecilia

Hale, Kenneth -- Samuel Jay Keyser

Harley, Heidi
1995    Subjects, Events and Licensing. Cambridge, Mass.: MITWPL.

Holmberg, Anders -- Christer Platzack

Kratzer, Angelika

Lavine, James E.  
(in press)   'On the Site of Morphology and Crosslinguistic Variation'. Ms., Wellesley College/MIT.

McGinnis, Martha

Pesetsky, David

Simpson, Jane

Perlmutter, David

Tenny, Carol

Ura, Hiroyuki

Woolford, Ellen

Zænen, Annie -- Joan Maling -- Höskuldur Thráinsson