

THE BLOOMSBURY COMPANION TO SYNTAX

EDITED BY
**SILVIA LURAGHI
& CLAUDIA PARODI**

B L O O M S B U R Y

The Bloomsbury Companion to Syntax

Edited by

Silvia Luraghi and Claudia Parodi

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Leonid Kulikov

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1 Preliminaries

1.1 Historical Notes

The term “middle” is inherited from the ancient Greek grammatical tradition (*mesôtēs*, that is, “middle”), where it appears combined with the term *diáthesis* “disposition.” The formal opposition between three diatheses, *enérgeia* “performance,” *páthos* “experience,” and *mesôtēs* literally “central position, mean,” amounts to the morphological opposition between two series of the verbal inflectional suffixes (as, for instance, in the case of 1sg.pres. *bouleúō*, 2sg.pres. *bouleúeis*, 3sg.pres. *bouleúei*, etc. “to take counsel, deliberate” vs. middle: 1sg. pres. *bouleú-o-mai*, 2sg.pres. *bouleú-ei*, 3sg.pres. *bouleú-e-tai*, etc. “to take counsel with oneself”), known in the modern terminology as active and middle (though not quite consistently described in Greek tradition in terms of three functional labels: “active,” “passive,” and “middle”; for details, see Andersen 1994a: 125ff., 1994b; Shibatani 2004: 1149).

1.2 Basic Definitions and Terminology

The categorical domain of reflexives and middle is one of the most important—and the most intricate—parts of the verbal grammar. It overlaps with (and can to some extent be described in terms of) such categories as transitivity and voice or diathesis, depending on the theoretical framework chosen as basic for linguistic description.

For the purposes of the present survey, it will be convenient to capture the most relevant features of the reflexive and middle in question in a broader categorical context—as members of (or, at least, as categories related to) the category of voice.

Below I have chosen as basic the approach developed by the Leningrad/St Petersburg Typology Group,¹ which offers a useful calculus of relations between two main levels of presentation of the structure of a clause. These are: (i) the level of semantic “macroroles” (cf. the macroroles of Actor and Undergoer in the framework of Role and Reference Grammar; to avoid terminological confusion, I will denote macroroles by means of capital letters X, Y, Z, W); and (ii) the level of syntactic functions (grammatical relations): Subject [S], Direct Object [DO], Indirect Object [IO], and Oblique Object [Obl].

The level of grammatical relations is responsible for the realization of arguments in the clause—in particular, for the three main formal means of encoding grammatical relations, which include case marking, verbal agreement, and word order. Altogether, these three morpho-syntactic devices determine the syntactic structure of the clause. In simple cases, the syntactic functions can be straightforwardly identified in terms of one of these parameters. Thus, the grammatical relations of S, DO, and IO often correspond to the nominative, accusative, and dative, respectively (in nominative–accusative case-marking languages); the clause-initial noun bears the grammatical relation of Subject in many languages; etc.

The most important theoretical concept that can be determined in terms of the two levels of representation and enables to capture the rich variety of voices is that of **syntactic pattern**, determined as a pattern of mapping of semantic arguments onto syntactic functions (grammatical relations).² The notion of syntactic pattern is closely related to that of verbal valency/valence, which is inherently associated with the set of arguments governed by the verb in question.

The pattern where the Actor is mapped onto the Subject and the Undergoer onto the Direct Object is the most common, unmarked way of representing an event and therefore can be regarded as the basic, or the neutral, syntactic pattern³ of a simple transitive verb. This can be illustrated by the following Ancient Greek and Sanskrit sentences (1–2):

(1) Ancient Greek

ho paîs bállei tèn sfáiran.
 the:NOM.SG.M child:NOM.SG throw:PRES:3SG.ACT the:ACC.SG.F ball:ACC.SG
 "The child throws (active) the ball."

(2) Sanskrit

kumāro vṛkṣaṃ han-ti.
 prince:NOM wolf:ACC kill:PRES-3SG.ACT
 "The prince kills the wolf."

Syntactic patterns can be conveniently presented in a tabular form (which I will use from now on in the present chapter). Thus the syntactic pattern exemplified by (1–2) can be schematized in Table (3):

(3) Basic transitive pattern

Semantic argument level (role)	X (Actor)	Y (Undergoer)
Syntactic function level (case)	S (NOM)	DO (ACC)

(*ho paîs; kumāro*) (*tèn sfáiran; vṛkṣaṃ*)

Syntactic changes affecting transitivity can be conveniently described in terms of modifications of syntactic patterns. For instance, the modification of the basic (neutral) transitive pattern that results in the passive equivalent of a transitive clause typically suggests the following two (partly independent) syntactic phenomena: (i) the promotion of the initial Direct Object to the Subject (= the Subject of the passive construction); and (ii) the demotion of the initial Subject (usually, an Agent). The demotion of the Subject may amount either to its downgrading to an Oblique Object (passive Agent), or to its removal from the structure. This change in pattern is exemplified by the passive equivalents of (1–2) in (4–5) and presented in tabular form in Table (6):

(4) Ancient Greek

hē sfáira bálle-tai hupò toû paidós.
 the:NOM.SG.F ball:NOM.SG throw:PRES-3SG.MID under the:GEN.SG.M child:GEN.SG
 "The ball is thrown by the child."

(5) Sanskrit

vṛkṣo kumāreṇa han-ya-te.
 wolf:NOM king:INS kill-PRES.PASS-3SG.MID
 "The wolf is (being) killed by the prince."

(6) Passive pattern

X	Y	$\Rightarrow$	X	Y
S	DO		Obl / –	S

In the languages where the correspondence between grammatical relations and case-marking is relatively straightforward, pattern modification can also be formulated in terms of changes in case-marking. Thus, Scheme (7) describes passivization in Sanskrit:

(7) Passivization in Sanskrit

X	Y	$\Rightarrow$	X	Y
S (NOM)	DO (ACC)		Obl (INS)	S (NOM)

1.3 Syntactic Pattern and Voice

The technical concept of **syntactic pattern** was introduced, foremost, in order to arrive at a more accurate definition and a reasonable formalization of our traditional concept of voice, and, eventually, to sort out its linguistic content. The category of “**voice**” is determined on the basis of the concept of syntactic pattern as follows: **voice is a regular encoding of syntactic pattern through the verbal morphology**.

Thus, many languages encode the passive pattern outlined above by means of a special verbal morpheme, which, accordingly, is interpreted as the marker of the passive voice. In Sanskrit, these are the present passive suffix *-ya-* and the middle inflection; in Greek and Latin, the passive voice is expressed by means of a special series of endings (“medio-passive” inflection); cf. 3sg.pass. Gr. *-tai* ~ 3sg.act. *-i* (<*-si < *-ti), Lat. *-tur* ~ 3sg.act. *-t*; in many modern Romance and Germanic languages by means of the auxiliary verb “to be” (Italian *essere*, French *être*, English *be* etc.) and past participle; etc.

It is important to note that, in accordance with the definition given below, a modification in pattern only suggests changes in the pattern of mapping of semantic arguments onto syntactic functions (i.e. in the valency pattern), but not in the semantics of the sentence. This is only possible in cases where the inventory of semantic roles remains unchanged, that is, no role is removed from the base structure nor added to it. Yet, there are some system-related reasons to group together such syntactic alternations (cf. passive, antipassive, dative shift, see Keenan, this volume) and those that do allow some operations

on the set of semantic roles (“pattern changes *sensu latiore*”; cf. causative and anticausative, benefactive).

Of course, defining passive and other voices primarily in syntactic terms simplifies the matters in some respects. Alongside with syntactic parameters, both semantics and morphology play an important role in the definition and adequate description of the passive and other voices. The fact that in many languages the morphemes labeled “passive” include into the range of their functions non-canonical passive(s) or even non-passive syntactic patterns, such as the reflexive or the anticausative, apparently justifies a more morphologically oriented (form-oriented) definition of voice. In what follows, this problem is dealt with in terms of voice clusters.

2 Middle as a Cluster of Deagentivized (Intransitivized) Syntactic Patterns

In rare cases, a particular verbal form (voice) may correspond to just one particular syntactic pattern. However, most often we are faced with the situation where a group of (similar) patterns (diatheses in terms of St Petersburg Typology group) is represented by the same verbal form (voice). That is, one morphological voice corresponds to a number of syntactic patterns—a “pattern cluster,” or “family” (see, for example, Shibatani 2004: 1157ff.). The patterns belonging to the same cluster normally share some feature(s). Thus, in many languages with passive, the class of constructions where the form called “passive” occurs includes both canonical (“full”) and agentless (reduced) passives—thus forming, as a matter of fact, a “passive cluster” consisting of at least two members. The range of its other members varies across languages: the passive cluster may optionally include backgrounding passives without DO-foregrounding, as in Polish or Dutch; dative passives, as in English; or exclude from its members passives with an overtly expressed Agent, as in Latvian.

A much larger cluster is known under the traditional term “middle (voice/diathesis).” Middle forms typically express a variety of functional types (syntactic patterns). They all share both semantic and syntactic features, and this fact explains their identical encoding (“middle morphology”). Semantically, they “focus” the activity expressed by the base verb on the first argument (Subject). Syntactically, they usually intransitivize the base verb (with a few important exceptions, however). As a matter of fact, the feature of intransitivization can easily be extended to the semantic domain in terms of Hopper and Thompson’s (1980) semantic approach of transitivity, understood as a cluster of semantic features correlating with the degree of transitivity. For further discussion of the shared features of the middle, see Geniušienė (1987); Klaiman (1991: 44ff.) Kemmer (1993); and Kazenin (2001b).

One of the most elaborated semantically based approaches to the problem of the “middle” is offered by Kemmer (1993). According to Kemmer (1993: 243), “[t]he middle is area comprising events in which (a) the Initiator is also an Endpoint, or affected entity and (b) the event is characterized by a low degree of elaboration [. . .] The first property is a subaspect of the second.” The (low) elaboration of events is a complex notion that includes, in particular, such parameters as (low) distinguishability of participants and (low) distinguishability of events (Kemmer 1993: 109ff., 208ff. and *passim*).

Thus, putting the essence of the “middle voice” into a more general linguistic perspective, the existence of this category is based on the well-known ability of languages to cluster together the functional types along the basic features above, creating a syncretic linguistic entity, which usually forms a linguistic (grammatical or derivational) opposition with another, non-middle, form—traditionally called “active.” In other words (and, placing the issue in a diachronic perspective, on which see Section 5.1), “middle” can be considered a result of a syncretic merger of several, closely related (from the functional point of view), linguistic categories such as reflexive, passive, anticausative, and some others.

There is no universal inventory of functional types (patterns) included into the middle cluster in any language that is said to have the category of middle. Yet, most typically, the range of functions covered by the middle includes passive, anticausative, reflexive, reciprocal, conversive, antipassive, and subjective versions (self-beneficent derivative).

Before taking a closer look at variation attested in languages in the domain of middle, it will be in order to summarize the main functional types typically associated with this category.

3 Middle Types/Patterns

The inventory of patterns (syntactic, or functional, types) that normally belong to the “middle cluster” can be conveniently summarized within the framework outlined above.

3.1 Pattern Changes that do not Affect the Inventory of Semantic Roles: Derived Patterns/Voices *Sensu Stricto*

The first major class of patterns includes those that do not affect the initial inventory of semantic roles. In other words, the derived syntactic pattern preserves all semantic roles present in the basic, or neutral, pattern (the base, or non-derived structure); even where some of them remain unexpressed, their presence is implied by the meaning of the sentence. In this category belong all syntactic patterns and voices in the strict sense of the word.

3.1.1 Subject-demoting Patterns: Passive

The most important class of syntactic patterns includes those that suggest the syntactic demotion of the main participant of the situation (realized as the Subject in the initial structure), and its degrading down to an Oblique Object (Obl), or complete removal from the clause. This class consists of passives of various types.⁴

(i) Canonical Passive: S-backgrounding and DO-foregrounding

This syntactic pattern (which also represents a textbook example of voice in general) was briefly discussed above, cf. (4–7).

(ii) Agentless Passive

Probably all languages that have a canonical passive can also freely omit the passive Agent (*hupò toû paidós* and *kumāreṇa* in the Greek and Sanskrit examples (4–5)), which results in the agentless passive, as shown in Scheme (8):

(8) Agentless passive

X	Y	$\Rightarrow$	X	Y
S	DO		–	S

Next to the languages with canonical (“full”) passive, such as English, Latin, or Sanskrit, there are languages that cannot express the Agent in passive sentences. This is, for instance, the case with Amharic, Latvian, Turkic, and many other languages (see Siewerska 1984: 35 and Keenan, this volume).

A special subtype of the agentless passive pattern is the potential passive, which suggests the non-referential status of the Agent (“someone, whoever”) and often adds the meaning of habituality; potential passives are typically constructed with manner adverbials such as *well*, *easily*, *often*, etc. (as in French *Le livre se lit bien*, etc.).

3.1.2 Object-demoting Patterns: Antipassive and Deobjective

The demotion of the initial Direct Object produces an effect opposite to that observed in the canonical passive—hence the term “antipassive.” The Direct Object can: (i) be degraded down to an Oblique Object (this type is particularly common in ergative languages, such as Chukchee (Paleo-Siberian) or many Nakh-Daghestan languages); or (ii) be entirely removed from the syntactic structure. The latter sub-type is also called the “absolute transitive,” “object suppressive,” or “deobjective”:

(9) Antipassive

X	Y	$\Rightarrow$	X	Y
S	DO		S	Obl / –

In some languages with middle morphology, middle forms may also be used as antipassives. Thus, we find instances of the identical marking of the passive and the antipassive (both decreasing the verbal valency) in Russian and some other Slavic languages; cf. Russian antipassives in (10–11), which belong to the same middle cluster as passives:

(10) Russian

- (a) *Ivan brosaet kamni.*
 Ivan:NOM throw:PRES.3SG stones:ACC
 “Ivan throws (the) stones.”
- (b) *Ivan brosaet-sja kamnjami.*
 Ivan:NOM throw:PRES.3SG-MID stones:INS
 “Ivan throws stones.” (lit.: “John throws with stones.”)

(11) Russian

- (a) *Pčely kusajut Petju.*
 bee:NOM.PL bite:PRES.3PL Peter:ACC
 “The bees bite Peter.”
- (b) *Pčely kusajut-sja.*
 bee:NOM.PL bite:PRES.3PL-MID
 “The bees bite” (in a habitual context)

3.2 Syntactic Changes that Preserve the Inventory of Semantic Roles but Impose Certain Operations on them (“Operational Patterns”)

3.2.1 Reflexive

The reflexive can be described as a derivation that encodes the referential identity of the main argument of the initial structure (X) and some other argument; for a detailed study of this type, see Geniušienė 1987 and (with particular focus on its semantics) Ryan 2004. The most important type of reflexives, “canonical reflexive,” is the one where the Subject is co-referential with the Direct Object (*Mary_i likes Mary_i = Mary likes herself*).

Normally, the co-referential Direct Object is not repeated in the sentence but is either (i) replaced by the reflexive pronoun (cf. Eng. *oneself*, *him-/her-/itself*, Russian *sebjā*, Italian *se stesso*, etc.), or (ii) removed from the original structure. In the latter case, we are dealing with a valency-reducing phenomenon, as shown in (12) and illustrated in (13), which is relevant for the diathesis change and typically is included into the middle clusters; the verbal form receives special morphological marking (called in some grammars “reflexive voice”):

(12) Canonical reflexive

X	Y	$\Rightarrow$	X = Y
S	DO		S

(13) Russian

- (a) *Petja* *moet* *sobaku.*
 Peter:NOM wash:PRES.3SG dog:ACC
 "Peter washes the dog."
- (b) *Petja* *moet-sja.*
 Peter:NOM wash:PRES.3SG-MID
 "Peter washes himself."

3.2.2 Reciprocal

The reciprocal derivation suggests another logical operation, which can roughly be described as a conjunction of the base proposition with its "symmetric" equivalent, where two of the arguments switch (i.e. exchange the roles); for a detailed study of this derivation, see Nedjalkov (2007) and König and Gast (2008). As in the case of the reflexive, the most important and commonest ("canonical") type is represented by the "Subject $\leftrightarrow$ Direct Object" reciprocal (*John loves Mary and Mary loves John* = *John and Mary love each other*). As in canonical reflexive constructions, the Direct Object is either (i) replaced by the reciprocal pronoun (cf. English *each other*, German *einander*, etc.) or (ii) removed from the original structure, and this valency change is obligatorily marked in the verbal morphology ("reciprocal voice"). As in the case of the reflexive, we are dealing with a valency-reducing phenomenon, as shown in Scheme (14) and illustrated in (15–16):

(14) Canonical reciprocal

X	Y	and	Y	X	$\Rightarrow$	X and Y
S	DO		S	DO		S

(15) French

- (a) *Pierre a embrassé* *Marie* (and *Marie a embrassé* *Pierre*).
 Pierre kiss:PAST:3SG Mary Mary kiss:PAST:3SG Peter
 "Pierre kissed Mary."
- (b) *Pierre et Marie se sont embrassés*
 Peter and Mary MID kiss:PAST:3PL
 "Peter and Mary kissed (each other)."

(16) Russian

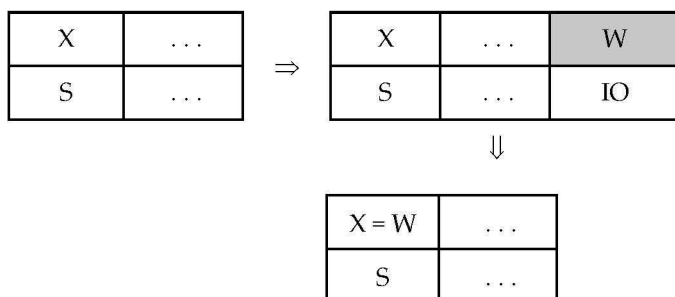
- (a) *Katja obnja-l-a Mašu.*
 Katja:NOM embrace-PAST-SG.F Masha:ACC
 "Katja embraced Masha."
- (b) *Katja i Maša obnja-l-i-s'.*
 Katja:NOM and Masha:NOM embrace-PAST-PL-MID
 "Katja and Masha embraced (each other)."

All main types of derivation discussed above—passive, antipassives, reflexive, and reciprocal—decrease the valency of the initial structure. Passives degrade the original Subject; antipassives and operational syntactic patterns demote or remove the Direct Object.

3.3 Auto-benefactive

An important (and typologically quite common) type of verbal derivation based on the benefactive derivation (see, for instance, Boeder 1969; Dixon and Aikhenvald 2000: 14ff. et passim) is called "auto-benefactive," "self-beneficent," or "subjective version" (in Kartvelian grammar; see Schmidt 1965; Boeder 1969). This is the only member of the middle cluster that, normally, does not decrease the valency, that is, does not intransitivize transitive verbs. It can be described as a result of a successive application of two elementary derivations, the benefactive and the indirect reflexive; cf. (17) and (18):

(17) Benefactive reflexive (subjective version, self-beneficent)



(18) Georgian

- (a) *šen m-i-krep vašl-s.*
 you IO:1SG-OBJ.VERS-pluck:PRES apple-DAT
 "You pluck an apple for me."
- (b) *šen i-krep vašl-s.*
 you SUBJ.VERS-pluck:PRES apple-DAT
 "You pluck an apple for yourself."

The self-benefactive meaning was one of the main functions of the ancient Indo-European middle inflection. The **auto-benefactive functional domain** of the middle in such languages as Vedic, where it is productive and well-attested, can further be specified as representing one of the following subtypes (all three well-attested, for instance, for the Vedic middle forms, as illustrated in example below): (i) the **self-beneficent** meaning proper (“to do smth. for oneself”) (cf. (19)), (ii) **possessive-reflexive** (the subject is referentially identical with the possessor of another argument: “to yoke *one’s* chariot,” etc.) (cf. (20)); and (iii) **auto-directional**, which applies to transitive verbs of caused motion, typically referring to the motion of the referent of the direct object caused by the Agent and directed toward the Agent, such as obtaining or taking of the object by the Agent. In Vedic, middle forms of this latter subtype are typically used with preverbs such as *ā* “to(ward),” as in the handbook example—the converse pair *dā* (active) “give” ~ *ā-dā* (middle) “take”), cf. (21–22):

- (19) Vedic (Śatapatha-Br. 5.3.5.4)

rājā tvā pak-ṣya-te.

king:NOM.SG you:ACC cook-FUT-3SG.MID

“The king will cook you [said toward an animal] for himself.”

- (20) Vedic (Taittirīya-Saṃhitā 6.1.1.2)

nakhāni ní kṛnta-te.

nail:ACC.PL down cut.off:PRES-3SG.MID

“He cuts off his nails.”

- (21) Vedic (RV 1.8.3):

ā vāyāṃ vājraṃ . . . dad-ī-mahi jāyema [. . .] sprdhaḥ.

to 1PL.NOM club:ACC.SG give:PRES-OPT-1PL.MID win:OPT:1PL.ACT rival:ACC.PL

“May we take the club (and) win over (our) rivals!”

- (22) Vedic (Śatapatha-Br. 1.5.2.1)

ghṛtāvatiṃ adhvaryo srúcam ā-asya-sva.

with.ghee:ACC.SG.F priest:VOC spoon:ACC.SG to throw:PRES-2SG.IMPV.MID

“O priest, take a spoon with ghee (in your hand).”

The **possessive-reflexive** type is also well-attested in other Indo-European languages, in particular, in Ancient Greek (see, for instance, Allan 2003), cf. (23):

- (23) Ancient Greek (Hdt. 2.178.1)

édōke khōrous enidrúsasthai bōmoús kai teménea theōisi.

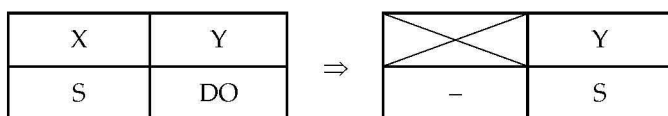
gave lands set.up:INF.MID altars and sanctuaries god:DAT.PL

“ . . . he gave lands where they might set up altars and sanctuaries to their gods.”

3.4 Valency-decreasing Derivation: Anticausative

The main representative of the class of patterns deleting some argument(s) from the base structure is the anticausative (decausative),⁵ which removes the Subject (Agent) from the structure:

(24) Anticausative



The anticausative has an important feature in common with the agentless passive: both entail the promotion of the initial Direct Object (Patient) and the demotion of the initial Subject (Agent), which accounts for their similar morphological marking in many languages. Some languages, nevertheless, make a morphological distinction between these two categories, cf. (25b–c) in Russian:

(25) Russian

- (a) *Petr* *sloma-l-∅* *lyžu*.
 Peter:NOM break-PAST-SG.M ski:ACC
 "Peter broke the ski."
- (b) *Lyža* *sloma-l-a-s'* (**Petrom*).
 ski:NOM break-PAST-SG.F-MID (Peter:INS)
 "The ski broke (*by Peter)."
- (c) *Lyža* *by-l-a* *sloma-n-a* (*Petrom*).
 ski:NOM be-PAST-SG.F break-PART.PERF.PASS-SG.F (Peter:INS)
 "The ski was broken (by Peter)."

Notice that in cases where the markers of the passive and anticausative overlap, passives without an overtly expressed Agent can be distinguished from anticausatives only by semantic criteria. The standard description of this semantic opposition can be found, for instance, in Comrie (1985: 326): "Passive and anticausative differ in that, even where the former has no agentive phrase, the existence of some person or thing bringing about the situation is implied, whereas the anticausative is consistent with the situation coming about spontaneously." Distinguishing passives without an Agent from non-passive intransitives (anticausatives) is one of the most complicated problems with which a linguist is confronted when undertaking a syntactic study

of the verb. Alongside clear instances of passives, which raise no doubts by virtue of the inherent agentive semantics of the corresponding verb (cf. such predicates as *build—is built*), and doubtless anticausatives (cf. *falls, grows*), there is an area of uncertainty, that is, intransitive usages that allow for both passive and anticausative interpretations (cf. such meanings as “is born / arises”).

Changes in syntactic patterns that do not affect the valency (the inventory of semantic roles), such as passive or antipassive, could be considered semantically (nearly) empty. Nevertheless, even canonical voices introduce some important semantic effects into the meaning of the sentence. Thus, antipassives typically introduce habitual meaning and non-referential status of objects (see, in particular, Hopper and Thompson 1980: 268–70); in addition, they may express the disposition of the actor to perform the action.

4 Middle Voice in Indo-European and Beyond: The Range of Variation

All in all, scholars agree on the content of the category of middle in ancient Indo-European languages (and thus, presumably, in the Indo-European proto-language), which include (see, for example, Neu 1968a and b; Jankuhn 1969; Flobert 1975; Gonda 1979; Allan 2003):

Passive
Anticausative
Reflexive
Reciprocal
Auto-benefactive (subject version)

The “canonical” inventory of middle functions is attested for many modern Indo-European languages.

The Slavic middle morpheme (represented, for instance, by Old Church Slavonic clitic *-se* or Russian bound morpheme (postfix)) *-sja / -s'* can express most of the above-listed functions (except for self-beneficent), as in (10b, 11b, 13b, 16b, 25b); see, in particular, Knjazev (2007).

However, closer examination of evidence available from individual ancient Indo-European languages, such as Greek, Latin, Vedic, or Hittite, shows that this inventory is subject to modifications and variations.

Thus, the “medio-passive” inflexion in Ancient Greek can, all in all, be considered as a canonical example of a language with middle, given the fact that the very concept of the middle was coined within the Greek grammatical tradition. For instance, for most present causative oppositions, the active morphology is the only marker of the causative meaning, cf. *elpō* “cause to hope, give hopes” — *ēlpomai* “hope,” *koimáo* “make sleep” — *koimáomai* “sleep,” *komízō* “carry” — *komízomai* “travel.” For the passive and other uses of the Greek medio-passive inflexion, see Jahnkuhn (1969) and Allan (2003).

By contrast, the Hittite middle, albeit chronologically older, is lacking some of the functions typically connected with middle voice, such as auto-benefactive, and thus exhibiting more crucial deviations from the “prototype.” Yet another “canonical” middle function, passive, is only rarely rendered by middle forms (for details, see Neu 1968a & b and Luraghi 2012). The functions that are fairly regular expressed by the active/middle alternation include, above all, anticausative (e.g. for *harp-* “split,” *irha-* “finish,” *surwai-* “fill”).

Likewise, the middle inflexion in Vedic Sanskrit, an ancient Indo-European language, which can chronologically be traced back approximately to the same epoch as Ancient Greek and shows obvious similarity in form with Greek cognate inflexion (thus offering valuable evidence for the reconstruction of the morphology of the proto-middle), from the functional point of view, exhibits a number of important differences. Traditionally, Vedic is regarded fairly similar to Greek as far as the functional polysemy of the middle is concerned. Thus, we find examples of reflexives, reciprocals, and passives expressed by the middle inflexion only (i.e. without additional morphological devices), as illustrated in (26–8):

- (26) Vedic (RV 2.33.9)

pipiś-e *hiranyaih.*
adorn:PERF-3SG.MID golden.decoration:INS.PL
“[Rudra] has adorned himself with golden decorations.”

- (27) Vedic (RV 1.140.3)

ubhā *tarete* *abhi* *mātārā* *śśisum*.
 both:NOM.DU overrun:PRES.3DU.MID towards mother:NOM.DU child:ACC.SG
 "Both parents overrun one another towards the child (sc. Agni, fire)."

- (28) Vedic (RV 7.17.1ab)

utá barhír urviyā ví str-ñī-tām.
and barhis:NOM widely PRVB spread-PRES-3SG.IMPV.MID
“... and let the barhis be spread widely.”

Gonda (1979), still considered the standard work on the issue (cf. also R. Pooth, in preparation), conveniently summarized all these functions, but failed to notice that these only represent scattered traces, relicts of the original (presumably, Proto-Indo-European) system. Already in early and, especially, in middle Vedic, the intransitivizing functions of the middle are largely taken over by specialized morphemes (present passive suffix *-yá-*, reflexive pronouns *tanū́-* and *ātman-*, reciprocal adverb *mithás* and preverb *vi-*, etc.). The causative/anticausative distinction is, unlike passive, reflexive, and reciprocal, regularly expressed by the active/middle opposition, at least in early Vedic, as in mid. *várdhate* “grows” ~ act. *várdhati* “makes grow, increases,” mid. *réjate* “trembles” ~ act. *réjati* “makes tremble.” However, even in this case the contribution of the middle inflexion to the marking of valency-decreasing derivation is rather limited. The middle type of inflexion is not the only marker of anticausative, being supported by the stem opposition—which, eventually, weakens the role of the middle as a marker of anticausative within the system.

The only type that proves to be more stable and becomes the main function of the middle inflexion is the auto-benefactive meaning. The stability of the auto-benefactive subclass of the functions of the middle inflexion as opposed to the transitivity-changing (intransitivizing) functions, such as passive, reflexive, reciprocal, and anticausative is preserved until the very end of the Vedic period.⁶

Albeit coined within Indo-European scholarship, the notion of middle has been immediately borrowed into general and typological linguistics, where it is commonly used to refer to the verbal categories with comparable range of meanings or functions. Thus, the Iraqw (Cushitic) middle suffix *-t* can, next to intransitivizing (in particular, anticausative) function, render aspectual (durative or progressive) meanings, cf.: *diyaa'* “separate from” (tr.)—*diyaa'-t* “be scattered,” *gweer* “open” (tr.)—*gweer-iit* “be open,” *siiq* “cut”—*siiq-iit* “be cutting,” *xwaar* “dig up”—*xwaad-iit* “be digging up now” (Mous 1993: 170ff., 2000, 2004).

To conclude, one has to mention that virtually all languages with the category of middle (including all ancient Indo-European languages that preserved the middle morphology) have a considerable number of *media tantum* verbs (also called “deponent” in accordance with the Latin grammatical tradition)—that is, verbs that are only attested with the middle inflexion; cf., for instance, Swedish *anda-s* “breathe,” *hoppa-s* “hope,” *minna-s* “remember” (which have the middle suffix *-s* but no active pendant verb), Hittite *es-* “be sitting, sit down,” *ki-* “lie” and *tugga-* “be visible” (see Neu 1968a: 52, Luraghi 2012 for discussion); see also Flobert (1975) on Latin. There are several verbal classes that often contain *media tantum*, such as verbs of body posture, verbs of mental processes, or verbs of grooming (see Kemmer 1993).

5 Middle and Reflexive in a Diachronic Perspective

A comparison of evidence available from individual languages and, especially, a diachronic perspective provides important generalizations on the origins and diachronic developments of the category of “middle.” In particular, it reveals that there are a few scenarios of the rise of the category of middle and a limited number of scenarios of its further development.

5.1 Diachronic Origins of Middle and Reflexive

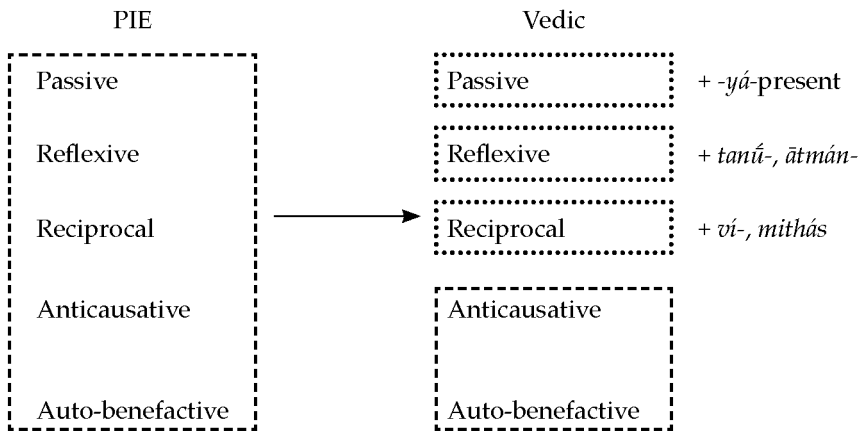
The commonest diachronic source of the middle morpheme is the reflexive marker (Kemmer 1993: 151ff.; Heine and Kuteva 2003: 252f.). This development is common in the history of Indo-European languages: several groups of Indo-European (in particular, most Germanic, Romance, and Slavic languages), replace the old syncretic marker of the valency-reducing categories, the middle type of inflexion, with a new one, mostly going back to the Proto-Indo-European reflexive pronoun **s(u)e-* (see, in particular, Cennamo 1993). It is also attested for the Oneida (Iroquian) reflexive morpheme *-at-/an-* etc.; South !Xun (Khoisan) reflexive particle *’ee* (Heine and Kuteva 2003: 252f.) and others.

The reflexive morpheme, in turn, often goes back to nouns denoting body, soul, head, or other body parts (see Moravcsik 1972: 272; cf. Vedic *tanī-* (“self” ← “body”) and *ātmān-* (“self” ← “breath, soul”), Fulfulde *hōre* (REFL ← “head”), Yoruba *ara* (REFL ← “body”) (Heine and Kuteva 2003: 58–60, 168f.). The origin of the Proto-Indo-European middle conjugation, which certainly does not originate in the reflexive marker, is unclear. Historical connections of the (early) Proto-Indo-European middle with such categories as stative and perfect are very likely, but the exact scenario of the emergence of the middle and the evolution of Proto-Indo-European voices remains the subject of vigorous debates; see Kulikov (2006: 74ff.) for a short discussion and bibliography.

5.2 Evolution of Middle

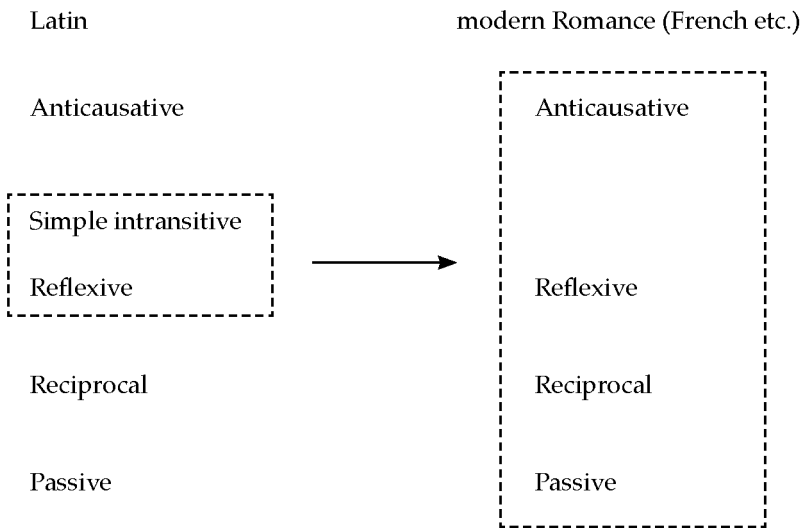
More variegated are possible developments within the middle domain attested across the languages (see, in particular, Croft, Shyldkrot and Kemmer 1987).

Thus, the evolution of the Proto-Indo-European middle toward its Old Indo-Aryan reflex, as attested in the middle inflexion in (early) Vedic, can be schematically represented as follows (the dotted line groups together the functions expressed by the middle morphology alone; the pointed lines show the functions that can, normally, be expressed by middle forms only in combination with other morphemes (suffixes, pronouns etc.):



The loss of many original functions of the middle and the lexicalization of middle forms suggests that the diathesis opposition, albeit physically preserved in the paradigm, loses a large part of its grammatical content. The Indo-European middle, which is likely to have been employed as a syncretic marker of several intransitive derivations in the proto-language, loses its intransitivizing functions one by one, thus being degrammaticalized. This process is supported by the grammaticalization of several new categories (*-yá*-passives and *-áya*-causatives, reflexives with *ātmán-* and reciprocals with *anyo'nya*); in other words, the **grammaticalization** of new valency-changing categories (as well as new reflexive constructions with *ātmán-* and reciprocal constructions with *anyo'nya*) runs parallel with the **degrammaticalization** of the diathesis (middle/active) opposition. This is an important counterexample against one of the crucial claims of the grammaticalization theory, on the unidirectionality of grammaticalization (see, for example, Heine and Kuteva 2002).

An opposite type of development is attested for several Western groups of Indo-European. While Greek is the only branch of Indo-European where the old middle survives into the modern language (see Manney 2000), most other languages of the Western part of the Indo-European area have chosen a different strategy. As mentioned above, most Germanic, Romance, and Slavic languages replace the old middle (used, above all, as a syncretic marker of several valency-reducing categories) with a new syncretic morpheme, going back to the Proto-Indo-European reflexive pronoun **s(u)e-*.⁷ Thus, the scenario of the functional evolution of the Romance middle marker originating in the Latin reflexive pronoun can schematically be represented as follows (see Cennamo 1993, 1998; Kemmer 1993: 151–82; Heidinger 2010):



6 Concluding Terminological Remarks: Reflexive *Sensu Stricto* vs. “Reflexive” as a Cover Term

6.1 “Reflexive” as a Synonym of “Middle”

The term “reflexive,” next to its strict (technical) sense (see Section 3.2.1), is also used (particularly, by some earlier authors) as an alternative (quasi-synonymous) label for “middle.”

Thus, the classical study by E. Geniušienė, entitled *The typology of reflexives* (1987), deals, in fact, with a much broader range of phenomena than reflexives properly speaking: it focuses on all morphemes (bound or free forms) employed as reflexives at least in one of their uses. Obviously, this means that such a broader terminology covers all those cases of middle that include reflexive among their uses.

This terminology is not widely accepted now, but it is common for several linguistic traditions—particularly, for those where the middle marker historically goes back to the reflexive morpheme (as, for instance, in case of Slavic reflexes of **s(u)e-*).

6.2 “Reflexive” and “Emphatic (Reflexive)”

Another function closely related to (and often expressed by the same form as) reflexive proper (i.e. the expression of coreference with the subject in constructions of the type *John defended himself* or German *Hans verteidigte sich*) is “emphatic reflexive,” or intensifier.⁸ One of the main functions of intensifiers is to signal that the referent “is to some degree unexpected in the discourse role or clausal role where it occurs” (Kemmer 1995: 57). This type can be illustrated by such examples as (29):

- (29) *Hans verteidigte Peter selbst.*
 John defended Peter self (EMPH)
 “John defended Peter himself.”
 (i.e. without the help of a professional lawyer or someone else).

Another subtype, called “adnominal,” singles the referent out from a set of items somehow related to it (cf. *John ~ John’s parents, John’s uncle* etc.; *London ~ centre of London, London’s suburbs*), as in (30) (examples from König and Gast 2006: 228ff.):

- (30) *I prefer the surroundings of London to London itself.*

Note the ungrammaticality of (31):

- (31) **I prefer Paris to London itself.*

The two functions, that is, reflexive proper and emphatic reflexive, or intensifier, can be expressed by two different forms in some languages—for instance, in German (*sich* vs. *selbst*) or Russian (*sebja* vs. *sam*). By contrast, some other languages syncretically express them by means of the same form—as is the case with English (-*self*) or Vedic *tanū-* (and, in the later language, *ātman-*).

Furthermore, in some languages we also distinguish between two types of reflexives proper, usually called “heavy reflexives,” as opposed to “light,” or simple, reflexives. “Heavy reflexives” of the type instantiated by, for example, German *sich selbst*, French *soi-même*, or Russian *samogo sebja* (vs. “light” reflexives: *sich, se, sebja*; see, for instance, Dirven 1973: 294ff., König and Siemund 1999: 41f., 47ff.) are used to express the marked, unusual character of the reflexive situation as against what we typically observe or expect, as in German and Russian examples (32–3):

- (32) *Hans sprach mit sich selbst.*
 John talked with REFL (MID) self (EMPH)
 “John talked to himself.”

- (33) *Ivan govoril s samim soboj.*
 John talked with self (EMPH):INS.SG.M REFL:INS
 "John talked to himself."

In many languages, they are formed from light reflexives by adding the emphatic morpheme (intensifier): *selbst* etc. Note that English has no special heavy reflexive expressions (obviously, *-self* cannot be reduplicated), so that we have no other option but to render heavy reflexives of other languages with simple reflexives in English.

Notes

1. For an outline of this methodology, see, for instance, Geniušienė (1987), Mel'čuk (1993, 1994: 135ff.). For a general sketch of the ideology of the Leningrad/St Petersburg group, see Nedjalkov and Litvinov (1995).
2. = "diathesis" in the terminology of the Leningrad/St Petersburg Typology Group, which is not widely accepted in the typological literature (but cf., for example, Shibatani 2004: 1146f.); not to be confused with the traditional usage of this term in the Greek and, in general, Indo-European scholarship to denote the inflectional verbal category (active/middle type of inflection). Cf. also the notions of "valence pattern" and "argument structure," briefly discussed, for instance, by Haspelmath and Müller-Barday (2004).
3. For the notion of basic pattern, see, in particular, Shibatani (2006: 257ff.).
4. There is a rich literature on passives; see, for instance, Siewierska (1984), Shibatani (1988), and Andersen (1991). For a detailed discussion and further reference, see Keenan (this volume).
5. Other terms used include the term "inchoative" (popular after Haspelmath (1993), referring to not necessarily accompanying aspectual features of anticausative and therefore misleading), "unaccusative," and "fientive" (now common in Indo-European scholarship). Quite infelicitous, but not uncommon in the literature, are terms "ergative," "middle" (e.g. Keyser and Roeper 1984), and "quasi-passive," used, in particular, for intransitive/anticausative usages of English labile verbs, as in *The boat sank* or *The door closed*; see Kulikov (2001: 888) for a survey. On anticausatives, see especially Haspelmath 1987.
6. Note that the indigenous term for "middle," Sanskrit *ātmanepada* (lit. *ātmane-pada* "for oneself-word") is clearly based on the auto-benefactive uses of middle forms.
7. It is interesting to note that this process goes parallel with the emergence and expansion of the labile patterning (which becomes particularly common and productive in English; also well attested in Greek) and the decline of the Proto-Indo-European **-eie-*causatives (only few traces in modern Germanic and Slavonic languages). This type of evolution, attested foremost in the **Western** part of the Indo-European area, might be called "**syncretic**" — in contrast with such **Eastern** branches of Indo-European as Indo-Iranian, which radically abandons the syncretic strategy and develop special markers for several intransitive derivations; see Kulikov (2009).
8. On this function, see, in particular, König and Siemund (1999), König and Gast (2006).