

## Causatives without Causers and Burzio's Generalization<sup>\*</sup>

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### 1. The Problem

The accidental construction in Russian given in (1) (also termed 'adversity impersonal' in Babby (1993a,b), Tsedryk (2003) and as 'accusative unaccusative' in Levin and Freidin 2001) presents a counterexample to Burzio's Generalization<sup>1</sup> (BG) (Burzio (1986), (2000: p.196)). The construction involves an internal argument marked with the accusative case but lacks an agent.

- (1) a Bumag-u sozhgl-o    b Dim-u udaril-o    c Berez-u svalil-o  
Paper-acc burned-neut    Dima-acc hit-neut    Birch-acc make-fall-neut  
The paper got burned    Dima got hit    The birch was caused to fall

The NP in (1) has the accusative case, but there is no implicit agent in the construction. This is seen from 3 facts. First, the accidental construction does not allow control into purpose clauses as seen in (2):

- (2) Dom sozhgl-o (\*chtob poluchit' strahovku)  
House-acc burn-neut (\*to receive insurance)  
The house got burned down (\*to collect the insurance)

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<sup>1</sup>I am assuming a version of BG that is a one-way implication:  
*Burzio's Generalization: Accusative case* → *External argument* (Burzio (2000:p.196))

Second, the construction does not allow an agentive by-phrase, only a non-agentive one as seen in (3):

- (3) Vanj-u udaril-o (molni-ej) />(\*Dim-oj)  
 Vanja-acc hit-neut (lightning-inst) />(\*Dima-inst)  
 Vanja got hit (by the lightning) / (\*by Dima)
- (4) Berezu svalil-o (molni-ej) />(\*Dim-oj)  
 Birch-acc fell-neut (lightning-inst) />(\*Dima-inst)  
 The birch got fallen down (by the lightning) / (\*by Dima)

Third, the construction is incompatible with an agent-oriented adverbial such as “purposefully” as seen in (5):

- (5) Berezu svalil-o (\*special’no )  
 Birch-acc fell-neut (\*purposefully)  
 The birch got fallen down (\*on purpose)
- (6) Dom sozhgl-o (\*special’no)  
 House-acc burn-neut (\*purposefully)  
 The house got burned down (\*on purpose)

In this respect, the accidental construction is crucially different from the passive. The passive does involve an implicit agent. It allows control into purpose clauses, is possible with an agentive by-phrase and agent –oriented adverbs<sup>2</sup> as shown in (7):

- (7) Dom byl sozhzhen Dimoj special’no chtob poluchit’ strahovku  
 House was burned Dima-instr purposefully to receive insurance  
 The house was burned down by Dima on purpose to collect the insurance

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<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, in Ukrainian, a language closely related to Russian, the passive construction is compatible with the accusative case on the theme. [Thanks to John Bailyn for pointing it out]. However, the construction is crucially different from the accidental construction because in the Ukrainian passive the implicit agent is present as we can see in (i).

- (i) Cerkvu bylo sbudovano robotnykami special’no schob molytysja Bogu  
 Church-acc was built workers-instr purposefully to pray God  
 The church was built by the workers, purposefully to pray to God

The implicit agent in (i) is diagnosable via the addition of an agentive by-phrase, control into purpose clauses and agent-oriented adverbials. Consequently, this is not a violation of BG – the external argument is present underlyingly. The Ukrainian passive and the accidental construction thus cannot be treated on a par. Since the passive construction is not the topic of this paper I will not dwell on it any longer and will not discuss the possibility of the accusative case on the theme in the Ukrainian passive. For discussion see Baker, Johnson and Roberts 1989.

### *Causatives without causers*

Further, unlike the passive, the accidental construction is only possible with those verbs whose meaning is compatible with inanimate causation (8a,b).

- (8) a Knig-a byl-a prochitan-a b \* Knig-u prochital-o  
Book-nom was-fem read-fem Book-acc read-neut  
The book was read The book got read

While the above examples can lead us to say that BG is invalid, this conclusion would be premature since in English the analogue of the accidental construction is indeed impossible as seen in (9):

- (9) a. \*Him killed. => something killed him  
b. \*It[ expletive] killed him

The story is thus more complicated than it may appear at first: BG is obeyed in some languages but not in all. The central question I address in this paper is what allows a language to violate BG?

## **2. The Proposal.**

### **2.1 Causatives without Causers**

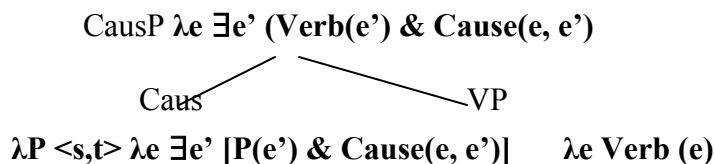
I argue that BG violations are related to the nature of causative heads that exist in a language where a causative head (Caus) licenses the accusative case. I crucially adopt a proposal in Pylkkanen (2002), who argues that causative constructions universally involve a head Caus that introduces a causing event. However, Pylkkanen argues that Caus can be spelled-out separately or together (bundled) with Voice – the head that introduces an agent (Kratzer 1996). Pylkkanen further claims that voice-bundling is subject to language variation. I argue that using Pylkkanen’s idea, we can derive parametric variation with respect to BG as follows: *If Caus is not bundled with Voice, BG can be violated.*

This claim raises two questions:

- 1) What does it mean to be a causative without a causer?
- 2) What is the evidence that the Russian is a non-voice-bundling language ?

To answer the first question let us consider the central idea presented in Pylkkanen (2002). Pylkkanen argues that a Caus head does not introduce a theta-role, but a causing event as shown below:

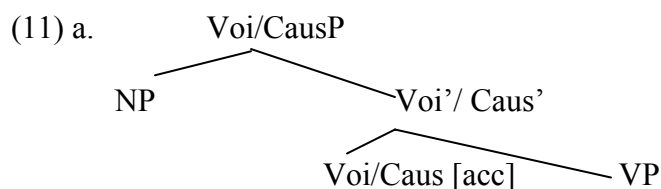
(i)



That is, causation is treated as a relationship between events, not between an event and an individual – a causer. Thus, in a sentence such as (10) causation is a relationship between the causing-to-melt event and the melting event.

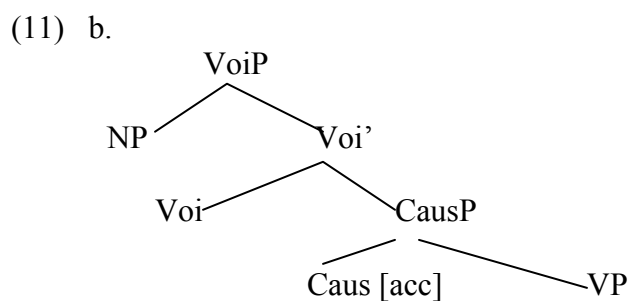
(10) John melted the ice-cream

In addition, the construction above contains a causer – the agent of melting – John. Crucially, the Agent (Causer) is a theta-role assigned by Voice (Kratzer 1996). Now if Caus is realized as a single head with Voice, then we get the following configuration:



That is, in the above representation a single head carries two interpretable features that need to be processed in order. First the causing event is added to the VP, then the Causer (Agent) of the event is introduced by Voice<sup>3</sup>.

Crucially, Caus can also be realized separately from Voice in some languages:



In this structure, we have two heads: Caus which introduces a causing event, and Voice which introduces a Causer (Agent) also via Event Identification (cf. ft3).

Briefly, the central motivation adduced by Pylkkanen 2002 for her claim that Voice and Caus can be separate heads comes from the fact that in some languages there are constructions that involve causation, but do not have external arguments. Pylkkanen argues that Japanese, Finnish, and Bemba are languages in which Caus and Voice are realized as different heads. In these languages, then, having a causing event is not the same as having a Causer (Agent). In the next section, I present evidence that Russian is also a non-voice-bundling language and argue that the accidental construction illustrates the fact that Voice and Caus realized as distinct heads in Russian.

<sup>3</sup> After the causing event is added, Voice adds a Causer (Agent) via Event Identification (Kratzer 1996). Event Identification:  $\langle e, \langle s, t \rangle \rangle \langle s, t \rangle \rightarrow \langle e, \langle s, t \rangle \rangle$ . For further details see Kratzer (1996), Pylkkanen (2002: Ch.3).

Note that I use 'Agent/Causer' to refer to the theta-role and 'agent/ causer' to refer to the individual that has the theta-role.

## 2.2 The Russian accidental construction: a causative without a causer

The evidence that the Russian accidental construction is a causative without a causer, i.e. a construction that involves only a causing event, but no agent comes from three sources. First, the accidental construction is a causative. This is indicated by the fact that external causation is obligatory -- a modifier like “on its own” is impossible as seen in (12):

- (12) Dim-u ubil-o /udarilo (\*sam / sam-o po sebe)  
Dima-acc killed/hit-neut (\*alone-masc / alone-neut by self)  
Dima got killed/hit (\*on his own/on its own)

As we can see from (12), the accidental construction is not compatible with a modifier indicating that the individual caused the event by himself without any external involvement. Another example illustrating the need for external causation is (13):

- (13) \*. Dim-u umertvilo ubilo ot starosti ot raka bolezn'ju  
Dima-acc die-caus-neut killed-neut from old age from cancer illness-instr  
Dima got killed by old age / by cancer /by illness

In (13), the accidental construction is impossible because there is no external cause of death. Note that the accidental construction is different from the unaccusative in this respect. The unaccusative does not require an external cause.

- (14) Dima upal / umer (sam po sebe)  
Dima fell down / died (on his own)

In (14), the unaccusative verbs ‘fall’ and ‘die’ are compatible with the modifier “on its own” in contrast with the accidental construction. Also unlike the accidental construction, the unaccusative requires no external causation in a construction such as (15) (cf 13):

- (15) Vanja umer ot starosti/ot raka  
Vanja died from old age/from cancer  
Vanja died of old age/ cancer

Thus, the accidental construction is distinct from the unaccusative in requiring an external cause.

Second, that Caus is distinct from Voice in Russian is seen from the fact that it is possible to attach an adverbial that modifies the causing event as long as the modifier is not agentive. This is illustrated in (16):

- (16) a.Dub svalil-o (mgnovenno) />(\*special'no)  
Oak-acc fell-neut (instantaneously) /(\*on purpose)  
The oak got fallen (instantaneously) / (\*on purpose)

- b. Vanju udaril-o (mgnovenno) (\*special'no)  
 Vanja-acc hit-neut (instantaneously) (\*on purpose)  
 Vanja got hit (instantaneously) / (\*on purpose)

In (16a), the modifier “instantaneously” modifies the causing event, but not necessarily the falling event. The examples is compatible with a scenario in which the lightening strikes the tree in an instant, however, the tree does not instantaneously fall down. Thus, it is the causing event that is instantaneous, but the caused event may not occur in an instant. In this respect, the accidental construction is again crucially different from an unaccusative which involves only one event.

- (17) Dima upal / prijexal mgnovenno  
 Dima fell down / arrived instanteneosly

In (17) where the adverb “instantaneously” modifies “fall”, the event of falling must be instant. This is different from what we saw in (16) where the caused event need not be instantaneous.

Third, the Russian accidental construction is parallel to the Japanese adversity lexical causative<sup>4</sup> argued by Pytkkanen 2002 to involve a Caus head but no external argument. Like the Russian accidental construction<sup>5</sup>, the adversity causative requires an external cause as seen from the following data in (18):

- (18) a. Taro-ga mukuko-o (\*katteni) korob-ase-ta  
 Taro-nom son-acc (\*by-self) fall-caus-past  
 Taro was adversely affected by his son falling down (\*by himself)
- b. # Taro-ga titioya-o sin-ase-ta  
 Taro-nom father-acc die-caus-past  
 Taro was affected by his father dying

(18b) is impossible in the context where Taro’s father passes away of natural causes. (Pytkkanen 2002: Ch.3). However, the agent is not allowed as seen from the impossibility of adding an agentive by-phrase:

- (19) Taro-ga (\*Hanako-ni-yotte) /(sensoo-ni-yotte) musuko-o sin-ase-ta  
 Taro-nom (\*Hanako-by) /(war-by) son-acc die-caus-past  
 Taro’s son was caused to die on him (\*by Hanako) / (by war)

Interestingly, the Japanese adversity causative also involves the accusative case in the absence of an agent – a violation of BG. The accusative case is not possible with

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<sup>4</sup> Pytkkanen (2002: Ch3 ) further points out that the adversely affected argument, though marked with the nominative case (Taro-ga) is not an agent. See Pytkkanen (2002: Ch.3 p.82) for details.

<sup>5</sup> The Russian accidental construction does not involve an adversely affected argument. This salient difference is irrelevant for the purposes of the current discussion.

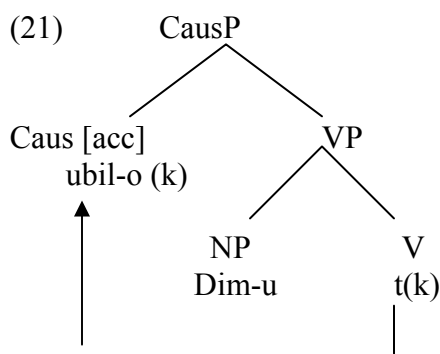
### *Causatives without causers*

mono-eventive unaccusative verbs such as “fall” and “die” (20a), but does appear on the adversity causative repeated in (20b):

- (20) a. Taro-ga /\*Taro-o sin-ta    b. Taro-ga musuku-o sin-ase-ta  
       Taro-nom /\*Taro-acc die-past    Taro-nom son-acc die-caus-past  
       Taro died                            Taro's son died on him

This supports the hypothesis that the licencer of the accusative case is Caus, as opposed to Voice.

Returning now to the Russian accidental construction, I propose the following configuration for it:



In the above configuration, the accusative case on the NP is licensed by Caus, but the agent argument is absent. Instead, there is a causing event<sup>6</sup>.

## 3. More evidence that Russian is non-voice-bundling: Experiencer Unergatives<sup>7</sup>

### 3.1 Experiencer unergatives vs. agentive unergatives

In this section, I consider additional evidence for the claim that Russian is a language in which Caus is a head that is distinct from Voice. In Russian, there is a construction that involves an unergative verb with a causativized meaning, but the agent (causer) is absent.

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<sup>6</sup> Unlike the Japanese lexical causative, the accidental construction in Russian does not involve an overt causative morpheme. Instead, the suppletive forms are used. For example, if an unaccusative verb such as ‘fall’ = ‘upal’ or ‘die’ = ‘umer’ is causativized in Russian, the V+Caus complex head is realized as a suppletive form ‘dropped’ = ‘uronil’ or ‘umertvil’ = ‘made dead’ is used instead. In some cases, the aspectual prefix is used to indicate causation:

- (i) Dima smejal-sja                            (ii) Vanja ras-smeshil Dim-u  
       Dima laughed-sja                        Vanja perf-laughed Dima  
       Dima laughed                            Vanja made Dima laugh

<sup>7</sup> This construction is also discussed in *Marusic and Zaucer [this volume]*. They present a different account, but a comparison would extend beyond the scope of this paper.

Instead, the construction involves an experiencer argument that is not a volitional participant of the event<sup>8</sup>. Consider the examples below:

- (22) Mne xorosho bezhit-sja / igraet-sja / rabotaet-sja  
 I-dat well runs-sja /plays-sja / works-sja  
 Running / playing / working goes well for me

While the English translation does not reflect it, the experiencer unergative<sup>9</sup> construction also involves a causing event, though it lacks an agent, much like what we saw in the accidental construction in (1-3). The non-agentivity is evidenced by the impossibility of both control into purpose clauses and agentive modification:

- (23) a Mne xorosho igraet-sja (\*chtoby vyigrat') / (\*special'no)  
 Me well plays-sja (\*to win) / (\*on purpose)  
 Playing goes well for me (\*in order to win) / (\*on purpose)/
- b Mne xorosho rabotaet-sja (\*chtoby mnogo zarabotat'') / (\*special'no)  
 Me well work-sja (\*to earn money) / (\*on purpose)  
 Working goes well for me /feels well to me (\*in order to earn money) / (\*on purpose)

Yet, there is a clear sense that a causing/ facilitating event is present as seen from (24):

- (24) Mne xorosho igraet-sja / rabotaet-sja (\*samo po sebe)/ (ok: iz-za pogody)  
 Me well plays-sja /work-sja (\*alone by self) / (ok: due to weather )  
 Playing/ Working goes well for me (\*on my own) / (because of the weather)

The sentence in (24) is impossible with a modifier like “on its own” but is compatible with one asserting the presence of an external cause e.g. “because of the weather”.

Another example indicating that the experiencer unergative construction is impossible in a context that requires volitionality on the part of the individual is (25a):

- (25) a. (#/\* Posle dolgih usilij), mne vspomnilsja etot son  
 ( After long trials), me-dat remembered-sja this dream  
 (After trying for a long time), the dream (finally) came back to me

The construction in (25a) is ungrammatical. Experiencer unergatives can only be used in a context where the dream comes back to me on its own or because something reminded me of it as we see in (25b):

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<sup>8</sup> The experiencer unergative construction is similar to the desiderative construction in Finnish discussed in Pyllkanen 2002. For reasons of space I will not go into a comparison here and refer the reader to Pyllkanen 2002:ch3

<sup>9</sup> A modifier like “well” or “easily” is obligatory if the sentence does not contain negation (e.g. ? *Mne igraet-sja* = Me plays. When negated, the sentence does not require a modifier: *Mne ne igraet-sja* = Me not plays. The reasons for this are unclear at this point. I leave this issue for future research.

*Causatives without causers*

- b. Posle prosmotra etogo fil'ma, mne vspomnilsja vcherashnij son  
After viewing this movie, me-dat remembered-sja yesterday's dream  
After seeing this movie, last night's dream came back to me

In (25b), seeing the movie reminds me of the dream. Crucially, no conscious effort or control on my part is being exercised here.

In contrast, an agentive unergative is compatible with control into purpose clauses and does not require causation of any kind (26):

- (26) a. Ja xorosho igraju (chtoby vyigrat') / (sam po sebe)  
I well play (to win) / (on my own)  
I play well (in order to win) / (on my own) /
- b. Ja bystro begu (chtoby vyigrat') / (sam po sebe)  
I fast run (to win) / (on my own)  
I am running fast (in order to win) / (on my own)

The agentive unergative is also perfectly acceptable in the following construction:

- c. Posle dolgihusiliy, ja vspomnil etot son  
After long Trials I-nom remembered this dream  
After trying for a long time, I finally remembered this dream.

Finally, the experiencer unergative construction can be used in a sluicing structure in (27) where the question 'why' refers to a cause of good running, not to the runner's intentions. (Pylkkanen uses a similar test to diagnose a causing event in the Finnish desiderative construction).

- (27) Mne xorosho bezhitsja no ja ne znaju pochemu  
I-dat well run-sja but I not know why  
Running goes well for me, but I don't know why

The above sentence cannot mean that I don't know my own reasons for running. It can only mean that I don't know the causes of my running well. In contrast, the salient reading<sup>10</sup> of the agentive unergative (28) is that I don't know the contents of my own mind – I am running but I have no idea what my purpose/ intention for running is.

- (28) Ja xorosho begu no ja ne znaju pochemu  
I-nom well run-1<sup>st</sup>-sg but I not know why  
I run well, but I don't know why

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<sup>10</sup> The sentence can also have the reading on which the person does not know of any external causes that make him run well. While the ambiguity in the agentive unergative is interesting, what is crucial here is that the experiencer unergative construction (27) can never mean that the person is unaware of his own intentions for running. It is not ambiguous.

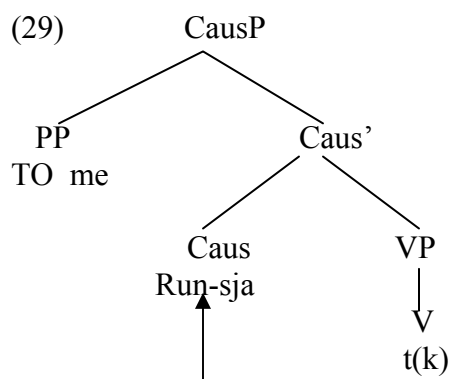
The experiencer unergative, on the other hand, crucially cannot have this meaning.

Thus, the above data indicates that the experiencer unergative unlike the agentive unergative cannot tolerate volitionality on the part of the individual involved. The event is beyond the person's control (Moore and Perlmutter 2000). From the above data, it is reasonable to conclude that the lack of control in these construction is attributable to the presence of a causing event<sup>11</sup>.

The experiencer unergative construction, much like the accidental construction, also involves a causing event (albeit an internal one) but lacks an agent. The construction, therefore, provides further evidence that Caus and Voice in Russian are distinct heads. In the next section, I will show that the possibility of having the experiencer argument in this construction is also crucially dependant on Caus being a distinct head from Voice.

### 3.2. Voice-bundling and the experiencer unergative construction

I propose that the experiencer unergative construction involves an NP embedded under a null preposition TO that assigns it an experiencer theta-role. I treat an experiencer as a recipient (see Emonds 1985, Baker 1997, and Landau 2003 for similar proposals, also Markman (in prep) for discussion). That is, crucially, the NP is not an argument of Caus, but of P [TO]. In other words, the individual in (29) is a recipient of a causing event<sup>12</sup>.



<sup>11</sup> Speaker's intuitions suggest that the causing event in the experiencer unergative may be internal to the individual. In other words, whatever makes the individual run or play well is internal to him/her as opposed to what we saw in the accidental construction where causation must be external. The term 'internal causation' employed here is similar to that in Pesetsky (1996: Ch4). However, internal causation is causation nonetheless, hence no volitionality on the part of the individual can be asserted as indicated by the agentivity tests above. Thus, Russian involves two different causative morphemes, both realized as separate heads from Voice, one referring to internal and one to external causation. For reasons of space, I will not discuss internal vs. external causation here and refer the interested reader to Pesetsky 1996.

<sup>12</sup> In the example above, TO relates an individual to a set of events of 'caused-running'. That is, the individual is a *recipient* of a caused-running.

Here I provisionally take the reflexive morpheme *-sja* as a spell out of the causative morpheme that denotes internal causation<sup>13 14</sup>.

Crucially, the above construction can only be possible if Caus is not bundled with Voice. Otherwise, we would get a Theta-Criterion violation: the P theta-marks the NP embedded under it, leaving the agent theta-role of Voice unassigned. However, since Caus is not a theta-marking category -- it introduces an event, and not a theta-role --there is no conflict when we merge a PP into the spec of CausP. Thus, experiencer unergatives further indicate that Caus is distinct from Voice in Russian. Note that the above discussion implies that the possibility of BG violations and the possibility of the experiencer unergatives are related: both are linked to the voice-bundling-parameter (Pylkkanen 2002). This relationship is explored in detail in (Markman (in prep)).

#### **4. When BG must be obeyed.**

I argue that in a BG-observing language such as English, Caus and Voice are realized as a single head: since Caus is the head licensing the accusative case, BG cannot be violated. While Pylkkanen does not provide extensive arguments to the effect that English is a voice-bundling language<sup>15</sup>, I will take it as a null hypothesis that a language is voice-bundling, unless we have positive evidence that Caus and Voice are distinct heads. This view is plausible because it reduces the number of heads that need to be independently realized in a language<sup>16</sup>. Since English is a language that lacks any evidence of having Caus and Voice as distinct heads (e.g. it lacks not only the accidental construction but also any likeness of an experiencer unergative construction or a desiderative construction), I will assume with Pylkkanen 2002 that it is in fact a voice-bundling language. If so, the presence of the accusative case licensed by Caus necessitates the presence of the agent:

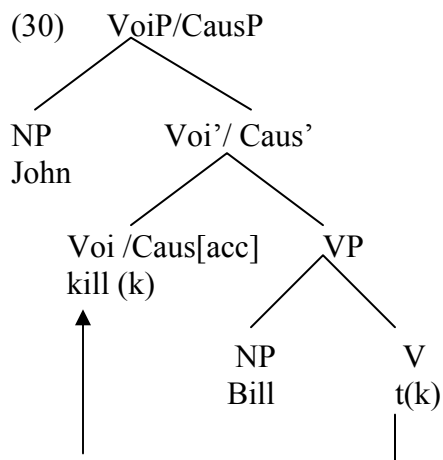
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<sup>13</sup> In Russian, *-sja* has many meanings. I am not claiming that *-sja* is unambiguously a morpheme denoting an internal causing event. My claim is that it is merely one of its meanings. A similar view is taken by Pesetsky 1996: Ch.4.

<sup>14</sup> I am also provisionally assuming that *-sja* absorbs the accusative case here.

<sup>15</sup> Pylkkanen 2002 mentions another parameter that defines causative constructions – selection. She argues that the complement selected by the causative head can vary. Since this parameter is not relevant to the discussion here. I will refer the reader to Pylkkanen 2002:Ch.

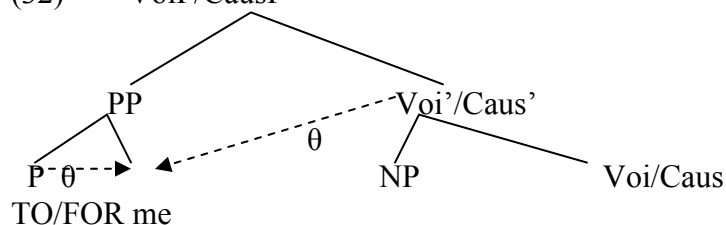
<sup>16</sup> This position is similar to the one taken in Bobaljik and Thrainsson (1998) *inter alia* with respect to Agr projections. That is, the authors claim that unless we have evidence for an Agr projection, there is no reason to posit it. (A distinct view of UG is presented in Cinque 1999 who argues that if a particular functional head is present in one language it is present in all. I will not present further arguments for or against this view, however.)



Furthermore, since Caus is bundled with Voice, the experiencer unergatives are impossible (31):

(31) \*Me plays / runs/ works well.

(32) \*VoiP/CausP



Merging a PP into the spec of Voi/CausP is impossible in English since Voi is a theta-marker and so is the P. Hence, a Theta-Criterion violation results.

Before I close this section, I would like to make a brief note about the nature of the following English construction:

(33) The wind broke the window.

In (33) there does not seem to be an agent, but this should be impossible given the claim that Voice = Caus in English. To account for constructions such as (33) I will assume, in a slight departure from what was said above, that Voice assigns a Causer theta-role, rather than an Agent theta-role. A causer, unlike an agent, can be inanimate<sup>17</sup> as we see in (33). Crucially this is different from the accidental in Russian because a Causer is a theta-role that must be discharged to an NP in the spec of Voice. Hence, in English we cannot have:

<sup>17</sup> The reason you cannot use an agent-oriented adverb such as ‘purposefully’ in a construction involving an inanimate Causer is pragmatic – the wind is not the kind of thing that can break the window on purpose.

- (34) a. \* The window-acc broke = something broke the window  
b. \*Him killed

In the absence of an overt Causer, the construction violates the Theta-Criterion. In contrast, nothing assigns a Causer theta-role to an NP in the accidental construction. There is no causer, just a causing event.

## 5. Other accounts

Here I compare the current proposal with the one presented in Levine and Freidin (2001)<sup>19</sup>. Levine and Freidin (L&F) argue that the accidental construction (they refer to it as the ‘accusative unaccusative’ construction) results when the defective (phi-incomplete) T co-occurs in the same clause as a phi-complete light v. The phi-complete light v values the accusative case on the object NP. The object NP then moves to spec TP to satisfy the EPP – which they take to be an independent syntactic primitive (L & F, p.1). In other words, they claim that a T that lacks phi-features still has the EPP feature and is able to attract an NP into its spec. While interesting, their account faces a number of problems. First, the accusative object NP is not a subject – it does not appear in Spec, TP as evidenced by the fact that it cannot bind a subject-oriented anaphor, unlike the derived subject of the passive or the subject in a transitive construction:

- (35) a. Dimu ubilo \*svoim /ego ruzh'jem  
Dima-acc killed-3<sup>rd</sup>-neut \*self's /his gun-instr  
Dima got killed by his own gun
- b. Dima byl ubit svoim ruzh'jem  
Dima-nom was killed self's gun-instr  
Dima got killed with his own gun
- a. Vanja(i) ubil Dimu(j) iz svoego(i/\*j) ruzh'ja  
Vanja-nom killed Dima-acc From self's gun  
Vanja killed Dima with his own gun

As seen from the contrasts in (35), the accusative NP in the accidental construction patterns with regular objects in the transitive constructions, and not with the subjects.

L & F argue that the object in the accidental construction can bind the anaphor ‘each other’, but native speakers report that the examples are marginal. But more importantly, the anaphor ‘each other’ is not subject-oriented in contrast with ‘self’.

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<sup>19</sup> A different account of the accidental construction is presented in Babby 1993a, b. While interesting, this account is couched in a completely different theoretical framework which makes a comparison difficult. I therefore will not discuss this account here and refer the reader to Babby 1993a, b. Also a proposal of the accidental ‘impersonal’ construction is presented in Tsedryk 2003. Since the focus of this account is on case –agreement properties of this construction I will not be discussing it here.

Consequently, the argument from binding does not go through. This is seen from the following example where it is clear that the binder of ‘each other’ is an object.

- (36) Vanja ubil Dimu i Mishu v kvartirax drug druga  
Vanja-nom killed Dima-acc and Misha'acc in apartments each other-gen  
Vanja killed Dima and Misha in each other’s apartments

Thus, evidence from anaphor-binding does not support the claim that the displaced object appears in spec TP<sup>20</sup>.

Second, L&F crucially assume the presence of light *v* (aka Voice) that carries phi-features and checks the accusative case on the object. However, it is unclear why the Agent / Causer theta-role that is ordinarily assigned to an NP by light *v* (Chomsky 1995) is missing here. Third, L&F have no principled account for why the accidental construction is absent in English while present in Russian. In fact, L&F attribute the absence of this to a lexical idiosyncrasy of the English verb ‘be’. They argue that this verb ‘has no finite form that lacks agreement morphology’ (L&F p.11, ft.note 13). However, the accidental construction need not contain the verb ‘be’ (cf 1). Moreover, Russian also does not have a designated morpheme that is used solely to indicate non-agreeing forms -- it uses 3<sup>rd</sup> singular neuter. However, it does have the accidental construction. The lack of a designated non-agreeing verb form does not seem to bear on the presence/absence of the accidental construction in a language.

In contrast, the account presented in this paper provides a principled reason why BG can be violated in Russian but not in English. Furthermore, since I assume that the accidental construction does not involve light *v* (Voice), (the accusative case is licensed by Caus), I can account for the fact that this construction does not require an overt causer while having a causing event.

## 6. Conclusion

To sum up, I have proposed that Burzio’s Generalization can be violated if Caus and Voice are realized as distinct heads (Pylkkanen 2002) where Caus is the head that licenses the accusative case and Voice introduces the agent. I have argued that in Russian Voice and Caus are distinct heads, while in English, Caus and Voice are realized as a single head. Consequently, BG violations can occur in Russian but not in English. The proposal, thus makes a testable crosslinguistic prediction: BG violations can occur only in non-voice-bundling languages. Crucially, the theory presented here accounts for the properties of the accidental construction without relinquishing BG completely. Furthermore, one can venture an even stronger claim: assume that BG should be re-phrased to state that the accusative case implies the existence of external causation, not necessarily an external argument. If so, then BG would be universal.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> L & F present arguments from Weak Cross-Over and Focus that the displaced object is not in scrambled position (p.20 – 27). However, while the movement of the object may not focus-driven scrambling, it is not enough to conclude that the object moves to an A position.

<sup>21</sup> Thanks to Ken Safir to bringing this point to my attention.

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