

## The Tricky Case of Czech Reflexives

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In Czech, similarly as in other European languages (Maslova, 2008), the reflexives are highly ambiguous (Karlík et al., 2016). In Czech their clitic forms *se/si* and their long forms *sebe/sobě/sebou* serve as lexical and/or grammatical markers with different functions:

- (1) **inherently reflexive verbs:** only the clitic reflexives *se/si* without any apparent lexical or syntactic function (e.g., *bát se* ‘be afraid’, *stěžovat si* ‘complain’, *poprat se* ‘grapple, fight’);
- (2) **reflexivity:** both the clitic and long reflexives (serving as grammatical means) expressing a referential identity between the valency complementation in the subject position and the valency complementation lexically expressed by the reflexive (e.g., *Martin se myje.* = *Sebe Martin myje(, ale děti ne).* ‘Martin washes himself.’ (= *Martin* in the subject and the reflexives *se/sebe* refer to the same entity), *Martina si koupila koláč.* = *Sobě si Martina koupila koláč (a dětem koblíhy).* ‘Martina bought herself a cake.’);
- (3) **reciprocity:**
  - a) only the clitic reflexives *se/si* (as lexical means) deriving inherent reciprocal verbs from irreflexive verbs (e.g., *líbat* → *líbat se* ‘kiss’, *povídat* → *povídat si* ‘talk’);
  - b) both the clitic and long reflexives (serving as grammatical means) expressing mutuality (e.g., *Jan a Marie se políbili.* = *Jan políbil Marii a Marie políbila Jana.* = *Sebe Petr a Marie políbili(, ale děti ne).* ‘Jan and Mary kissed each other.’);
- (4) **deagentive diathesis:** only the clitic reflexive *se* (as grammatical means) shifting personal agent from the subject position (e.g., *Dělníci staví školu.* ‘The workers are building a school.’ → *Škola se staví.* ‘A school is being built.’).
- (5) **decausativity:** only the clitic reflexive *se* (as lexical means) deriving decausative verbs from causative ones (e.g., *Petr rozbil vázu.* ‘Peter broke the vase.’ → *Váza se rozbila.* ‘The vase broke.’).

Here we focus especially on the distinction between reciprocal (3) and reflexive (2) structures and their possible ambiguity, see, e.g., the sentence *Jan a jeho manželka o sobě soudci lhali.*, which can be interpreted either as reciprocal (‘John and his wife lied to the judge about each other.’), or as reflexive (‘John and his wife lied to the judge about themselves.’). This ambiguity can be eliminated by the presence of some of lexical markers, as, e.g., the adverb *vzájemně* ‘each other’ for reciprocity and the pronoun *sám* ‘oneself’ for reflexivity.

In the presentation, we will present a deeper insight into the types of Czech verbs with respect to the above mentioned ambiguity and the possible functions of the reflexives.